



Title	Impact of School Climate on the Implementation Quality of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Mongolian High Schools: A Mixed Methods Case Study
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Abstract of Thesis

Name (ENKHTUR OYUNDELGER)

Title

Impact of School Climate on the Implementation Quality of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Mongolian High Schools: A Mixed Methods Case Study

(モンゴルの高校における学校風土が包括的性教育の質に及ぼす影響:混合法による事例研究)

Abstract

CSE is an essential tool for realizing the rights and objectives outlined in the human rights treaties, as it promotes the interconnected aspects of human rights, including education, sexual health, well-being, protection, participation, identity, and equality (Yankah, 2018). These rights are enshrined in various international frameworks, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the universally ratified treaty. Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of CSE on youth development, but contextual challenges, particularly in developing regions, often hinder its implementation (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO, 2023).

As a developing country, Mongolia presents a unique opportunity to benefit from quality CSE. Adolescents face challenges like gender-based violence, teenage pregnancies, and high suicide rates, which could be mitigated through a whole-school approach to CSE. Though reproductive health education has existed since 1998, CSE was formally integrated into the Health Education curriculum in 2018. However, no research has evaluated its implementation quality.

A secure school environment is a prerequisite for effective learning, especially on sensitive topics such as CSE (UNESCO, 2018; UNESCO, 2021). This highlights the importance of a supportive school climate for addressing these subjects. However, the role of school climate in implementing CSE, particularly in non-Western settings, remains underexplored.

This study investigates how school climate influences the quality of CSE implementation, using Mongolian high schools as a case study. It focuses on three research questions: (1) Does school climate affect CSE? 2) Which domains of school climate are the most impactful? 3) How does school climate influence CSE implementation quality?

The conceptual framework in this study adopts a systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rudassil et al., 2018) and Gidden's (1979) structuration theory. It conceptualizes the school as a

microsystem in which the stakeholders dynamically interact in their unique school climate and, through their interactions, co-create the CSE implementation quality.

For the methodology, an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed. First, surveys measuring school climate and CSE implementation quality were collected from six schools (two in the urban, two in ger, and two in border areas). The school climate survey, WHITS Mongolia Extended Version (What's going on in this school?), was used. Participants included 1,437 high school students, six principals, and seven health education teachers. The Adolescent Reproductive Health Education Implementation Index (Keogh et al., 2020) assessed CSE implementation quality. Factor analysis, Kruskal-Wallis tests, and multiple regression analyses were conducted using SPSS. Based on the quantitative results, three schools (one from each location) were selected for follow-up focus group interviews, and 132 students participated. Thematic analysis was applied to transcribed interviews.

The quantitative analysis showed that school climate factors explain 16.5% of the CSE implementation quality index variance. All school climate dimensions, particularly school teachers and the school's physical environment, had the highest impact. Urban and ger areas positively predict the quality of implementation, while tuition fees have a negative effect.

Qualitative findings highlighted that, despite limited resources, teacher agency, preparedness, and program fidelity contributed significantly to higher CSE implementation quality in the ger area school. However, schools' physical environment and teachers' attitudes towards sexuality undermined CSE implementation quality. School teachers' disrespectful and intrusive treatment and a lack of confidentiality modeled negative relationship patterns and an unsafe learning environment. Moreover, stigmatization of adolescent sexuality created barriers to fostering a supportive learning environment that aligned with CSE.

On the other hand, the school with tuition fees had a more positive school climate, especially in the dimensions of the physical environment and school teachers, which resulted in significantly higher CSE implementation context index scores. Therefore, it can be concluded that school climate has more influence on the implementation context than on the content curriculum, in which HE teachers have more impact. Thus, according to the conceptual framework, the agency of HE teachers and school leadership also played a role in CSE implementation.

Key health services, such as access to school physicians and school psychologists and clean and accessible toilets, were identified as areas needing improvement, particularly in ger and border area schools. In both border and urban schools, health education was not taught consistently or with high program fidelity. This inconsistency suggests that school leadership also plays a critical role in ensuring

the quality of health education.

As one of the stakeholders, students shared that health education, of which CSE is a part, must be prioritized. The content needs to be more relevant to their needs, in-depth, and timely, and teaching methods need to be engaging and meaningful. The findings also show inadequate school leadership's support for CSE by not closely evaluating and monitoring program fidelity, repurposing health education time, lacking anti-sexual harassment policies, and not engaging students in school climate improvement processes.

This study contributes to the limited research on CSE in non-Western contexts by offering insights into how school climate influences the quality of CSE implementation. It also contributes to the theoretical understanding by proposing a conceptual framework that helps explain where feedback is lost in the system, hindering the successful implementation of CSE. The findings have implications for policy, teacher training, and school-level practices to improve Mongolia's school environments and CSE implementation. Specifically, the study underscores the importance of transforming schools into health-promoting environments.

論文審査の結果の要旨及び担当者

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論文審査の結果の要旨

Thesis title: The Impact of School Climate on the Implementation Quality of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Mongolian High Schools: Mixed Methods Case Study

This mixed-methods study tests the hypothesis that a positive school climate will create an environment that allows for the delivery of high-quality comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). The definition of CSE was in line with that outlined in the UNESCO International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (2018). Three research questions were used to drive the study: (1) Does school climate affect CSE? 2) Which domains of school climate are the most impactful? 3) How does school climate influence CSE implementation quality? Six high schools in Mongolia were chosen for the quantitative phase of the study: two from urban areas, two from border areas and two from rural ger regions. Three schools, one from each area, were chosen for the qualitative phase.

The thesis is made up of nine chapters. The first chapter introduces the study and outlines its contribution. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are literature review chapters. Chapter 2 introduces the literature around sexuality education in schools and successful CSE implementation. Chapter 3 offers an extensive overview of the literature on school climate and how this could impact CSE implementation quality; a body of literature which Enkhtur herself has contributed to in the Mongolian context. Chapter 4 outlines the context of Mongolia, its education system, health education and sexual and reproductive health education. The theoretical model introduced in Chapter 5 draws on the earlier chapters, and particularly chapter 3.

Chapter 6 introduced the research design. Two validated survey instruments were administered to 1,437 students in the six schools, two urban, two border areas and two rural (Ger district). The school climate survey, WHITS Mongolia Extended Version (What's going on in this school?) and the The Adolescent Reproductive Health Education Implementation Index. The latter instrument had been developed by the researcher with Sattler et al., to measure 7 elements of CSE implementation in Low and Middle Income Countries (Sattler et al, 2022). Enkhtur added two more dimensions to this model for the current research, the school physical environment and the importance of the homeroom teacher (Enkhtur, 2022). The Adolescent Reproductive Health Education Implementation Index was used to measure CSE implementation quality (Keogh, et al 2020). The measure has been validated in Low- and Middle-Income Countries that have adopted CSE in their curriculum. It was developed specifically as an instrument to measure CSE implementation quality. The composite index represents seven key components of a successful programme: range of topics, values imparted, teaching methods, teacher training, resources available, monitoring and evaluation,

and the school environment (Keogh, et al 2020).

Factor analysis, Kruskal-Wallis tests, and regression analyses were conducted using SPSS. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to validate Sattler et al.'s (2021) modified measures, and to check whether the added items loaded to the expected dimensions. In this process the 37 items at the beginning of the study were reduced to 35 (2 items were removed, because of low primary and cross-loadings), which again were grouped into 7 factors. Factor analysis 'was deemed to be suitable for all 35 items. The factor analysis results showed that the instrument and the sampling size met the criteria for factor analysis' (p102). Based on the mean of the items associated to the factors composite scores of the factors were created.

Chapter 7 reports on the results of the quantitative study. A Kruskal-Wallis test was applied to test the influence of the two dummy variables location (urban, border, and ger area) and tuition fees on school climate and sexuality education implementation. Location explained the statistically significant variations of 6 factors and the CSE implementation quality. Tuition fees explained statistically significant variations of 4 factors and CSE implementation quality. Finally, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the extent to which the 7 factors and the two dummy variables, location and tuition fees, would explain the CSE implementation quality. The test confirmed 'that the model is statistically significant overall: $F(10, 1245) = 39.952$, with a $p\text{-value} < .001$, indicating that the set of predictors significantly explains variance in summary index scores' (p136). The 'model can explain approximately 16.5% of the variation of sexuality education implementation' (p140). Schoolteachers, school physical environment and location (urban and ger areas) had the strongest positive impact on CSE implementation quality, whereas, unexpectedly, higher tuition fees decreased the quality of CSE implementation. Urban and ger areas positively predict the quality of implementation, while tuition fees have a negative effect.

Chapter 8 reports on the qualitative study. The qualitative phase involved focus groups with 132 students in three of the original six schools: one from each location. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis to the transcribed data. This data helped explain some of what was revealed in the quantitative phase of the study. While limited resources were available in the ger areas, the satisfaction of student with the CSE curriculum contents was high. The interview data suggested that teacher agency, their preparations for teaching and a commitment to program fidelity were positive factors here. At the same time, the poor physical environment of the school and the negative attitudes of some teachers to sexuality issues, and adolescent sexual behaviour, undermined delivery. On the other hand, the one urban school with high tuition fees had a more positive school climate, especially in the dimensions of the physical environment and schoolteachers, which resulted in significantly higher CSE implementation context index scores in the quantitative study. However, the students were less satisfied with the content of the curriculum, and it was clear that there was lower commitment to program implementation fidelity. Therefore, it was concluded that school climate has more influence on the implementation context than on the content of the curriculum, in which health education teachers have more impact. This is in line with the conceptual framework introduced by the researcher (Figure 1) that the agency of 'stakeholders, including administrators, health education teachers, and students, actively interact within the school climate, either reinforcing or diminishing the effectiveness of CSE implementation' (p16).

The final chapter considered the findings of the two phases of the study in relation to the extant literature. It was concluded that while school climate has a significant impact on the quality of CSE delivery, teachers and other school stakeholders can play a positive or negative

role depending on how they are orientated to the contents and their students.

Recommendations were offered for CSE based on the findings.

The examining committee felt that this was a well executed study that utilized the conceptual model of school climate to investigate CSE implementation. Although only six schools were included, the volume of data collected, especially in the qualitative phase of the study, was impressive. The focus on a non-Western culture and non-high income country, Mongolia, also adds to the originality of the study. While it was felt more work was needed to polish the final presentation of results, overall we rated the research and the results highly. We also felt that the two literary review chapters, especially the one on school climate, made a valuable contribution in their own right. There was unanimous agreement among the committee members that the research and presentation of results reached a standard commensurate with a PhD in Human Sciences.