

ABSTRACT

School Climate, Self-Concept and Academic Achievement in Newly Established High Schools in Trinidad and Tobago: A Mixed Methods Study

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This thesis discusses school climate and the adolescent's self-concept and the extent to which they may impact upon academic achievement in Trinidad and Tobago. An explanatory sequential mixed methods approach was utilized—with a quantitative approach in the first phase, followed by a qualitative approach. The quantitative investigation employed analysis of variance, independent sample t-tests, as well as multiple correlation analysis, which indicated that while different climates exist in schools and affect academic performance, there are other variables that also affect academic performance. The study also employed structural equation modelling which indicated that the self-concept mediates the relationship between the school climate and academic achievement as well as other factors. The qualitative investigation further examined the different climates and the extent to which these factors or others may have affected the secondary school student. The qualitative findings supported the quantitative findings of the existence of the different climates and revealed that teaching styles, the teacher-student relationship, the differential treatment of males in the classroom, male dependence on females for academic help and other factors helped to explain the student's sense of self and academic thrust. The research findings will have implications for educators, researchers and policy makers.

Keywords: Sacha John-Charles-Baynes; classroom environment; school climate; self-concept; academic achievement; secondary school; Trinidad and Tobago.