

2nd International Education Conference

09 - 11 August 2024

Berlin, Germany

Analysis of the relationship between perceived classroom climate and academic stressors in Spanish university students

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ABSTRACT

University students are subjected to different academic stressors, including those related to the social relationships they establish with their peers and professors. This fact is important since a correct relationship between peers and teachers can lead to a good classroom climate, contributing to the correct development of academic, behavioural and socioemotional results. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to analyse the association between academic stress and perceived classroom climate in a sample of 309 Spanish university students (63.10%, n=195 females) with a mean age of 22.58 years (SD=5.55). For this purpose, the Stressor Academic Scale and the Perceived Responsibility Classroom Climate Questionnaire were administered. Student-generated classroom climate was associated with the following academic stress factors: Teacher Methodological Deficiencies ($r=-.119$; $p=.037$), Student Academic Overload ($r=.131$; $p=.021$), Public Speaking ($r=-.130$; $p=.022$), Negative Social Climate ($r=-.302$; $p=.000$) and Difficulties in Participation ($r=-.202$; $p=.000$). On the other hand, teacher-generated classroom climate was only associated with the academic stress factors: Negative Social Climate ($r=-.153$, $p=.007$), Lack of Content Value ($r=-.122$; $p=.032$) and Difficulties in Participation ($r=-.178$; $p=.002$). The results obtained indicate that the impact of classroom climate generated by students or teachers is different as it does not influence the same stressors, coinciding only in the case of negative social climate and participation difficulties. Therefore, it is necessary to promote educational intervention strategies that improve students' social relationships among their peers and with the teaching staff, to reduce academic stress and therefore improve the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: classroom climate; academic stressors, students, teachers, university