

## **Preface**

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“Constructive educational climates may be so vitally important that priorities should be drastically rearranged.” (Riorden, 1982, p. 310)

This book is devoted to conceptualising, assessing and investigating what happens to students during their school and university education. In particular, the main focus is on important aspects of classroom learning environments. Clearly, having positive classroom environments is a valuable goal of education. But, it should not be assumed that the equally important issue of student outcomes is ignored. Rather, this book presents compelling evidence that the classroom environment so strongly influences student outcomes that it should not be ignored by those wishing to improve the effectiveness of schools and universities.

The curriculum of schools and universities consists not just of content and outcomes, but also of classrooms where the business of learning takes place. It is the quality of life lived in classrooms that determines many of the things that we hope for from education. As this book clearly shows, classroom climate can be assessed and studied. In fact, remarkable progress has been made in conceptualising, assessing and researching it.

In particular, over the years, researchers have developed quite a few questionnaires to assess students' perceptions of their classroom learning environments. These questionnaires have been used in different countries and at different grade levels. They have been translated into various languages. They have been used by hundreds of researchers, thousands of teachers and millions of students around the world.

Given the ready availability of questionnaires, the importance of classroom environment, the influence of classroom environment on

student outcomes, and the value of environment assessments in guiding educational improvement, it seems very important that researchers and teachers give it greater priority. Although educators around the world pay great attention to student achievement and only a little attention to the environment of school and university classrooms, research on classroom environment should not be buried under a pile of achievement tests. Hopefully, this timely book will encourage and guide important research and practical applications involving classroom environment, especially in Asian countries.