The Socio-emotional Climates of Out-of-School Time Programs:

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Counseling Psychology

THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL CLIMATES OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

Dissertation by

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submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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The Socio-emotional Climates of Out-of-School Time Programs

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The differential effects of the achievement gap on lower-income youth persist in this country (National Association of State Boards of Education, 2013). Recognition of the role of Out-of-School Time (OST) factors contributing to achievement differences has been growing (Gordon, Bridglall, & Meroe, 2005). As a result, OST programs have been gaining popularity; however, program efficacy varies. Socio-emotional climate represents one area of quality that likely influences student outcomes. Socio-emotional climate was assessed through a custom observation tool from a larger study. Social competence and resilience was the outcome variable as measured by the DESSA-RRE. Factor analysis empirically profiled the socio-emotional climates of 37 summer learning programs from five school districts across the country, resulting in four "GROW" dimensions of socio-emotional climate: (1) Growth-promoting Instruction, (2) Resolve and Focus, (3) Organization, and (4) Warmth. Given the randomized control design of the larger study, variability among the 37 climates was limited. Thus, hierarchical linear regression examined the influence of climate on students' outcomes. HLR found that the socio-emotional climate explained a statistically significant ($R^2=0.12$, p<0.001, $t^2=0.14$) amount of variance in students' social competence and resilience, above and beyond demographics alone ($\Delta R^2 = 0.005$, p = 0.007, $f^2 = 0.01$). Moderation results were nonsignificant. Limitations to the study centered on data collection and quantitative methodology. Implications for both counseling psychologists and OST providers were discussed at length, notably supporting programs towards Growth-promoting Instruction.

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CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The link between the achievement gap and income disparities for children and youth by race has been well documented within the United States (Borman, 2001). As attention to the achievement gap has grown and school day curriculum and resources begin to become more equitable, disparities in afterschool and summer activities are increasingly recognized as important domains of inequality influencing the achievement gap (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011; Downey, von Hippel, & Broh, 2004; Entwisle & Alexander, 1992; National Association of State Boards of Education, 2013). Dramatic income-based differences exist in how youth spend their time outside of school and during the summer (Duffet & Johnson, 2004). Gordon, Bridglall, and Meroe (2005) argue that higher-income, higher-achieving youth learn outside of the traditional school day the social competence and resilience that is key to their academic success. Alleviating deeply entrenched class-based opportunity differences requires providing lower-income youth with out-of-school-time experiences that promote comparable social competence and resilience necessary for high achievement (Gordon, et al., 2005). Thus, Out-of-School Time (OST) programming aims not only to compensate for these differences, but also to go above and beyond school year material and provide youth with the social competence and resilience necessary for high achievement (Dessoff, 2011; Hughes, 2011; Smink, 2012). In this study, social competence and resilience are considered in unison because of the significant conceptual overlap in their definitions as one's capacity to use internal and external resources to overcome stress (Masten & Curtis, 2000; Nickerson & Fishman, 2009).

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The mechanisms for promoting social competence and resilience in youth may include both close relationships with caring adults as well as features of the overall climate or culture of the Out-of-School Time (OST) setting. Research recognizes the social factors in youth's school day experiences, especially their relationships with their teachers (Ames, 1992; Gabrieli, 2011; Heron, 2003; Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999). Research on OST programs has generated mixed results, highlighting the importance of understanding differences in program quality and program climate (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Heyns, 1987; Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthorp, Snow, & Martin-Glenn, 2006; Sawchuk, 2011; Shulruf, Tumen, & Tolley, 2008). While theory and research indicate that both social competence and Out-of-School Time programming may be mechanisms for alleviating the achievement gap, research has yet to fully understand whether certain socio-emotional climates of OST programs might promote social competence and thereby reduce the achievement gap. This study examined how socio-emotional climates differ among summer programs and whether these differences in climate influence social competence and resilience in children. This dissertation research contributed to an understudied area by focusing on socio-emotional climates of OST programs, and how these different climates might have promoted development of social competence and resilience in low achieving ethnic minority children.

Achievement Gap

Across the United States, youth from higher-income families are out-performing youth from lower-income families (US Department of Education, 2008). This pervasive issue has both multiple sources and multiple implications for youth that compound each other. Lower-income youth are less likely to attend college, have lower academic scores

on average, and are more likely to engage in delinquent or aggressive behaviors and to have mental health concerns (American Psychological Association, 2013; National Alliance on Mental Health, 2012; US Department of Education, 2013; Wadsworth & Achenbach, 2005). While these characteristics are excessively present among lowerincome youth, the developmental trajectories of these characteristics are complex. For example, aggressive behaviors may contribute to lower academic performance while lower academic performance may also contribute to low self-esteem that leads to aggressive behaviors. Further, income disparities fall along racial lines, so that racial minority youth do not have the same opportunities or outcomes as more privileged, white youth. Youth who require academic remediation over the summer are not only more often low-income but also disproportionately represent racial minorities (Aidman, 1997).

In past decades, much of the focus on the achievement gap has been on equalizing public education across racial, income, and regional groups. While there is opportunity for improvement, public education increasingly serves as an equalizer across income and racial gaps (Downey, et al., 2004). Despite advances in offering equal opportunity across income and racial groups through public education, the achievement gap persists, highlighting the need to also consider Out-of-School Time factors (e.g. afterschool activities, summer programming) (Stonehill, Lauver, Donahue, Naftzger, McElvain, & Stephanidis, 2011). Gordon and colleagues (2005) emphasize that the hidden, non-traditional learning that higher-income youth receive from their extra-curricular activities, families, and communities, constitutes a form of supplemental education.

Many students, and especially lower-income students, experience summer learning loss when their young minds disengage or become idle from months of school

year learning over the summer. The phenomenon of summer learning loss underlines the necessity to study Out-of-School Time's impact on the achievement gap. The academic achievement gap grows more profoundly during the summer months (Downey, et al., 2004). Lower income youth do not engage in the same summer activities as their higher income peers during elementary school and this has lasting impact on their academic achievement. For example, higher-income youth might enroll in specialized summer camps or travel to national parks with their families, while lower-income youth might spend the summer playing video games in unstructured settings. In fact, differential summer experiences during elementary school account for two-thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007; Celano & Neuman, 2008). This ninth grade difference in turn influences later income-based achievement differences, including high school non-completion and four year college attendance (Alexander, et al., 2007).

Clearly, higher-income youth are having more enriching summer experiences, but these experiences are likely not focused exclusively on formal academic instruction. Actually, higher-income and lower-income parents have different ideas about how youth should spend their summers (Borman, Benson, & Overman, 2005). For low-income families, the ideal summer program would likely be academically intense and deprioritize fun or enrichment programming (Duffet & Johnson, 2004). On the other hand, high-income families value summer experiences that holistically enrich their children, providing social competence and resilience. Duffet and Johnson note that limited program quality, affordability, and availability of OST programs for low-income families influence this problem. Because of this, higher-income youth learn through summer

activities that include formal summer school, as well as non-formal (e.g. sports programming) and informal activities (e.g. visiting a museum) (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011). The more comprehensive and diverse summer experiences of higher income children provide greater holistic enrichment, improving their self-esteem and providing greater opportunity for positive social interactions with both peers and caring adults. This, in turn, contributes to their higher academic achievement.

Social Competence and Resilience

The opportunity differential between high-income and low-income youth results in disparities in social competence and resilience (Elias & Haynes, 2008; Heller, et al., 2012). Social competence involves a capacity for self-management, goal directed behavior, social-awareness, decision-making, and relationship skills, as well as other related skills and behaviors (Nickerson & Fishman, 2013). Conceptualizations of resilience similarly include one's capacity to use internal and external resources to overcome stress (Masten& Curtis, 2000), and so, in this study, social competence and resilience are considered jointly as one overlapping concept. Essentially, high-income youths, because they have more connected and highly resourced families and communities, experience an array of growth-promoting activities that help them acquire the social competence necessary for high achievement. Ultimately, achievement differences are manifestations of differences in social competence and resilience (Alexander, et al., 2007; Gordon, et al., 2005). Social competence may be intrinsic to promoting positive youth development outcomes. Specifically, even with equal access to public resources, social competence acquired from an assortment of enriching experiences allows higher-income youth to surpass their lower-income peers. For

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example, during parent-supervised trips to the public library, low-income children read one-third of the amount of text that middle-income children do and are less supported by parents (Celano & Neuman, 2008). This represents one way social capital influences how children differently experience life.

Academic and enrichment programs represent one forum through which youth may interact with adult caregivers to learn social competence and resilience. While individual lessons or short-term curricula focused on socio-emotional learning can be helpful, a comprehensive and influential mechanism of these programs in fostering social competence and resilience may be the program's socio-emotional climate (National Association of State Boards of Education, 2013; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). Socioemotional Learning (SEL) programs are frequently stand-alone lessons that programs attempt to implement without examining how the content of the lessons could be practiced throughout their program. Without a supportive socio-emotional climate in which to practice social skills, specialized lessons from an SEL curriculum are ineffectual (Naylor and Cowie, 1999). Increasingly research recognizes the role of the socioemotional context, especially teacher-student interactions, in influencing youth outcomes in school-day activities (Ames, 1992; Gabrieli, 2011; Heron, 2003; Lee, et al., 1999). However, only a few scholars have explored social and emotional support in OST programs (Keiler, 2011; Lee & Smith, 1999; Stone, Engel, Nagaoka, & Roderick, 2005), and none have empirically profiled their socio-emotional climates.

Out-of-School Time Programming

Because much of the necessary learning for high achievement occurs outside the school day, there is growing recognition of the importance of out-of-school time (OST)

programming (e.g. Alexander, et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2006; Celano & Neuman, 2008; Dessoff, 2011). OST programs include before school, after school, and summer programs. These programs not only provide supervision and care for youth, but also aim to provide academic enrichment, physical activity, and social support to narrow the achievement gap and promote positive youth development (Gabrieli, 2011). Involvement in OST programs represents an investment in human capital, as there are immediate benefits, such as improvements in math and science scores, and long-term benefits, such as increased likelihood of attaining a college degree (Lipscomb, 2007).

Summer learning programs, a type of OST programming, have been developed to provide both enrichment and remedial instruction (Heyns, 1987). Initially, programming focused on low-income youth's lower school year performance and subsequent need for remediation (Aidman, 1997). However, with recognition of the dangers of summer learning loss, programs have begun trying to offer quality enrichment beyond remediation to address this issue (Smink, 2012). Thus, there has been a shift in focus from remediation to enrichment. This focus on enrichment aims to protect youth against the stressor of a summer without structured time and, therefore, promotes the development of resilience. While a higher income child may attend specialized soccer camp and take a vacation to a national park with his family, a lower-income child may attend a low-budget program at a community center near his home. In this way, the income-based differentials in summer opportunity are profound (Dessoff, 2011). Therefore, some summer programs seek to provide a diversity of high quality, enriching learning opportunities to lower-income youth who may not have the resources to experience them independently (Dessoff, 2011).

OST programs, including summer learning programs, have demonstrated mixed results (Farb & Matjasko, 2012; Heyns, 1987; Lauer, et al., 2006). Understanding what constitutes program quality helps inform the design and implementation of effective programs. While the caliber of academic content may impact program quality, the theoretical shift of OST from remediation-based to enrichment-based implies that some of these non-academic factors may also impact program quality. Moreover, if the new goal of OST programs involves supporting the whole child and valuing non-formal and informal aspects of learning (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011), then both the inputs and the results may need to be measured in terms of both non-academic and academic outcomes (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). As a note, the literature distinguishes non-formal learning, such as sports instruction, and informal learning, such as visiting a museum with your family (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011). In this way, the mixed outcomes of summer programs may be explained by the shift in programs' missions from remediation towards enrichment and a lag in adapting outcomes measures to include non-academic domains as well.

Understanding program's socio-emotional climates may be one way to better understand differences in program quality. In fact, universal OST programs that improve multiple levels of the programs' socio-emotional climates are more effective than targeted approaches that focus only on one level of intervention such as teaching students emotional expression skills (Battistich, Schaps, Watson, Solomon, & Lewis, 2000; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). Socio-emotional climates in school-day programming are often conceptualized as a product of teacher support or teacher-student relationships (Downer, Rimm-Kaufman, & Pianta, 2007; Downer, Sabol, & Hamre, 2010). While this represents

one aspect of socio-emotional climate, the overarching concept of socio-emotional climate aims to capture the more inclusive social and emotional experience of attending a specific program. This includes not only relationships with teachers, but also relationships with peers as well as the culture of the school or program.

Current Study

The proposed study sought to profile OST summer programs' socio-emotional climates and how these climates may or may not have supported youth in developing social competence and resilience. Socio-emotional climates of summer programs have not been empirically examined and likely function differently than the socio-emotional climates of school-year programming. Moreover, OST programs seek to compensate for income-based opportunity differentials by offering something above and beyond the school-year baseline so that lower income youth might gain skills more readily available to higher income youth. This study also examined whether youth who receive summer programming with certain types of socio-emotional climates differentially developed social competence. For this study, two closely related research questions with their own hypotheses were explored in order to examine fully the influence of the socio-emotional climates of summer programs.

Research Question One

In what ways are the socio-emotional climates of different summer programs similar to and different from each other? This study conceptualized socio-emotional climate as a multi-faceted concept reflecting the pervasive culture of a program, encompassing more than teacher-student relationships. Socio-emotional climate in this study represented the holistic social and emotional experience of youth enrolled in a

program, recognizing that this experience was co-created by teachers, peers, administration, and the larger environmental context. While conceptualizations of school-day socio-emotional climate focus on the teacher-student relationship and actions taken by the classroom teacher, the conceptualization of socio-emotional climate for OST programs in this study took a more integrative approach. Here socio-emotional climate included not only relational dynamics but also above and beyond instruction focused on promoting social and emotional competencies. Thus, in considering socio-emotional climate of the summer programs in this study, I hypothesized that programs' climates would differ along four dimensions: (1) Structure and Predictability, (2) Teacher-Student Relationships, (3) Student-Student Relationships, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. I sought to reject the null hypothesis that there were no dimensions to socio-emotional climate. Specifically, different programs would possess different combinations of each of these domains. For example, some programs may have provided a strong sense of Structure and Predictability with positive Teacher-Student Relationships, but lacked positive Student-Student Relationships and Growth-Promoting Instruction. The degree of presence or absence of combinations of these various domains would create distinct socio-emotional climates. Once this conceptualization of socio-emotional climate was empirically determined, I planned to use the resulting dimensions to explore my second research question.

Research Question Two

What combination of socio-emotional climate dimensions predicts students' fall levels of social competence and resilience? For this research question, I sought to reject the null hypothesis that differences in socio-emotional climates did not predict

differences in students' social competence. My alternative hypotheses were intrinsically dependent on the results of the factor analysis differentiating socio-emotional climates in Research Question One. Based on the four dimensions of climate I hypothesized in Research Question One, I tentatively anticipated three alternative hypotheses. Firstly, I hypothesized that programs whose climates possessed primarily high levels of Structure and Predictability and low levels of other dimensions would not see any significant influences on students' social competence and resilience. While being organized and predictable would be important for youth to feel safe and secure during programming, I suspected this dimension of socio-emotional climate would be necessary but not sufficient for fostering social competence, as relational connections are critical (Duffet & Johnson, 2004; Hopson & Lawson, 2011). Secondly, I hypothesized that programs whose climates were characterized by high levels of positive Teacher-Student and Student-Student Relationships in addition to high levels of Structure and Predictability would predict moderate improvements in students' social competence and resilience (Hamre, et al., 2013; Wilson, Pianta, & Stuhlman, 2007). Thirdly, I hypothesized that programs whose climates incorporated moderate to high levels of Growth-Promoting Instruction in addition to the other positive dimensions of socio-emotional climate would predict the strongest improvements in students' social competence and resilience. Going above and beyond basic caring relationships to offer positive guidance reflects a strong mechanism for adults to promote resilience (Denham & Weissberg, 2004). Notably, various combinations of these four dimensions of socio-emotional climate might have indicated that certain dimensions of climate were more or less effective with or without other dimensions. In particular, Structure and Predictability may have been fundamental

for any other aspect of climate to be impactful because providing routine and security may have been a necessary baseline or ingredient for children to gain the hypothesized benefits of positive relationships and growth-promoting instruction. Similarly, Growth-Promoting Instruction may need both a foundation of Structure and Predictability and positive relationships. However, exploring the efficacy of these dimensions in predicting social competence and resilience depended on the factor analysis in Research Question One determining the viability of the hypothesized dimensions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section elaborates on the scholarly theory and literature related to my study rationale. I begin by discussing Positive Youth Development (PYD) theory, which provided my theoretical orientation to approaching this study. This strengths-based theory not only drove my research questions, but also influenced the design of the summer programs as well as the outcome measure of social competence and resilience. Additionally, this section further articulates the concepts of socio-emotional climate and social competence and resilience, as they were used in this study. In particular, as I proposed that socio-emotional climate is multi-dimensional, this section delineates how each dimension of climate links to existing literature and how, when taken in combination, expands on the current literature. I studied this by reviewing the literature on socio-emotional climates, which was primarily from school-day literature but I also discuss the literature about the climates of OST programs. The section on socioemotional climate has sub-sections devoted to the four dimensions of climate that I hypothesized with literature relevant to each of these dimensions. Following this, I discuss social competence and resilience, including the related subjects of emotional competence and socio-emotional learning programs. Through this discussion, the reader will understand not only the importance of promoting social competence and resilience in youth, but also why this study considered social competence and resilience jointly. Additionally, this chapter elaborates on the rationale for the expectation that socioemotional climates of summer programs influence youth's social competence and resilience.

Positive Youth Development

Increasingly, scholars recognize the importance of taking a strengths-based approach to youth development (Nickerson & Fishman, 2013). This more comprehensive approach to understanding development examines not only risk factors, but also protective factors or strengths within both the individual and the environment (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). In this way, psychology begins to capture both deficits and strengths across the population. Notably, the dependent variable in this study, social competence and resilience, represents a protective factor in youth, and looking for ways to promote this reflects PYD's strengths-based approach to prevention intervention. The PYD approach allows us to understand the achievement gap as a product of differentially occurring deficits, as well as privileges and strengths. For instance, the achievement gap is no longer explained by focusing on the risk factors of lower-achieving youth (e.g. lower socio-economic status and higher community violence) and the relative absence of these risks among higher-achieving peers (Gordon, et al., 2005). A strengths-based approach avoids focusing solely on the pathology of lower-achieving youth and recognizes the hidden benefits and strengths among higher-achieving youth. For example, understanding that higher-income youth learn critical social and emotional skills from interactions in their more privileged social context helps to explain how achievement differences result from differential learning opportunities based on context (Aidman, 1997; Gordon, et al., 2005). This underscores the power of environmental experience on development (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000).

Positive Youth Development (PYD) theory represents a major contributor to the strengths-based shift in the scholarly literature (Damon, 2004; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas,

& Lerner, 2005). Grounded in ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994), PYD recognizes that strengths exist both internal and external to the individual. Moreover, PYD posits that interactions with external influences such as teachers, parents, peers, and the community have the potential to support youth in developing positive internal traits. In this way, OST programming aimed at promoting youth's socio-emotional and academic development is consistent with PYD theory. In fact, Mueller and colleagues (2011) found that participation in a youth development program fostered self-regulation skills, which in turn predicted the youth demonstrating higher levels of contribution and PYD. Thus, they demonstrated the importance of linking youth internal strengths with external resources. By focusing on growth potential and the strengths of each student rather than on correcting students' deficits, PYD programs intend to support holistic youth development.

In recognizing the complex layers and interactions of external influences on the individual, PYD theory is well situated to conceptualize the complexity of socioemotional climate. The socio-emotional climate of a classroom or youth program does not result solely from how the teacher teaches, treats the students, or arranges his or her classroom. PYD theory recognizes that teachers interact with other factors, so that there is not a clear cause and effect relationship from teacher input to student output (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). In fact, multiple other factors co-create the socio-emotional climate of a program. For instance, students' personalities shape teachers' responses to them. Additionally, students' relationships with each other can create a warm and collegial climate or a hostile and competitive climate (Hogue, Fry, Fry, & Pressman, 2013). Furthermore, the neighborhood or community in which the program operates factors into

the socio-emotional climate, for example by influencing students' feelings of safety. In this way, the interactive nature of internal and external strengths suggests the importance of providing a positive socio-emotional climate in youth programs.

PYD scholars outline five core tenets, known as the 5 C's: competence, confidence, connection, character and caring (Damon, 2004), that link directly to the construct of social competence and resilience used in this study. Some scholars also recognize the importance of a sixth C: contribution (Mueller, et al. 2011). These 6 C's help to explain the meaning of social competence and resilience used as outcome variables in this study. In fact, the measurement tool used in this study, an adapted version of the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) called the DESSA-RRE, was developed out of PYD principles (Nickerson & Fishman, 2013). Most basically, social competence is one critical form of competence, a core tenet of PYD. Competence, or specifically social competence, is a protective factor and one indicator of resilience. Youth with higher levels of social competence and resilience will not only be more holistically competent, but also will likely demonstrate greater confidence, increased ability to connect with others, stronger sense of character, and greater capacity to care for others, their community, and larger society (Heller, et al., 2012). For instance, social competence and resilience promote self-esteem and sense of self, which correspond to PYD's concepts of confidence and character. Moreover, being socially competent facilitates connecting and caring for others, also core tenets of PYD.

Furthermore, PYD focuses on prevention programming (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). By building strengths and promoting resilience, PYD programs can prevent maladaptive developmental trajectories (Gabrieli, 2011;

Rutter & Sroufe, 2000; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). OST, and especially summer programs, represent one crucial context for delivering PYD prevention interventions. Understanding the influences of youth's ecological systems, including their families, schools, and communities, PYD programs seek to offer a growth-promoting context. For example, interacting with caring adults and learning through appropriate social interactions with peers may be critical for PYD program efficacy (Heron, 2003; Keiler, 2011). Consequently, it is not only the content of PYD programs that promotes positive outcomes, but also the climate of the programs.

As research increasingly highlights the role of environmental factors contributing to the income-based achievement gap (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Celano & Newman, 2008; Downey, et al., 2004; Smink, 2012), it becomes clear that bolstering protective factors and reducing risk factors in the extended learning environment could prevent or reduce the achievement gap. Research indicates that differential summer experiences during elementary school explain two thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap (Alexander, et al., 2007). In particular, all children are prone to summer learning loss, a phenomenon where children slip back a couple of months over the summer (Borman, 2003). Summer learning loss is most pronounced in reading and is more dramatic for low-income children, who are more likely to have lesser quality summer experiences (Aidman, 1997; Cooper, Charlton, Valentine, Muhlenbruck, & Borman, 2003; Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse, 1996; Downey, et al., 2004). High quality summer programs during elementary school should provide youth with the academic skills and social capital necessary to prevent summer learning loss (Sawchuk, 2011).

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While some OST programs are specifically designed based on PYD theory, it is important to note the programs on this study, while inspired by PYD, were not explicitly PYD programs. Expressly, this study sampled programs specially designed by the Wallace Foundation and the RAND Corporation for a randomized controlled trial of summer learning programs. The Wallace Foundation is an organization that has been concerned about students' loss of learning over the summer. They have invested in addressing this educational issue by enlisting the RAND Corporation in a multiyear study designed to implement and evaluate summer programs' effectiveness in reducing loss of student learning. While the Wallace Foundation and the RAND Corporation are familiar with PYD theory and designed their summer programs as a prevention intervention for at-risk children, their summer programs are not specifically PYD programs. Although there are important parallels between the PYD theory and the Wallace programs, the Wallace Foundation primarily hopes to determine whether their approach comprehensive OST summer programming impacts academic outcomes longitudinally. In this way, although their conceptualization of the issue at hand is informed by PYD and they do include some more holistic measures of wellbeing, they are still primarily interested in traditional academic outcomes, whereas this dissertation focuses on these PYD underpinnings and the PYD-oriented outcome of social competence and resilience.

High quality summer programs that incorporate both academics and enrichments take a strengths-based approached to prevention, aligned with PYD theory (Duffet & Johnson, 2004; Gabrieli, 2011). Youth programs need to do more than avoid negative outcomes, such as depression or high school drop out. Programs need to actively promote wellbeing and positive outcomes, such as academic success and social

competence. In this way, OST prevention programs designed with an understanding of PYD theory focus on enrichment rather than remediation alone (Aidman, 1997; Heyns, 1987; Smink, 2012).

Critical to understanding OST programs is not merely the reading or academic instruction, but rather the overall experience of attending the program, including relationships with caring adults and the opportunity for positive social interactions with peers that provide a powerful protective factor through the program (Duffet & Johnson, 2004; Keiler, 2011). Thus, the socio-emotional climate of OST programs that are inclusive and more comprehensive seems to be an important element in whether these programs effectively serve as the protective factor they are designed to be (Heron, 2003; Lauer, et al., 2006; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Stone, et al., 2005). Therefore, based on PYD theory that asserts that an array of environmental factors potentially promotes strengths in children, this study examines how differences in the socio-emotional climates of summer programs influence youth's social competence and resilience.

Socio-emotional Climate in Classrooms and OST Programs

A classroom or OST program climate is a multi-faceted concept and context important to program efficacy (Pianta & Allen, 2008). Almost all of the existing literature about climate has been about school-year classroom climate. Moreover, there are limitations to the prevailing conceptualization of climate. This is particularly true for socio-emotional climate in classrooms and for the unique climates of OST programs. A safe and nurturing climate has been found to be a necessary condition for effectively delivering program interventions, such as improving academic outcomes (Hopson &

Lawson, 2011). Teachers, program administrators, and researchers have long been interested in how interactions within contexts might shape youth development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Sameroff, 2000). Specifically, classroom culture and relationships with teachers foster student participation and pride in learning and thus help students feel they have contributed to creating a good climate (Heron, 2003; Ullrich-French & McDonough, 2013). Students contribute to creating a positive socio-emotional climate for learning, as well (Heron, 2003). Thus better understanding the contexts through which youth receive interventions assists in distinguishing the mechanisms of efficacy for these interventions.

Wilson and colleagues (2007), in a study using teacher scales and direct observation, found that students in classroom climates that provided both strong emotional support and evaluative feedback had higher levels of social competence. Teachers play a critical role in the classroom climate, as their expectations of their students directly influence the classroom socio-emotional climate (Rubie-Davies, 2010). Roeser and colleagues (1996) found that positive relationships with teachers improved students' sense of belonging to school, school-related affect, efficacy, and academic grades. Furthermore, Lee and Smith (1999) argue that while social support helps learning outcomes, the effects are more powerful when coupled with academic press. Hence, research indicates that a warm, supportive relationship with teachers must also be combined with teachers and programs that encourage academic success and believes in students' success (Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Thornton, 2006). A program must have high quality content in addition to caring instructors. It may be that teachers who are warm and caring but who do not rigorously push their students communicate, albeit

unconsciously, that they do not believe their students have the capacity for success. Therefore, these students are less likely to believe in their own capacity to succeed and to overcome stress. These students would then demonstrate lower levels of social competence and resilience.

Classroom climate can generate positive outcomes under optimal circumstances, but can also generate negative outcomes when something is awry. For example, teachers who are perceived as judgmental and who primarily lecture will negatively influence student participation, which, in turn, lowers academic performance (Heron, 2003). The negative effects from poor classroom climates may explain some of the achievement gap. Youth from low socio-economic status or racial minority backgrounds are more likely to be in low quality classrooms (Stuhlman & Pianta, 2009), where instructional quality is lower (Heller, et al., 2012).

The climate of a program not only influences emotional and academic performance, but also influences students' physiologically (Hogue, et al., 2013). Hogue and colleagues (2013) examined the effects of competitive and caring climates on people's biological responses to stressful or challenging tasks. They found that the same tasks performed in a competitive climate induced more physiological and psychological distress than when they were performed in the caring climate. Programs can also be designed to target students' physiological responses. McCraty, Atkinson, Tomasino, Goelitz, and Mayrovitz (1999) reported on a program that effectively taught students to positively modulate their bodies' physiological responses to stress. As PYD theory and developmental psychopathology theory emphasize the transactional nature of biological,

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psychological, and social factors influencing development, these transactional processes make all three domains important elements in the role of climate (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000).

Considerable research has focused on the role of teacher-student relationships (Hamre, et al., 2013; Pianta & Allen, 2008; Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). While these relationships represent a major component of socio-emotional climate, they are only one facet. However, the dominant literature on the socio-emotional climate of school-year classrooms focuses primarily on the role of teachers. Pianta and his colleagues at University of Virginia have developed a major line of research into classroom climate called the Teaching Through Interactions Framework (Brackett, Reves, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011; Hamre, et al., 2013; Downer, et al., 2010). They have identified three types of support that teachers offer: emotional, instructional, and organizational. Their research examines the ways in which classroom climate, which they measure through these three types of support, influence student outcomes, both socio-emotionally and academically. These types of support correspond to their three domains of classroom climate: classroom emotional climate (CEC), classroom instructional climate (CIC), and classroom organizational climate (COC). Each of these domains is comprised of a handful of dimensions. CEC includes positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspectives; CIC includes concept development, quality feedback, and language modeling; COC includes behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats (Brackett, et al., 2011; Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White, & Salovey, 2012). This view on socio-emotional climate comes out of a traditional pedagogical approach where the teacher is dominant in delivering support and instruction to students. In this study, I take a more transactional

approach to understanding climate as co-created by students, teachers, administrators, and the larger culture as this aligns with both PYD theory and developmental psychopathology (Damon, 2004; Rutter & Sroufe, 2000).

Previous models of classroom climate focused on two domains (Hamre, et al., 2013). Downer and colleagues (2007) examined the impact of two facets of climate among third grade students: classroom quality and instructional context. Children at risk for school problems especially benefited from high quality classrooms, when coupled with a demanding instructional context. These results indicate the need for academic press or instructional rigor as a baseline. Rigor and high quality content work synergistically with caring and supportive adults to create an optimal climate (Heron, 2003; Phillips, 1997). This kind of comprehensive support is especially impactful for atrisk students, who are more likely to have lower quality instruction and less academic rigor.

There are complex pathways between social and instructional inputs, such as socio-emotional climate and interactions with teachers, and youth social and developmental outcomes. For instance, these types of support – emotional, instructional, and organizational – promote different outcomes for youth (Brackett, et al., 2011). While much research focuses on the outcomes, these complex pathways indicate the importance of deeply exploring the mechanics of climate in order to better understand which inputs encourage which outcomes (Downer, et al., 2010). For instance, Teacher-Student interactions predict student performance, specifically emotional support. Further, Strong classroom organization promotes students' social and emotional functioning in addition to academic outcomes (Hamre, et al., 2013). The Teaching Through Interactions Framework

differentiates between general and content-specific instructional supports (Hamre, et al., 2013). Overall, instructional support is more linked to academic functioning outcomes (Downer, et al., 2010; Hamre, et al., 2013). Instructional support, while linked to cognitive/academic outcomes, may also foster socio-emotional improvements such as positive feelings about school (Downer, et al., 2010). Higher organizational support predicts better self-regulation skills, including behavioral control and student engagement (Downer, et al., 2010). Organization may also promote social competence by encouraging pro-social behaviors (Downer, et al., 2010). However, evidence suggests that emotional support may be especially powerful (Brackett, et al., 2011; Downer, et al., 2010; Reyes, et al., 2012). Hence, instructional and organizational support inputs promote various positive outcomes for youth these outcomes are focused in specific domains. However, emotional support has the potential to promote positive outcomes across multiple domains.

Specifically, emotional support in classrooms is a factor that has been linked to improvements in social competence, peer and teacher relationships, and behavioral adjustment (Downer, et al., 2010; Reyes, et al., 2012). Emotionally supportive climates are related to student motivation, interest, enjoyment, and classroom engagement. Additionally, positive classroom emotional climate promotes better student coping strategies, less violent behavior, greater school adjustment, and academic achievement (Brackett, et al., 2011). Moreover, when controlling for classroom organization and instructional support, emotionally supportive classrooms promote positive student conduct, with teacher affiliation mediating this relationship (Brackett, et al., 2011). Not surprisingly, in more emotionally supportive settings students report more positive

feelings about their teachers. This helps them to feel a greater sense of belonging to school, encourages them to stay focused on the academic task at hand and seems to contribute to better behavior and conduct at school (Brackett, et al., 2011). Additionally, more emotional support from teachers relates to increased pro-social behaviors in students (Luckner & Pianta, 2011). Perhaps most interestingly, classroom emotional climate (CEC) is the domain of climate that has the best cross-domain effects, meaning a positive emotional climate has the strongest ability to predict outcomes typically associated with classroom instructional climate (CIC) or classroom organizational climate (COC) (Downer, et al., 2010). Not surprisingly, CIC best links with cognitive and academic outcomes and COC best links with self-regulation and control outcomes. While CEC is especially adept at fostering positive socio-emotional functioning, CEC also promotes academic and self-regulation outcomes, such as student engagement (Reves, et al., 2012). Thus, studying CEC is particularly important.

Given the wider-reaching effects of Pianta's Classroom Emotional Climate, this study aimed to unpack and expand on this concept, recognizing that the concept would be distinct in the OST setting. Because of the strong connection between social and emotional experiences, this dissertation used the term socio-emotional climate, emphasizing both social and emotional aspects of OST programing. While posited as distinct, there are certainly overlaps between CEC, CIC, and COC. For instance, some of the dimensions of COC, such as behavior management practices, would relate to students' experiences of emotional support. Therefore, in conceptualizing socioemotional climate for OST settings in this dissertation, I most heavily overlapped with CEC while also drawing from the relevant influences of CIC and COC. In this study,

socio-emotional climate intended to characterize the spirit of youth's social and emotional experiences while attending the summer programs, recognizing that these experiences were co-created by peers, teachers, administration, and the larger context.

The construct of socio-emotional climate of OST programs in this study was hypothesized to include four dimensions: not only (1) Teacher-Student Relationships, but also (2) Student-Student Relationships, (3) Structure and Predictability, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. Student-Student Relationships aimed to account for the limited scope of teacher's influence and to recognize the salience of peer dynamics during elementary school. Structure and Predictability represented some of the aspects of COC that contribute to students feeling that their program was a safe space with established routines and rules. Growth-Promoting Instruction tried to capture whether some teachers went above and beyond teaching academic content to inspire students, foster resilience, and teach them life skills. Expanding on Pianta's conceptualization of climate by including Growth-Promoting Instruction was especially relevant for OST programs, as theory suggests this type of extra special experience is what low-income students are lacking (Dessoff, 2011; Shouse, 1996). These four dimensions of socio-emotional climate were central to my hypotheses about all the relevant factors influencing students' socio-emotional experiences at their summer programs. The following four sub-sections explain each of these dimensions in depth and discuss related literature. Analyses, discussed in chapter three, empirically examined the appropriateness of these hypothesized dimensions in my conceptualization of socio-emotional climate of OST programs.

Teacher-Student Relationships

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Relationships with teachers represent an important factor in improving students' academic and social skills (Cadima, Leal, & Burchinal, 2010). Hamre and Pianta (2001) found that relational negativity with the teacher in kindergarten predicted academic and behavioral outcomes through eighth grade. This underscores the importance of teacherstudent relationships for both short-term and long-term development and wellbeing. In fact, some attribute summer learning loss to not just the lack of school, but also to a lack of supportive mentors such as parents or teachers. For instance, Celano and Neuman (2008) suggest that low-income students are less likely to have the benefit of an actively engaged, literate adult assisting them in utilizing materials at the public library. Furthermore, Mitra (2004) found that attempts to relate to students and understand their perspective are ineffectual when there is not a caring connection with the teacher.

There is evidence that positive teacher-student relationships are critical for the efficacy of OST programs and the creation of a pro-social environment (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Keiler (2011) found three key themes of program efficacy including "fun" learning activities, focusing on student comprehension, and mutual respect between teachers and students. When offered a meaningful summer program with a caring teacher who believes in their potential, struggling students can make critical developmental gains (Keiler, 2011). Mutuality between teachers and students requires that teachers adequately manage their own stress and wellbeing (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). When teachers are able to be fully present to their students, students have the best outcomes. Denham & Weissberg (2004) articulate two pathways through which teachers can foster socio-emotional learning through a relationship with their students. First, warm teacher-student relationships provide youth with a caring, adult attachment figure. Secondly,

teachers in their behavior may offer positive guidance such as modeling appropriate behaviors and emotions, and teaching about emotions. However, teachers must have a positive relationship with their students in order for this positive guidance to be received.

As discussed above, Pianta and colleagues have established the principal theory and research in this area and developed a widely used measure to observe teacher-student relationships (Pianta, et al., 2012). In fact, their work finds that a positive teacher-student relationship is necessary for acquiring academic skills (Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004). Significantly, this research links emotional support to higher levels of social competence, organizational support to increased self-regulation skills, and instructional support to improved academic and cognitive outcomes (Downer, et al., 2010). Yet, there is some emerging evidence of cross-over benefits among these domains; for example, emotional support also fosters improvements in self-regulation and cognitive outcomes (Downer, et al., 2010). Given the interactive nature of these dimensions of teacher-student relationships, teacher-student relationships may also interact with other elements of the climate.

Additionally, a growing literature on traditional school day education highlights two synergistic ideologies of teacher support: academic press and personalism. Academic press emphasizes high expectations and structure while personalism emphasizes warmth and caring support (Lee, et al., 1999; Stone, et al., 2005). Academic press better supports youth when combined with personalism, just as personalism is most supportive when combined with academic press (Lee & Smith, 1999). Caring for students without pushing them and providing rigorous instruction unconsciously communicates the teacher's low expectations for the students. On the other hand, rigor

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without caring sets students up to feel intimidated and puts low-achieving students with lower levels of self-efficacy at greater risk for slipping behind. For example, Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, and Morrison (2008) found that emotional support needed to be coupled with adequate levels of academic content and reading time in order to generate academic growth. However, how teachers communicate academic press and personalism exists in more than their direct interactions with students. Teachers and administrators' efforts to support youth have ripple effects on many aspects of the environment that influence youth. For example, creating a caring culture during classroom instruction likely encourages children to approach each other with caring attitudes during recess creating a particular climate (Brown, Jones, LaRusso, & Aber, 2010).

Student-Student Relationships

Another critical dimension of socio-emotional climate is Student-Student Relationships. Feeling connected to a positive peer group provides youth not only with an opportunity to develop social skills, but also with an opportunity to feel valued by and related to others. In this way, positive student-student relationships represent a protective factor in youth development (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). Teachers can influence the dynamics between their students. Teachers' attitudes towards social behavior and emotional support influence students' treatment of each other and relationships with each other (Gest & Rodkin, 2011).

Caring friendships may not always occur naturally within school day programming, but OST programming, such as summer programs, provide an opportunity for youth to engage positively in another context with peers with whom they might not

otherwise have a chance to connect in this fashion. Because school day efforts center on academics and are increasingly pressured to demonstrate their efficacy through standardized test results, OST efforts are uniquely positioned to encourage different relational connections (Denham & Weissberg, 2004; Dessoff, 2011). Therefore, the Student-Student Relationship dimension of socio-emotional climate in this study reflected evidence of whether the youth attending the program related positively to each other.

Student-Student Relationships are complex and not merely a product of teachers' efforts to inspire kindness. Students bring their own personalities and strengths. While the environment influences students' behavior, students influence the environment too (Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). Over time, peer support shapes the socio-emotional climate (Naylor & Cowie, 1999). Changing the socio-emotional climate of school-day classrooms may take several years but comprehensive efforts across all levels of the school, including peer support programming, may help facilitate this process (Naylor & Cowie, 1999). Therefore, when conceptualizing youth's social and emotional experiences I believed it was critical to include student-student relationships.

Structure and Predictability

Theory and research underscore the importance of providing a safe and structured environment for students to feel secure (Downer, et al., 2007; Pianta, et al., 2012). Notably, Pianta's conceptualization of teacher-student relationships encompasses a measure of organizational support intending to represent how the teacher provides structure and routine to the classroom climate. Organizational support includes behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats (Brackett, et al., 2011).
The relevance of organizational support for students' in the classroom is that it provides a fundamental sense of structure and predictability in the environment. To some extent the teacher structures this, but how youth experience organizational support depends on many factors. For example, a teacher's behavior management plan depends on support from his or her administrators as well as students' cooperation levels (Roderick & Engel, 2001). Thus, this dimension of Structure and Predictability expanded on previous literature by recognizing that teachers' and administrators' success in providing organizational support was dependent on other factors. For instance, a teacher may have a system for managing disruptive behaviors but if many students continue to behave disruptively or easily go off-task, the climate experienced by students would be unpredictable.

Moreover, theory and evidence suggest that feeling a basic sense of structure and predictability in your environment is essential for any intervention to take place (Hopson & Lawson, 2011; Maslow, 1954). Hopson and Lawson (2011) suggest that a positive, nurturing school climate is a necessary condition for improving academic outcomes. Furthermore, Denham and Weissberg (2004) recognize the importance of a "safe and supportive" school climate as foundational. For these reasons, I felt it was important to capture whether students felt safety and structure when trying to understand their experience of the socio-emotional climate of a classroom, school, or OST program. *Growth-promoting Instruction*

Instructional content or what teachers directly teach contributes to students' learning and engagement as well as their classroom's climate (Luckner & Pianta, 2011; Pianta & Allen, 2008). It is expected that teachers will teach academic content, including

reading, spelling, and math skills. Entire fields of study have examined academic instruction and best practices for teachers aiming to promote students' learning of this content. In fact, most of the existing literature on socio-emotional climate focuses on the rigor and expectations of the academic instructional content (Lee & Smith, 1999; Downer, et al., 2010). Particularly, researchers describe the role of academic press (Lee & Smith, 1999) and instructional support (Downer, et al., 2007).

However, some teachers go above and beyond teaching academic content and also teach students important life skills such as persistence in challenging tasks and social skills (Dessoff, 2011). To provide students with experiences critical to their socioemotional development requires the experience of "school as caring community" in the learning process, which is more than just academic press (Shouse, 1996). This type of instruction likely contributes specifically to the classroom's socio-emotional climate, as this is essentially added instruction in social and emotional skills. Denham and Weissberg (2004) discuss how caring adults can serve not only as supportive attachment figures, but also can provide positive guidance to youth. This might include teaching about emotions and behavior, modeling appropriate behaviors or emotions, or reacting appropriately to children's emotions and behaviors (Denham & Weissberg, 2004). While having a warm relationship with teachers is helpful, a relationship that offers guidance and thoughtful socio-emotional feedback goes beyond the basics to more actively promote wellbeing (Murray, 2002). Thus, theoretically, this type of growth-promoting instruction could improve students' social competence and resilience.

Growth-promoting instruction not only contributes to a positive socio-emotional climate, but also offers students direct instruction in content specifically related to their

social and emotional wellbeing. Ideally, growth-promoting instruction would contribute to characteristics of positive youth development (Murray, 2002). Mitra (2004) describes how understanding students' perspectives through special creative writing activities targeting "student voice" are especially helpful at fostering three developmental assets: agency, belonging, and competence. In addition, Growth-Promoting Instruction may be especially important for students from less-resourced backgrounds. Students from moreresourced backgrounds are more likely to receive Growth-Promoting Instruction from naturally occurring supports in their ecological systems (Denham & Weissberg, 2004; Duffet & Johnson, 2004).

In Out-of-School Time programs, Growth-Promoting Instruction represents the manner by which these programs improve on the instruction of traditional school day education (Dessoff, 2011; Duffet & Johnson, 2004). While academics are certainly a target of OST programming, a major goal of these programs is to promote positive youth development, including social competence and resilience (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011). Direct Growth-Promoting Instruction is consistent with the enrichment-based orientation of OST programs aimed at narrowing the achievement gap (Heyns, 1987; Hughes, 2011). While remediation-based OST focuses on a deficit approach to educating youth, enrichment-based OST focus on youth's strengths and seeks to provide holistic support, including Growth-Promoting Instruction. In this way, the presence of this type of instruction may be critical to distinguishing the quality of OST programs. Keiler's (2011) qualitative study distinguishing students' experiences at summer programs highlighted the presence of some of these extra-special qualities that contribute to program efficacy. Because the majority of the instructional content in this study was

consistent across summer programs as a product of the randomized control design, this study offered a unique opportunity to quantitatively differentiate programs based on whether they provided growth-promoting instruction.

Social Competence and Resilience

Social competence and resilience both indicate well-being in students and are tools for achieving other markers of development, such as academic achievement (Buckley, Storino, & Saarni, 2003; Trentacosta & Izard, 2007). Social competence and resilience are developmental assets that help youth to function well despite the stresses of life (Buckley, et al., 2003; Masten & Curtis, 2000). The ability to navigate social situations, regulate one's emotions, and effectively utilize external resources facilitate adaptive functioning. Heller and colleagues (2012) define social-emotional competence as confidence, friendliness, and attentiveness, among other positive characteristics. Social-emotional competence contributes to success throughout childhood and adulthood (Heller, et al., 2012). This section discusses and integrates literature on social competence, resilience, and emotional competence in order to highlight the critical overlaps between these concepts. Ultimately, this study used an outcome measure that examined social competence and resilience as a single joint variable because of the interrelated nature of these concepts.

While there are many skills that evidence social competence and resilience, selfregulation is a particularly important component. Youth who possess the skills to regulate their own emotional reactions and social behaviors better negotiate stressful life events (Buckley, et al., 2003; Raver, 2012). Raver (2012) found that self-regulation mediates the relationship between poverty and later life outcomes, critical for the lower-

income and lower-achieving youth targeted in this study sample. Youth who can selfregulate improve their developmental trajectories, while those who are less able to selfregulate, as is the case with many low-income students, often have negative developmental trajectories (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Raver, 2012). Additionally, selfregulation is a skill that can be improved through intervention (Raver, 2012).

The term social competence, when discussed independently of resilience and emotional competence, reflects an ability to respond adaptively to social stimuli (Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, Brown, & Gottman, 1986). Dodge and colleagues (1986) provide a thorough review of social competence. Acknowledging that social competence has multiple definitions and that essentially they all capture the same essence, their review focuses on the reciprocity between social information processing and children's social behavior. This cyclical relationship includes (1) social cues, (2) social information processing, (3) social behavior based on processing, (4) judgments by peers about the child's behavior, and (5) peers' behaviors towards the child. Dodge and colleagues also articulate five steps in processing social environmental cues: encoding of social cues, mental representation of those cues, accessing potential behavioral responses, evaluation and selection of optimal response, and enactment of the response. What is most important about this approach is the recognition that emotionally processing and responding to environmental stimuli does not occur in isolation, but has significant social influences.

In addition to multiple definitions of social competence, the concept and definitions of emotional competence overlap with the dominant conceptualization of social competence (Taub & Pearrow, 2005). Emotional competence, compared to social

competence, focuses more on the internal capacities of an individual to navigate life. Buckley and colleagues (2003) articulate the theory behind emotional competence, offering the definition of "self-efficacy in social transactions." They further draw distinctions between functionalists' and social constructivists' understandings of emotional competence, advocating for an integrated approach and enumerating eight skills of emotional competence. Ultimately, Buckley and colleagues' more recent, integrated approach to emotional competence recognizes the social role of emotional experience. For example, emotional competence, like social competence, predicts academic success by improving youths' attention skills (Trentacosta &Izard, 2007). Internal regulation not only allows youth to focus on the task at hand, but also makes youth more socially appealing as learners to teachers and peers.

When discussing emotional competence, the research on emotional intelligence must be noted. The benefits of being emotionally intelligent are numerous, including protecting against suicidal behavior (Cha & Nock, 2009). The critical difference between emotional competence and emotional intelligence is that emotional intelligence is more about processing (Buckley, et al., 2003), much like the social information processing described by Dodge and colleagues (1986). Emotional intelligence fails to adequately account for the influence of context, culture, and developmental differences (Buckley, et al., 2003).

When examining the literatures on social and emotional competencies, the overlap between the terms is striking, especially as Buckley and colleagues recognize the social aspects of emotional competence. Our internal mechanisms for managing emotions in social situations, or emotional competence, become a component of social

competence. Moreover, social and emotional competencies relate to the concept of resilience. In essence, all these terms (social competence, emotional competence, and resilience) capture one's capacity to adapt to stress (Masten & Curtis, 2000; Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). Some scholars advocate for the integration of these terms (Buckley, et al., 2003; Taub & Pearrow, 2005).

Taub & Pearrow (2005) define resilience as one's "capacity for adapting to change and stressful events in healthy and flexible ways." Resilience includes traits both internal to the individual and external, within the environment (Masten & Curtis, 2000; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). Internal and external resiliencies are deeply intertwined. For example, possessing an internal ability for self-regulation would likely assist in greater ability to connect with external resources. And vice versa, being in a family that adapts easily to stressful changes would help a child to feel secure and likely reduce anxious reactions. Hence, Pianta and Walsh (1998) call for increased recognition of resilience in systems, such as school classrooms, not just as a trait within some children. In the long run, this type of ecological approach to intervention reaps greater benefits more effectively than a simpler person-centered approach (Taub & Pearrow, 2005). Thus, interventions that combine high quality classroom environment and children's psychosocial strengths promote resilience (Maier, Vitiello, & Greenfield, 2012).

Because of the inter-related nature of social and emotional competencies and resilience, they often draw from each other's literatures (Buckley, et al., 2003; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). As discussed above, emotional competence falls under the social competence umbrella. This study joined social competence and resilience as a unified variable because together they enhance our understanding of each independently. Firstly,

while social competence is emphasized as an internal characteristic, coupling social competence with resilience recognizes the internal and external characteristics of social competence. Additionally, while resilience as a term is critiqued for being difficult to quantify, linking it with social competence encourages the reader to think of quantifiable social competence skills.

For these reasons, this study conceptualized social competence and resilience together. Focusing on resilience aligns with PYD theory's asset-based approach to understanding youth development (Buckley, et al., 2003). Rather than focusing on students' stress and struggles, social competence and resilience highlight students' abilities and strengths. The measure used in this study assesses "social competence and resilience" as a single concept because together they represent the how youth navigate stressful life situations (Nickerson & Fishman, 2009; Nickerson & Fishman, 2013).

Importance of social competence and resilience

Social competence and resilience are developmental assets that support youth, especially youth who may be exposed to trauma, chronic stress, poverty, or other risk factors (Masten & Curtis, 2000). Some may argue that experiencing life stressors may actually be necessary for a resilience response to occur. For youth with developmental risk factors, social competence and resilience act as protective factors by promoting a variety of positive outcomes. Socially competent and resilient youth have higher academic achievement (Elias & Haynes, 2008; Trentacosta & Izard, 2007). These findings were strongest for African American students (Elias & Haynes, 2008). At-risk youth's developmental trajectories can be improved with interventions that enhance their social competence and resilience. There may be multiple pathways between resilience

and academic achievement, but Trentacosta and Izard (2007) highlight the role of competencies improving youth's attentional skills. Social and emotional inputs are critical for academic success (Zins, et al. 2004).

While improving academic outcomes and narrowing the achievement gap drives many youth interventions, increasingly programs recognize and desire to provide wellrounded educational experiences that support youth's socio-emotional and 21st century skills and needs (Gabrieli, 2011). Social competence and resilience indicate good functioning in themselves, and so serve as a PYD outcome. Strength-based enrichment OST programs seek to prepare students' life skills by developing their competencies and resiliencies rather than focusing solely on improving test scores (Hughes, 2011). Part of these efforts involves preventing the onset or worsening of mental illness, which resilience helps to do (Masten & Curtis, 2000; Rutter & Sroufe, 2000). Overall, social competence and resilience promote positive youth development.

Programs designed to promote social competence and resilience

Within the field of OST and even within some school day programs, there are specialized Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs. SEL programs provide support and intervention across the entire OST programs and thus influence programs' socio-emotional climates (Battistich, et al., 2000; Taub & Pearrow, 2005). In a meta analysis of SEL programs in schools, Sklad, Diekstra, Ritter, Ben, and Gravesteijn (2012) found benefits in seven major categories: social skills, anti-social behavior, substance use, positive self-image, academic achievement, mental health, and prosocial behavior. Durlak and colleagues (2011) discuss how well implemented SEL programs have positive impacts on youths' attitudes, behaviors, and academic achievement. SEL in both

classroom and OST programming is a growing field and influences not only youth outcomes, such as social competence and resilience, but also the socio-emotional climate.

SEL programs can take a variety of formats but frequently involve working with teachers to improve the way in which they work with students (Brown, et al., 2010; Heller, et al., 2012; National Association of Boards of Education, 2013). Brown and colleagues found that teachers' personal socio-emotional functioning notably influenced their instructional quality and classroom climate. Moreover, they found that a targeted SEL program significantly improved the classroom climate, despite teacher influences. Heller and colleagues (2012) highlighted the positive effects of a mental health consultation with pre-school teachers. While most SEL programs work with teachers in some capacity, some programs offer a comprehensive revision to a school's or program's climate while others offer a more focused intervention.

Targeted SEL programs can be stand-alone programs or curriculums designed to teach specific skills or an intervention offered to only some segment of the school population (e.g. bullies). In one program, middle school students took an emotional competence skills course and demonstrated improvements both immediately and at their six month follow up, across a variety of domains including stress, anger management, risky behavior, work management and focus, and relationships with peers family and teachers (McCraty, et al., 1999). Students also learned to positively modulate their physiological responses to stress. In another program, called 4Rs, teachers integrate literacy and socio-emotional learning, resulting in effects in hostile attributional bias, aggressive interpersonal negotiation strategies, depression, teacher reports of attention skills, and aggressive and socially competent behavior (Jones, Brown, & Aber, 2011).

This integrative approach has strongest effects for students with the highest problem behaviors and the most aggressive children (Jones, et al., 2011; Jones, Brown, Hoglund, & Aber, 2010).

Universal SEL programs aim to provide support across the entire school or program (Taub & Pearrow, 2005) and can be considered as interventions to improve the overall socio-emotional climate context (Battistich, et al., 2000). Increasingly scholars and educators argue in support of this holistic approach as it aligns with ecological models (Pianta & Walsh, 1998). Pianta advocates for building resilience in systems not just in children, by directing efforts to improve naturally occurring interventions rather than adding additional programs that teach skills in isolation. Programs like the bullying program Naylor and Cowie (1999) describe limit their efficacy when they target a specific skill or population without appreciating the nuances of the setting in which the intervention is occurring. Additionally, targeted programs tend to utilize a deficit model and try to prevent problems, whereas universal programs promote competencies in all students. In this way, universal SEL programs align with enrichment and strength-based approaches to programming (Hawkins, Kosterman, Catalano, Hill, & Abbott, 2005; Taub & Pearrow, 2005).

The Responsive Classroom approach is one universal SEL program that serves an entire program population and accounts for environmental factors (Rimm-Kaufman & Chiu, 2007). Responsive classroom approach integrates social and academic learning and results in better outcomes for students. These outcomes include improved reading achievement, closer teacher-student relationships, pro-social skills, more assertiveness, and less fearfulness, even when controlling for family influences.

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Another SEL program that can be either targeted or universal is called Resolving Conflict Creatively (Brown, Roderick, Lantieri, & Aber, 2004; Selfridge, 2004). This program has positive impacts on the social and academic functioning of youth in the program (Selfridge, 2004). Notably, this program is more effective when implemented broadly (Selfridge, 2004). When implemented across entire programs longitudinally, Resolving Conflict Creatively shifts youths' developmental trajectories of both socioemotional wellbeing and academic achievement (Brown, et al. 2004).

In sum, SEL programs that teach social and emotional skills do not necessarily change behavior or help to engage students (Johnson, Poliner, & Bonaiuto, 2005). Interventions need to change the learning environment or socio-emotional climate, as children need informal opportunities to practice the skills they learn formally (Johnson, et al., 2005; Pianta & Walsh, 1998).

How socio-emotional climate promotes social competence and resilience

Positive, supportive socio-emotional climates that enhance children's psychosocial strengths promote resilience (Maier, et al., 2012). Components of students' learning environment or socio-emotional climate affect both mental health and academic outcomes (Ysseldyke, Lekwa, Klingbeil, & Cormier, 2012). Providing healthy socio-emotional climates is critical for children developing social competence (Heller, et al., 2012). Students perform best in environments that couple warmth and academic rigor in a supportive manner (Lee, et al., 1999). This type of comprehensively caring climate fosters social competence while appreciating an ecological perspective on youth development (Heller, et al., 2012; Wilson, et al., 2007). In fact, negative or threatening

socio-emotional climates can adversely impact students' achievement and development (Schram, 1971).

Several scholars discuss how socio-emotional climate promotes social competence and resilience by improving students' motivation and engagement. Roeser and colleagues (1998) found that students' perceptions of their school environment predicted their motivation, achievement, and emotional functioning. Similarly, Pianta and colleagues (2012) recognize how students' developmental trajectories change through engagement. When the school or program setting compels students into relationship and supports their growth, students naturally become more invested in that setting and its expectations – both academic and social.

Special relevance of OST programs

OST programs, especially enrichment and strengths-based programs, frequently have the promotion of PYD characteristics, such as social competence and resilience, as part of their mission. Engaging youth, particularly those at risk of low achievement, in these types of OST programs represents a critical prevention intervention in narrowing the achievement gap. The socio-emotional climates of OST programs not only deliver important content for fostering social competence and resilience, but also encourage students' engagement in the program. Omelicheva (2012) talks about the specific challenges of gaining engagement in summer learning programs and the importance of quality and climate. Motivating students and engaging them in OST programming is critical in order for students to reap the benefits of the intervention (Nichols, 2002).

While there is an established literature about the socio-emotional climates of school-day classrooms, a major contribution of this dissertation is an empirical profiling

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and conceptualization of the socio-emotional climates of OST programs. As discussed previously, Pianta's Teaching Through Interactions Framework highlights three types of support: emotional, instructional, and organizational. For OST programs, I hypothesized four domains of socio-emotional climate: (1) Structure and Predictability, (2) Teacher-Student Relationships, (3) Student-Student Relationships, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. In this study, the concept of Teacher-Student Relationships focused on whether a basic level of warmth and connection existed between teachers and students, paralleling Pianta's emotional support domain. However, the organizational and instructional dimensions of school classrooms are less relevant in the OST setting, and so were re-configured in my conceptualization. For instance, the relevant elements of classroom organizational support were contained in the Structure and Predictability dimension, reflecting students' experiences of routine and safety. Similarly, since enrichment-based OST programs have instructional goals distinct from traditional schoolday instruction, instructional influences of climate were either considered as part of the Teacher-Student Relationship or as part of Growth-Promoting Instruction.

In order to better understand the multiple dimensions of socio-emotional climate discussed in detail in previous sections, this study recognized that climate is co-created by teachers, students, administrators, and the larger context. This is especially true for OST programs, which, because of the limitations of traditional school-day instruction, are more social by nature. Previous scholars focused on school-day climate, fitting these complexities under the umbrella of Teacher-Student Relationships and failing to recognize the interactive nature of teachers and students in co-creating their context over time. Thus, while Teacher-Student Relationships certainly shape Student-Student

Relationships, Structure and Predictability, and Growth-Promoting Instruction, considering all four dimensions of climate distinctly allows space for transactional relationships between these dimensions. This means that Student-Student Relationships could influence Teacher-Student Relationships and vice versa. For instance, the relational dynamics among students may influence how a teacher approaches the group of students, just as a teacher's style may influence how students interact with each other (Brown, et al., 2010).

While some OST programs certainly provide academic instruction, these programs aim to promote positive youth development, including social competence and resilience (Blyth & LaCroix-Dalluhn, 2011). For instance, Growth-Promoting Instruction epitomizes the mission of enrichment-based OST programs seeking to narrow the achievement gap (Heyns, 1987; Hughes, 2011). For this reason, it is especially important to study how the socio-emotional climates of OST programs, such as the summer programs in this study, foster social competence and resilience.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Procedures and Participants

This study used secondary data analyses to implement a quantitative, descriptive and correlational research design. Participants included a sample of approximately 2,500 rising fourth grade students who attended one of 37 summer learning programs specially designed by the Wallace Foundation. The summer learning programs were funded and developed by the Wallace Foundation as part of a randomized control trial examining the impact of summer learning programs on reducing summer learning loss. Much of the literature discussed in Chapter Two highlights the socio-emotional climate of school-day programming. While there is good reason to think that the climate of OST programs would be distinct from school-day programs, there is likely more variability among OST programs than school-day programs (Farb & Matjasko, 2012). For example, OST programs differ on the degree to which academics are integrated as well as on the timing and structure of their program. The summer learning programs used in this study and designed by the Wallace Foundation with the support of the RAND Corporation were specifically intended to eliminate much of the variability among OST programs common in the field. In particular, by standardizing program elements such as timing, type, and amount of instructional content, this study compared relatively similar programs and thus has greater ability to isolate the mechanisms affecting outcomes.

Students from five districts across the United States were randomly assigned to treatment or control groups. The RAND Corporation, a research company with a specialization in educational research, designed and evaluated the experiment. RAND served as consultants to the Wallace Foundation in developing and standardizing the

summer learning programs, and also collected data to determine the influence of the summer learning programs. They helped to evaluate summer curriculum choices and communicated important ways to maintain consistency among programs and districts.

Students were recruited through a variety of methods in their local communities. All students were provided pamphlets with information about the summer learning program. These pamphlets provided program dates, times, bus information, waitlist, surveys and measures, and a detailed description of the specific program, including the balance between academic programming and enrichment programming. While the academic portion was standardized across programs and districts, different programs offered different enrichment activities, including sailing, hiking, arts, sports, swimming, and music. Many families were also approached by a community liaison who provided them more information about the study. These community liaisons were assigned to schools that had previously had trouble gaining parent involvement through paper methods of outreach. Students needed to be enrolled as third grade students in their local public school district. Students had to commit to attending the entire program and plan on being promoted to the fourth grade in the fall. All the districts continued to offer whatever pre-existing remedial summer instruction program they had developed for students who required additional instruction prior to promotion to the fourth grade.

This study focused on the experiences of students who were randomly assigned to attend one of the summer learning programs within their home district. Within each of the five districts, there were multiple programs. The Boston, Dallas, and Florida's Duval County districts had ten programs each. Pittsburgh and Rochester had four and three programs, respectively. There were thirty-seven programs in total. Each program, in

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turn, had multiple teachers. At some programs, students rotated between teachers who specialized in math, ELA, or a specific type of enrichment. At some programs, students stayed with the same teacher, who provided instruction in multiple subjects. While class sizes were relatively similar across programs, programs had autonomy in selecting the number of teachers and the variety of enrichment offerings. All programs were free-ofcharge for families.

Students from the various districts represented a range of social and economic backgrounds. Boston was mainly African American and Latino (41.8% and 40.9%, respectively). Dallas students were mainly Latino (78.2%). And Duval, Pittsburgh, and Rochester students were mainly African American (80%, 70%, and 66.9%, respectively). On average, 86.1% of students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch, 29.2% of students were English Language Learners (ELL), 41.5% were low achieving, and 11.7% of the students had Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) during the school year. See Appendix A for full demographic details across the five districts.

While some factors varied among individual programs, certain aspects of the summer learning programs were standardized across all programs and districts. Specifically, each program was required to provide at least one hour of math and at least one and a half hours of English Language Arts (ELA) daily. Additionally, every program was required to provide enrichment programming that involved some physical activity or interactive learning experience (e.g. swimming, nature education, music). Within each district, all programs used the same curricula. However, districts had some autonomy in curriculum choice in order to provide instruction in a manner consistent with how their students had been learning during the school year. Trials in previous summers ensured

that all programs in these districts were able to provide reasonably high quality summer programming. The two summers prior to this summer of data collection, each of these districts ran summer programs as trials. These trial summers allowed districts to practice outreach methods, to ensure that sites operated smoothly, and to work out logistical problems such as hiring teachers and transporting students. These trials also allowed the RAND Corporation to pilot and develop observation tools and surveys. By practicing with the trial summers, researchers were able to ensure as much standardization as possible among all programs and guarantee a baseline level of rigor and delivery of instructional content. For example, each program definitely provided at least one hour of math and one and a half hours of ELA daily.

The current study focused on the naturally occurring differences in experiences of students in the treatment group. Specifically, the study looked at how differences in the socio-emotional climates of the thirty-seven programs influenced the student's social competence and resilience in the fall following summer program attendance. The human participants were protected under the RAND Corporation Institutional Review Board. The data for this study were provided by RAND without any identifying information and were approved through an expedited review by Boston College's Institutional Review Board.

Trained observers collected data on classroom practices within the OST summer learning programs. Some of the data on these classroom practices were used in this dissertation to represent the programs' socio-emotional climates. The observation tool, as a whole, consisted of eight sections. The "overview section" primarily contained identifying information, such as district, program, and teacher attributes, but also

contained details about the number of students and the start time and end time of the lesson. The "class segments" section was a running log of what was happening throughout the entire class period using time stamps and descriptions and asking whether students were working independently, in pairs, or in groups. The "math" and "ELA" sections asked detailed questions that were specific to the instruction in that subject and the curriculum. For example, the ELA curriculum asked teachers to begin lessons with a brief informational read aloud, so the observation tool required the observer to note whether or not that happened. Similarly, the math curriculum came with specific worksheets, so the observers were responsible for silently checking that the worksheets corresponded to the curriculum. The "classroom practices" section asked observers to note whether or not specific activities that would mark students' engagement occurred. For example, "Redirect: In a major of cases where students were overtly off-task, teacher effectively redirected students back on task." The "desired practices" section required evidence of other desirable classroom practices that might be considered beyond the core responsibilities of a teacher, such as "Persist: the teacher (a) explicitly encouraged at least one student struggling with a particular task to persist at academic/content-related tasks that were difficult for them (e.g. exhortations to keep trying, you know you can do it, helping students stick with rather than guit a task, to stretch to a higher level than the one student currently performs at), or (b) explicitly taught students strategies to persist at tasks." The "undesired practices" section asked observers to mark when problematic situations arose, such as "Misbehavior: there was one or more flagrant instance of student misbehavior. This includes a physical fight or persistent bullying or persistent use of discriminatory or derogatory language." The final section, "overall reactions," asked

observers for short qualitative descriptions of their overall impressions of the class. The twenty-four items that were used for this dissertation to represent socio-emotional climate are listed in Appendix B. Six of these items (19-24) were from the "undesired practices" section of the larger observation tool. Unlike all the other items a "yes" on these items indicates a bad quality rather than a good quality. Thus, I planned to reverse code these six negative items.

All observers attended a week long training in order to reach consensus on how to use the observation tool designed by the RAND Corporation specifically for studying these summer learning programs. Observers, along with primary investigators of the study, spent the training week watching videos of different types of instruction, rating with the observation tool, and discussing responses. During this training week, descriptions for the items on the observation tool were tweaked in order to help remind observers of the precise meaning intended through this consensus process. Observers reached inter-rater agreement of at least 85% on all items, meaning that at least 85% of the observers rated the item the same for a given video. Items that did not attain at least 85% inter-rater agreement were removed from the tool. Observers and investigators ensured their continued alignment over the course of data collection through two methods. Primarily, observers across districts participated in periodic realignment by watching online videos of instruction and rating using the tool. While most observers remained in the same district throughout the summer, co-observations were also implemented throughout the summer. At times, observers from the same district would spend a day together conducting observations together to ensure agreement. Additionally, a handful of observers, including all of the primary investigators, would

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travel between districts to co-observe. This helped to ensure continued consistency and inter-rater agreement across the five districts. The students' fall classroom teachers completed a measure on each child's social competence and resilience in November following their participation in the summer program. The fall measure of students' social competence and resilience constitutes the dependent variable and is discussed in detail in the section titled Dependent Variable.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question One: In what ways are the socio-emotional climates of different summer programs similar and different from each other?

Hypothesis: I hypothesized four dimensions of socio-emotional climate emerging from my data: (1) Structure and Predictability, (2) Teacher-Student Relationships, (3) Student-Student Relationships, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. *Research Question Two:* What combination of socio-emotional climate dimensions predicts students' fall levels of social competence and resilience?

Hypothesis: Students who attended programs with more positive socio-emotional climates (that is, with higher ratings on each of the four dimensions) would have higher levels of social competence and resilience. The optimal socio-emotional climate would be high ratings across all dimensions. Because I needed to empirically determine whether that data fit into the four hypothesized dimensions of socio-emotional climate represented in Research Question One, detailed hypotheses about interactions between these dimensions were not fully appropriate. However, the literature suggested that the characteristics associated with Structure and Predictability might have been necessary but not sufficient for supporting positive youth development (Downer, et al., 2007). Thus, I

planned that once I empirically established the dimensions of socio-emotional climate, I would hypothesize that Structure and Predictability alone would not predict significantly higher levels of students' social competence and resilience. Additionally, I hypothesized that the type of climate that would most strongly predict high levels of social competence and resilience would be Growth-Promoting Instruction because theory suggests that this type of positive guidance promotes positive youth development (Denham & Weissberg, 2004).

Measures

Independent Variable

In this study the independent variable of interest was socio-emotional climate. For this study, socio-emotional climate meant the social and emotional experience of the children, co-created by teachers, peers, administration, and the larger environmental context in each of thirty-seven summer learning programs located across five districts within the United States. As described previously, I hypothesized that socio-emotional climate would consist of four major domains: (1) Structure and Predictability, (2) Teacher-Student Relationship, (3) Student-Student Relationships, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. These domains constituted the independent variables and will represent the overarching independent variable of socio-emotional climate. Specific rated items from the observer's tool are expected to fall within each of these four domains. Appendix B describes the full list of items from the observation tool. Observation ratings were collected for each individual class within a program. I planned to aggregate classroom level ratings for math, ELA, and enrichment classes to the

program level to provide a picture of each child's holistic experience of attending the summer learning program.

Structure and Predictability: This dimension of socio-emotional climate attempted to capture whether there was a routine that helped students to feel stable and secure in their summer program environment. Behavioral items observed as either present or not with "yes" or "no" ratings included items 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 21 from the observation tool described in detail in Appendix B. Appendix C lists the specific items for this dimension of socio-emotional climate: (Item 1) STATE GOAL – whether the teacher stated a goal or objective for the activity; (Item 3) ONTASK – whether the majority of students were on-task during the observation period; (Item 4) REDIRECT whether the teacher tried to re-direct students who became off-task; (Item 6) MONITOR ALL – whether the teacher circulated and sufficiently monitored students; and (Item 7) WELL-OILED – whether the class was considered "well-oiled;" and (Item 21) INTERRUPT – whether the teacher's efforts to discipline students interrupted the class session. In a "well-oiled" classroom, all students know what to do without needing extensive guidance, for example, completing their math and automatically taking out a book for silent reading. In combination, the presence of these six items would reflect a stable, well-managed summer program.

Teacher-Student Relationships: The Teacher-Student Relationship dimension of socio-emotional climate represented whether there was warmth and a positive connection between teachers and students. Eight items from the observation tool described in detail in Appendix B were hypothesized for this dimension of socio-emotional climate: (Item 5) PARTICIPATION – whether the teacher encourages the participation of all students;

(Item 10) LIKE_TEACHER – whether students explicitly show they like the teacher; (Item 12) LIKE_STUDENTS – whether the teacher likes the students; (Item 13) ENTHUSIASM – whether the students are enthusiastic; (Item 14) CONTENT – whether the teacher demonstrates authentic enthusiasm for the content and desire for the students to learn this content; (Item 19) DISRESPECTFUL – whether the teacher was disrespectful to students; (Item 22) TDISENGAGED – whether the teacher was disengaged because of factors that were within her control; and (Item 23) ADISENGAGED - whether an adult other than the teacher engaged in activities that distracted from students' learning. Taken as a whole, these items aim to capture whether a baseline of positive connection exists between teachers and students.

Student-Student Relationships: This dimension of socio-emotional climate tried to represent whether there were positive peer relationships. Experiencing supportive and caring relationships with a peer group provides a social opportunity that may not be easily accessible within the school year socio-emotional climate. Specifically, observation items outlined in Appendix C and described in detail in Appendix B included: (Item 8) RESPECT – whether students respect each other; (Item 9) FRIENDLY – whether students are friendly and verbally encourage each other; (Item 11) COLLABORATE – whether students have an opportunity to collaborate or work together on a project or activity; (Item 20) MISBEHAVIOR – whether there were one or more flagrant instances of misbehavior; and (Item 24) BORED – whether students appeared bored throughout the class. Characterizing the socio-emotional climate in terms of Student-Student Relationships would allow an understanding of the role of positive peer interactions in possibly promoting social competence. These five items attempted to

capture whether and to what degree pro-social and anti-social interactions occurred in the context of the program.

Growth-Promoting Instruction: The hypothesized growth-promoting instruction dimension of socio-emotional climate illustrated how a teacher or a program might exceed the basic expectations of delivering a safe and organized summer program to actually and actively promote social and emotional growth among the youth. Observation items in this dimension include: (Item 2) PURPOSE – whether the teacher stated a real world purpose for the activity; (Item 15) PERSIST – whether students were encouraged to persist on challenging tasks; (Item 16) SOCIALSKILLS – whether the teacher explicitly taught social skills; (Item 17) CHOICES – whether students had some degree of volition or choice in the program; and (Item 18) GROUP_GOAL – whether the students' activity was contributing to a larger group or community goal. These items reflected some of the principles of PYD, such as contribution and sense of purpose. Overall, the growth-promoting dimension of socio-emotional climate strived to depict programs that were exceptional in the degree to which they promoted social competence and resilience.

Dependent Variable

For this study, the dependent variable of interest was social competence and resilience. To be clear, because of the significant conceptual overlap between social competence and resilience when taken separately, this study considered social competence and resilience as one variable. Specifically, this was measured by the teachers' report on fall levels of social competence and resilience by completing a specialized version of the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA-RRE) for

each student (Woodland, Porter, & LeBuffe, 2011). The original DESSA, developed by researchers at The Devereux Center for Resilient Children, is a 72-item measure representing the child's social competence and resilience through eight subscales: optimistic thinking, self-management, goal-directed behavior, self-awareness, socialawareness, personal responsibility, decision-making, and relationship skills (Nickerson & Fishman, 2013). Only teachers, afterschool staff, or other providers who have regular contact with the child are qualified to complete the DESSA questionnaire on that child.

For the purposes of this study, the RAND Corporation worked closely with the creators of the DESSA to develop a shorter version of the DESSA called the DESSA-RRE. They created a measure consisting of 27 items with an overall internal consistency of 0.968, utilizing seven of the eight subscales (McCombs, Pane, Augustine, Schwartz, Martorell, & Zakaras, 2014). Notably, the DESSA creators had also previously created an eight-item DESSA-mini that demonstrated strong validity and reliability (Naglieri, Goldstein, & LeBuffe, 2010; Naglieri, LeBuffe, & Shapiro, 2011; Tsang, Wong, & Lo, 2011). However, because RAND planned to follow students longitudinally they required a more robust measure. In creating the DESSA-RRE, the creators used the same national sample on which they normed the original DESSA. While items from seven of the eight subscales were used in creating the DESSA-RRE, the creators cautioned that the DESSA-RRE should only be analyzed using the total score for each child as there are too few items within each subscale for stability. However, they did note that individual items could be examined by practitioners, such as teachers or OST providers working directly with youth, in order to use the data to better understand how to work with individual children.

Control Variables

A number of variables were used as control variables in this study, consisting of dosage and demographics including race, gender, whether the student is eligible for a free or reduced price lunch, whether the student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and whether the student is an English Language Learner (ELL). This information was collected at the start of the study, during the registration process with parents and from the district administrators. Specifically, these variables may influence the relationship between socio-emotional climate and the development of social competence and resilience. The most important control was a dosage variable representing the percent of summer program days the student attended. Theoretically, students who attend a good program more often would see the strongest results (Hawkins, et al., 2005). Thus, controlling for differential attendance was critical.

Appendix A provides demographic breakdown by districts among these control variables. While demographic variables are important to control for, they are categorical and therefore cannot fairly be used as constructs to explain the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Helms, 2006), meaning it would be inappropriate to use these variables as mediators or moderators in my analyses. However, considering the contextual and interaction-based nature of this research, individual social factors certainly contribute to one's experience of the socio-emotional climate. Thus, using these categorical variables as controls was critical to ensure that a students' male or female gender, for example, was not driving his or her level of social competence and resilience. Preliminary analyses discussed below would examine whether there were any significant differences between demographic groups.

Analytic Plan

Preliminary Analyses

My preliminary analyses involved data preparation and preliminary descriptive and correlational analyses. The mean and standard deviation would be reported for the DESSA-RRE measure of social competence and resilience. The DESSA-RRE measure would also be evaluated for violations of the regression assumptions such as normality, linearity, homoskedasticity, and independence of errors. Moreover, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for both the socio-emotional climate factors and the DESSA-RRE in order to examine the reliability of these measures. With the DESSA-RRE, it would be important to examine its reliability. Specifically, given that this was a new version of a well-established scale, the internal consistency would be especially important. I anticipated that this would provide an initial picture of how the various dimensions of socio-emotional climate were correlated. The data would be cleaned and coded appropriately for use.

I expected that items from the observation tool would require additional preparation involving reverse scoring some items and aggregating observations. For this socio-emotional climate variable, scores would need to be aggregated within each program. There were observations for the multiple classrooms within each program, but for a variety of reasons I decided to look at this at the program-level rather than the classroom-level. Approximately 22% of students had the same teacher for Math and ELA whereas the remainder rotated between teachers. Additionally, the data were complicated by the fact that not only did students have multiple teachers, but also teachers instructed multiple groups of students and groups were often combined.

Conceptually, this inter-mingling of students across classroom groups underscored the importance of considering the socio-emotional climate as a product of the entire program. Thus, the socio-emotional climate was best understood as the culture and environment experience at the summer program site as a whole.

I planned for this aggregation to result in a percentage of instances when each item was present at that site rather than a dichotomous "yes" or "no," which would imply a consistent presence or absence of certain criteria. For example, a score of 0.5 for PURPOSE would mean that 50% of the time teachers in that program stated a purpose for the lesson: if there were four observations at that program, during two observation periods the teacher stated a purpose and during two observation periods the teacher did not state a purpose. By aggregating in this way, there would be more variability to explain the differences between programs' socio-emotional climates. This would also be more consistent with reality, as it is unlikely that an individual item either never happened (e.g. "0") or happened 100% of the time (e.g. "1"). I planned to sum the percentage scores for each of the observation tool items to create socio-emotional climate variables, where higher scores would represent programs with higher levels, often more favorable, of that aspect of socio-emotional climate. There would be separate socioemotional climate variables for each dimension of climate resulting from the factor analysis, described below.

In addition, I planned to examine, through the first step of my regression analysis, any differences between groups based on the demographic variables in order to rule out demographics as influencing outcomes. These demographic variables were described previously and include race, gender, whether the student was eligible for a free or

reduced price lunch, whether the student had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and whether the student was an English Language Learner (ELL). For example, the first step of the regression functions like an ANOVA and would test whether the DESSA-RRE scores were significantly different for youth from different racial backgrounds. Similarly, this would test group differences of social competence and resilience as measured by the DESSA-RRE based on gender, whether the student was eligible for a free or reduced price lunch, whether the student had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and whether the student was an English Language Learner (ELL). If differences existed, then this was accounted for in further analyses by leaving the statistically significant demographics variables in later models. Because the independent variable, socio-emotional climate, was a program-level rather than individual-level variable, it was not appropriate to use an ANOVA or other analysis to examine the role of individual demographic factors influencing the overall climate.

Main Analyses

In order to examine my first research question related to profiling the socioemotional climate of summer programs, I proposed conducting factor analysis. Research Question One stated "in what ways are the socio-emotional climates of different summer programs similar and different from each other?" and hypothesized four dimensions of socio-emotional climate: (1) Structure and Predictability, (2) Teacher-Student Relationships, (3) Student-Student Relationships, and (4) Growth-Promoting Instruction. While conceptually I hypothesized these four dimensions of socio-emotional climate, exploratory factor analysis would examine whether the items from the observation tool were statistically related within each dimension and whether each dimension was

sufficiently independent from each other. Assuming the factor analysis resulted in separate dimensions or clusters among the socio-emotional climate observation data, then I proposed creating corresponding subscales out of the socio-emotional climate items, even if these factor groupings came out differently than hypothesized. For example, there might be a Structure and Predictability subscale, a Teacher-Student Relationships subscale, a Student-Student Relationships subscale, and a Growth-Promoting Instruction subscale. Correlations of these sub-scales with each other and the DESSA-RRE measure would also be reported.

Research Question Two looked at how differences at the program-level in terms of socio-emotional climate predicted differences at the student-level in terms of social competence and resilience. Assuming that there was sufficient variance between programs' socio-emotional climates, I planned to use Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to examine this research question. Specifically, Research Question Two asked, "what combination of socio-emotional climate dimensions predicts students' fall levels of social competence and resilience?" Anticipating that the factor analysis in Research Question One would likely not produce results exactly matching my proposal, I planned to continue with Research Question Two as long as there were indeed relevant and statistically appropriate dimensions resulting from the factor analysis. The student-level dependent variable was students' fall scores on the DESSA-RRE, measuring their levels of social competence and resilience. Also at the student-level were the demographic control variables. The program-level variable was socio-emotional climate. This was explored in two separate manners: the first with an overall composite for socio-emotional climate and the second with separate variables for each of the dimensions of socio-

emotional climate resulting from the factor analysis. Thus, the first model examined whether students who attended summer learning programs with an overall more positive socio-emotional climate had higher levels of social competence and resilience, when controlling for students' demographic information and attendance levels. The second model similarly controlled for demographic information, but considered the four dimensions of socio-emotional climate (based upon the results of the factor analysis in Research Question One) and examined whether attending summer programs with certain characteristics of socio-emotional climate differently predicted social competence and resilience.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 reports the demographic information about the students who attended at least one day of a summer learning program and were contained in the sample for this study. Eighty five percent of students qualified for free or reduced price lunch, 28.4% of students were English Language Learners, and 12.4% of students had individualized education plans during the school year prior to summer program attendance. Fifty percent of students identified as African American, 37% as Latino, 8% as White, 3% as Asian American, and 2% as Other. In later analyses, White, Asian, and Other were combined into a master Other group which represented 13% of the sample.

While the majority of the sample identified as African American or Latino, Table 1 shows how these distributions varied by district. Notably, Dallas had more students who identified as Latino whereas Duval County, Pittsburgh, and Rochester were predominantly African American. Attendance varied by district. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) demonstrated that these differences were statistically significant with Dallas, Pittsburgh, and Rochester having the weakest attendance (F= 19.08). Boston and Duval County had higher average attendance, 80% and 84%, respectively. On the other hand, Dallas, Pittsburgh, and Rochester had similar more moderate attendance levels, 69%, 69%, and 70%, respectively. Because of this difference, attendance was initially included as a control variable.

The primary measure and dependent variable, Social Competence and Resilience from the DESSA-RRE was relatively normally distributed (M = 75.8, SD = 20.9, min =

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3, max = 108). The distribution was slightly skewed so that fall-classroom teachers more generously reported high scores, indicating that a higher proportion of students had higher levels of Social Competence and Resilience. This is common for this type of measure and consistent with a funnel or tiered approach to understanding student functioning. For example, the American School Counseling Association's multi-tiered model expects the majority of students to function well and be considered low-risk (American School Counseling Association, 2012). Thus, rather than expecting a normal distribution of student's social competence and resilience, it is reasonable to expect that the majority of students would be high functioning as indicated by high scores on the DESS-RRE. A tapering amount, consistent with ASCA's funnel-shaped tiered model, of students would have low levels of social competence and therefore be considered more at-risk.

Constructing Socio-emotional Climate Variable

In developing a quantitative variable for socio-emotional climate, I engaged in a series of analyses to understand how items best grouped together into factors or dimensions. I began with an exploratory factor analysis including all the items from the observation tool. I ran two different types of analyses, both Principal Components Analysis and Primary Axis Factoring with oblique and orthogonal rotations, and both approaches produced nine-factor solutions with inconclusive scree plots, significant crossloadings, and factor groupings with limited qualitative meaning. For these reasons, I needed to reduce the number of items in my factor analysis and focus my analytic approach.

There are different approaches to removing items, and I decided to focus on identifying weak items (Clark & Watson, 1995; Gorsuch, 1997). Because there were only 37 programs, items that did not occur frequently created a challenge in generating consistent factor groupings. Thus, in order to identify and remove weak items from my socio-emotional climate measure, I dropped items from the observation tool that had less than 10% of responses. For example, less than 10% of observations depicted unsafe environments (UNSAFE). Through this process 11 items were identified as low-frequency and therefore less helpful in describing the quality of programs' socio-emotional climate. These 11 items were PURPOSE, PARTICIPATION, GROUP_GOAL, RESPECT, ADISENGAGED, DISRESPECTFUL, INTERRUPT, MISBEHAVIOR, NOMATERIALS, TDISENGAGED, and UNSAFE.

Of these 11 low-frequency items, seven of them were "negative" or reversescored items. This meant that rather than representing a positive characteristic of socioemotional climate, these seven items represented a negative characteristic such as a disrespectful teacher or students' misbehavior. This removed all of the "negative" items from the observation tool except for BORED. Because of this, I also removed the eighth "negative" item, BORED, because it behaved differently than the positively scored items, as it had observers rate from a different perspective and required reverse scoring. As a result of this step, the factor analysis had much stronger loadings and better communalities. In the end, 12 items, including "negative" and low-frequency items, were removed including PURPOSE, PARTICIPATION, GROUP_GOAL, RESPECT, ADISENGAGED, DISRESPECTFUL, INTERRUPT, MISBEHAVIOR, NOMATERIALS, TDISENGAGED, UNSAFE, and BORED. This, in essence, removed
from the measure low frequency or "weak items" whose limited occurrence did not provide sufficient information for factor grouping.

After removing these weak items, I conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on the remaining 14 items, which included 627 observations (Table 2). The observation to item ratio was approximately 45:1, which is adequate for an EFA (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was .730, indicating adequate sampling and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant (p < .001), indicating the correlation matrix was appropriate for an EFA. I allowed the analysis to extract factors with an eigenvalue greater than one, which resulted in four factors. While there was some crossloading of items, the crossloadings were only with items belonging to the third factor. Extraction communalities ranged from 0.20 to 0.74. Factor correlations ranged from 0.047 to 0.35, indicating that factors did not share more than 4.6% of the variance.

Factor 1 had three items, factor 2 had three items, factor 3 had six items, and factor 4 had two items. Factor 1 loadings ranged from .66 to .85, factor 2 from .70 to .81, factor 3 from .44 to .69, and factor 4 from .62 to .81. The final four-factor solution accounted for 52.1% of the shared variance. Initial eigenvalues for factors 1 to 4 were 3.28, 1.57, 1.35, and 1.09, and accounted for 23.45%, 11.22%, 9.62%, and 7.77% of the variance, respectively. The first three factors demonstrated strong reliability scores (0.85, 0.74, 0.73). Factor 4 had a weaker reliability (0.39), which was expected considering it depicts the relationship between two items, each with only two possible outcomes. The means and standard deviations of each factor are reported in Table 3. After examining the factors against the detailed item descriptions listed in Appendix A and pulling for

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core themes from the item groupings, I concluded that factor 1 assessed Warmth and Personalism, factor 2 assessed Organization, factor 3 assessed Growth-Promoting Instruction, and factor 4 assessed Resolve and Focus. In this way, the four dimensions of socio-emotional climate can be referred to as GROW: G – Growth-promoting Instruction, R – Resolve and Focus, O – Organization, and W – Warmth and Personalism.

I conducted this EFA using Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with a Promax rotation, which is a type of oblique rotation. PCA includes more variance than other methods of EFA, which was especially beneficial for this dataset. Variance in this dataset for socio-emotional climate was limited by the structure of responses/observations in data collection. Specifically, all observation items had only two possible outcomes (i.e., "yes" this item occurred during the observation period and "no" this item did not occur during the observation period) rather than a more differentiated scale like a Likert measure. Therefore, it was important to include as much variance as possible in the analyses.

While the solution from the PCA with a Promax rotation was strongest for this dataset, in order to achieve model convergence, I explored other methods for EFA, which produced similar results. This was particularly important as some scholars believe PAF is more rigorous than PCA and similarly at times Varimax is viewed as preferable over a Promax rotation (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Given the limitations of these data, achieving model convergence strengthened my confidence in the factor solutions. Notably, both PAF with a Promax or oblique rotation and PAF with a Varimax or orthogonal rotation generated the same four-factor solution and item groupings. However when I used PAF, the communalities which represent the variance one item

shares with all the other items were very low. With PCA this was less of an issue because this extraction method includes error variance. Thus, because my items were all dichotomous, I used PCA over PAF as my extraction method. I also considered other rotations on the PCA solution, specifically PCA with a Varimax or orthogonal rotation. This rotation also produced the same four-factor solution and item groupings as PCA with a Promax rotation. This indicates convergence of the model. However, the oblique Promax rotation allowed the factors to correlate with each other, which was consistent with theory and my hypotheses that the dimensions of socio-emotional climate would be both conceptually and statistically related. In this way, a Promax rotation was a better fit with my theory. While the communalities, eigenvalues, and correlations varied with these different extraction methods and rotations, the four factors and the items belonging to each factor were identical among all these methods. While there are weaknesses to this dataset, the convergence of these factor solutions indicates construct validity.

Secondary Analyses

While I had hypothesized a different factor grouping, the actual factor structure (GROW) demonstrated sufficient face validity and support from the literature (see additional discussion in Chapter Five). Thus, the GROW factor structure that emerged in Research Question One analyses was applied to the following analyses for Research Question Two. As a first step in using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to explore Research Question Two, I created an Unconditional Model. Unfortunately, the results of the Unconditional Model suggested that this analytic approach, HLM, did not work for this dataset. Specifically, an Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) of 2% signified there was insufficient variance due to nesting. An ICC of 2% meant that only 2% of the

variance in the student-level outcome variable of social competence and resilience was a result of group-level nesting or differences between their summer programs.

Exploring this limited variance even further, I proceeded with the standard second step of creating a Preliminary Conditional Model containing the demographic variables. The demographic variables captured almost the entire ICC. This meant that the demographic variables explained the majority of the already limited nesting effects or differences between programs, leaving no variance in social competence and resilience for the socio-emotional climate variable to explain. Because there was no variance to explain, HLM was not an appropriate approach with these data to understanding how socio-emotional climate influenced student-level difference in social competence and resilience.

Further Analyses

Because there were very little nesting effects and HLM was not appropriate, I conducted Hierarchical Linear Regression (HLR) to explore the relationship between my independent and dependent variables: the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate and social competence and resilience, respectively. In this way, I was able to explore Research Question Two to some extent, although not in the ideal manner. Table 3 presents the correlations among social competence and the GROW measures. The major difference between HLM and HLR is that HLR will consider all the variables at the student-level, whereas HLM would have allowed me to examine climate as a program-level variable. However, because the programs were so similar and variance among programs was so small, HLM was not statistically appropriate. Further, having explored HLM first and finding no effects due to nesting, the limitations of HLR were mitigated

and HLR became the preferred method of analysis for Research Question Two. My hypotheses that more positive socio-emotional climates would predict higher levels of social competence and resilience remained the same.

Thus, HLR analyses were used to test whether the dimensions of socio-emotional climate, represented by the model GROW, predicted student's fall-levels of social competence and resilience more strongly than demographics and attendance alone. Results are reported in Table 4. The Preliminary Model explored how the demographic covariates and the attendance variable predicted the dependent variable of social competence and resilience. The Preliminary Model was statistically significant ($R^2=0.11$). $p < 0.001, f^2 = 0.13$). Demographics included in this analysis were age, whether the student had an individualized education plan, gender, English Language Learner status, whether the student qualified for free or reduced price lunch, and race variables. Attendance, age, ELL status, and the Other race variable were non-significant. Because of this, these variables, except for the Other race variable, were removed as covariates from all subsequent analyses. Because the majority of the sample was African American, only dummy codes for the Asian, Latino, Other and White race variables were included to control for race in the regression. By excluding the dummy code for African American students implied that the coefficients represented a comparison of Asian vs. African American students, for example. The Other variable needed to remain in the analyses in order to accurately examine the remaining race variables.

The Main Model looked at how socio-emotional climate predicted social competence and resilience. For this, I simply added the four dimensions of socio-emotional climate in Step 2. In this way, the demographic covariates and attendance variable were entered in

Step 1 and the socio-emotional climate variables were entered in Step 2. Social competence and resilience was the dependent variable. Both the overall model for Model 2 and the change in R-squared between Model 1 and Model 2 were statistically significant ($R^2=0.12$, p<0.001, $f^2=0.14$; $\Delta R^2=0.005$, p=0.007, $f^2=0.01$, respectively).

The Beta values for the four dimensions of socio-emotional climate varied. Notably, two were negative and two were positive. Growth-promoting Instruction and Warmth (B=3.02 and 0.33, respectively) were positive, while Organization and Resolve and Focus (B=-1.92 and -3.49, respectively) were negative. This indicated that higher levels of Growth-Promoting Instruction and Warmth predicted higher levels of social competence and resilience, whereas higher levels of Organization and Resolve and Focus predicted lower levels of social competence and resilience. However, because of the assumption of independence of predictor variables in regression, Model 2 did not account for the fact that some dimensions of climate may be more effective when coupled with other dimensions of climate. These dimensions of climate may interact with each other. For example, the level of Organization might influence whether students are able to experience Warmth and positive regard in the classroom. Warmth without Organization might less effectively promote social competence and positive socio-emotional climate, whereas a well organized classroom could potentially bolster the positive effects of Warmth on students' social competence and resilience. For this reason, I decided to follow-up on this by creating interaction terms for the dimensions of socio-emotional climate.

One of the fundamental assumptions of regression analyses is independence of variables. While it is often difficult to truly have independent variables in social

sciences, interaction effects are one tool for recognizing and evaluating how variables might relate to each other either synergistically or antagonistically to affect the dependent variable. While the four dimensions of socio-emotional climate do not have significant cross-loadings among items, conceptually these dimensions are related to each other and likely influence each other's efficacy. For example, Growth-Promoting Instruction might be better received when coupled with Warmth. Certainly, the literature on climate indicates that academic press or high expectations are received positively only when coupled with warmth or social support. Further, that some individual GROW factors had negative Beta values and others had positive yet the overall model was positive, indicates that these GROW factors likely interact with each other in some way. Complex relationships and non-linear pathways of the GROW factors toward promoting social competence and resilience are probable.

In order to examine how the different elements of socio-emotional climate interact with each other and in turn influence social competence and resilience, interaction terms for the dimensions of socio-emotional climate were added as Step 3 to the Main Model. Two-way interaction terms were created so that each of the four dimensions of socioemotional climate was allowed to interact with the other three dimensions of climate. This created six interaction terms (Warmth x Organization, Growth x Organization, Resolve x Organization, Warmth x Growth, Resolve x Growth, and Warmth x Resolve). The demographic covariates and attendance variable were entered in Step 1, the socioemotional climate variables were entered in Step 2, and the interaction terms were entered in Step 3. Social competence and resilience was the dependent variable. The overall model, including all three steps was statistically significant ($R^2=0.12$, p<0.001,

 f^2 =0.14) Additionally, the change in R-squared between Step 1 and 2, as discussed above, (ΔR^2 =0.005, p=0.007, f^2 =0.01) was statistically significant. However, the change in R-squared between Step 2 and 3 (ΔR^2 =0.003, p=0.30, f^2 =0.002) was non-significant. Effect sizes were calculated from R-squared (Soper, 2012; Cohen, 1988). The Beta values for the six interaction terms varied. Specifically, three were negative (Warmth x Organization, Growth x Structure, and Warmth x Resolve; B=-2.13, -5.24, -7.7, respectively) and three were positive (Resolve x Organization, Warmth x Growth, and Resolve x Growth; B=11.58, 0.88, 2.40, respectively).

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This Chapter begins by discussing the results to Research Question One. Subsequently, it explains the results of the analyses with regard to Research Question Two. Following this, limitations of the study are outlined. Implications and future directions for both Counseling Psychologists and OST Providers are discussed at length before some brief concluding thoughts.

Research Question One

This study found that four dimensions described the socio-emotional climate of summer learning programs: Growth-promoting Instruction, Resolve and Focus, Organization, and Warmth (GROW). OST programs serve similar students as school day programs, but have different goals, structure, and requirements (Dessoff, 2011; Hughes, 2011; Smink, 2012). Thus, not surprisingly, the socio-emotional climates of OST programs have some parallels to and some distinctions from school day programs' socioemotional climates. Having identified these four dimensions of GROW through this study it will help us to understand how to augment the potential of OST programs.

Notably, the results of this factor analysis found a major parallel to the research on school day literature for which the hypotheses had not adequately accounted. The literature on socio-emotional climate of school day programs centered on two overarching qualities: academic press and warmth or personalism (Lee, et al., 1999; Stone, et al., 2005). Academic press, or having high expectations for students and pushing them towards success, appeared in the Resolve and Focus factor in this study. Resolve and Focus included only two items, STATE_GOAL and PERSIST. Appendix C has the full list of items grouped by dimension from the factor analysis. While these

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items are different from academic press in that they do not explicitly capture the teacher's level of expectations for students, they are closely related in their focus on goals. A teacher who is guiding students to persist when they are struggling likely believes that the students can succeed through effort. Similarly, stating a goal and the skills a student needs communicates positive expectations about the teacher's longer-term vision for students' success. While academic press parallels the Resolve and Focus dimension, in the OST setting goal directedness and persistence is not always about academics. Thus, when considering a term for this concept in OST, Resolve and Focus better encompasses both academics and performance expectations embedded in extracurricular activities. This factor has important implications for OST showing that warmth and caring are not enough and that teaching persistence and focusing on goals is critical and communicates the teacher's belief in the child's potential.

The other important parallel to the school day literature was the Warmth factor. Consistent with the school day literature relationships between teachers and students and relationships among peers come together into a general category of personalism or warmth (Brackett, et al., 2011). While PYD theory values the contributions of both teachers and peers to the child's development, the transactional nature of these relational environmental influences was such that together they create the experience of relational warmth. These aspects of climate may interact so closely that they become one overall experience of warmth (Brown, et al., 2010). For example, perhaps a teacher being kind and supportive towards students encourages students to be kind to each other. Similarly, a teacher is likely going to have more patience and warmth with attachment to students.

Ultimately, the Warmth factor contained three fairly concise items: FRIENDLY, LIKE_TEACHER, and LIKE_STUDENTS. FRIENDLY captured the relationship between students. LIKE_TEACHER captured the students' perspective on their teacher. And LIKE_STUDENTS captured teachers' perspective on their students. Some of the related items, not dropped from the factor analysis, ended up as part of the Growth-promoting Instruction factor, which is discussed next. Specifically, some items had crossloading with the Warmth dimension, such as ENTHUSIAM and CONTENT discussed below. Because of the close conceptual relationship of the dimensions of socio-emotional climate, cross-loadings were expected. Relatedly, extraction communalities ranged from 0.20 to 0.74, which would be considered relatively weak. The process described in Chapter Four of achieving model convergence by triangulating the factor results with multiple approaches aims to mitigate some of this weakness. However, the Warmth factor was the first factor resulting from the factor analysis and therefore was the strongest statistically giving it greater conceptual credence.

Because of the special role of OST programs in educating children outside of school day curriculums, one of the major characteristics of socio-emotional climate this study sought to capture was Growth-promoting Instruction. Simply, are OST programs teaching students social skills and related tools for resiliency? Are they actually doing something special and intentional to foster well-rounded and successful children? Not surprisingly, SOCIALSKILLS and CHOICES factored strongly into Growth-promoting Instruction. SOCIALSKILLS literally indicated that the teacher explicitly taught a social skill. CHOICES reflected that the teacher provided students the opportunity to exercise

healthy independence and problem-solving skills by choosing an aspect of their approach to an assignment.

Surprisingly, some items that factored into the Growth-Promoting Instruction dimension were characteristics of a teacher's approach that could have been considered essential rather than above-and-beyond. However, upon reflection and review of the clarifying details articulated in Appendix A and available to all observers rating programs, these items (MONITOR ALL, CONTENT, and ENTHUSIASM) are aspirational for many teachers and were specifically designed to be a "high bar" that not every teacher would achieve. Rather than a teacher simply showing an interest in the material, CONTENT required that the teacher be really passionate about the material, perhaps bringing in materials from home. Similarly, ENTHUSIASM in students was more than a basic interest but intended as intense enthusiasm, such as jumping out of their seats excitement. And finally, in order to count as having MONITOR ALL students, a teacher had to check in individually with every child. Not surprisingly, this kind of personal touch exceeds basic instructional practices and helps children to feel extra special. This extra special care and enthusiasm translate as Growth-promoting Instruction because it helps to build students' sense of worth. The students come to believe they are valued and literally seen as individuals while also feeling a part of a special class covering content the teacher convincingly communicates as exciting and important. These are certainly the special and intentional characteristics belonging to exemplary OST programs.

The final item in Growth-promoting Instruction was COLLABORATE. COLLABORATE represented students interacting with each other in constructive and

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appropriate ways. Students' collaboration with each other is a product of the way teachers structures their classrooms and instruction. Teachers who recognize the importance of teaching teamwork and group problem solving skills probably offer more of these collaborative opportunities to their students. This kind of intentional teaching practice is reflective of teachers who are aware of the larger goals of OST education (e.g. teaching social skills). Thus, upon deeper reflection it follows that this item would group best as Growth-promoting Instruction.

The fourth GROW dimension of OST socio-emotional climates is Organization. Specifically, Organization had three core items: ONTASK, REDIRECT, and WELL_OILED. This represented programs where students were largely working on the assigned activity, teachers effectively redirected students, and the class overall functioned like a "well-oiled" machine. Of note, the item MONITOR_ALL, because it was a "high bar" or difficult to achieve item, grouped best with Growth-promoting Instruction but had some crossloading with the Organization dimension (See Table 2).

While previous models of climate (e.g. Pianta's model) conceptualize Classroom Organizational Climate as distinct from Classroom Emotional Climate, this study focused on emotions and how a program's Organization contributed to students' feelings of safety and therefore to their emotional experience of attending the program. As such, a dimension of Organization was readily apparent through the factor analyses. However, the overall sentiment of this finding does not contradict Pianta's model. Rather these findings and Pianta's model complement each other. Two closely-related but respective disciplines (education and counseling psychology) examined two closely-related settings (school-day and OST). Thus, he looked at teachers' classroom practices and this study

looked at students' social and emotional experiences. His measures are significantly more robust, detailed, and validated through multiple research studies over many years. Whereas the three items here only capture a fraction of the intent of organizational climate, either in school-day or OST settings.

In sum, factor analysis answered Research Question One by finding the four GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate: Growth-promoting Instruction, Resolve and Focus, Organization, and Warmth. While there were modifications from the originally hypothesized dimensions, the results had strong face validity and were consistent with the literature. In fact, the results of the factor analysis actually incorporated more of the literature than my hypotheses.

Research Question Two

While factor analysis did discover four factors of socio-emotional climate (i.e., GROW), it is yet unclear whether these factors are positive influences on students. The second phase of analysis attempted to examine how these factors supported students' developing social competence and resilience. Unfortunately, due to limitations of the data, results were inconclusive with regards to how these four GROW dimensions of climate impact outcomes for youth. While it is clear that climate is involved, the results open up new questions and leave room for future research.

The GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate do explain a statistically significant amount of the variance in social competence and resilience, above and beyond the demographics control variables. However, the power of this change in R-squared was relatively weak and the Betas of each of the dimensions varied. This indicates that there is something powerful enough about the socio-emotional climate to affect outcomes for

youth, but does not explain which dimensions are having a positive influence and which dimensions are having a negative influence. The mixed directionality of the GROW dimensions likely implies that the relationship among these dimensions is not straightforward. Specifically, the Organization and Resolve and Focus dimensions had negative Betas. The research literature discusses how academic press without warmth or social support can negatively influence climate. The directionality of these individual dimensions may be related to this. However, this model only looked at the four dimensions in combination. In essence, this treated the four dimensions as one overall concept or variable as we can only see the increase in R-squared from the combination of the dimensions.

Thus, the most likely explanation for the efficacy of the overall model but mixed directionality of the individual dimensions is that the efficacy of each of the four GROW dimensions' depends on the presence or absence of the other dimensions. For example, Resolve and Focus is most effective when coupled with Warmth. Or even further, perhaps Resolve and Focus is most effected with lots of Warmth and Organization but with lower levels of Growth-promoting Instruction. This is a layer of complexity that is likely present in the real life experience of students attending summer learning programs, but is difficult to capture statistically. Specifically, Hierarchical Linear Regression assumes independence among all predictor variables. This assumption of independence is not really practical for the dimensions of such an interdependent construct as socio-emotional climate. Interaction terms approximated the real life experience of dimensions of socio-emotional climate influencing each other. This also served to try to overcome

the limitations of the assumption of independence. And so, Model 3 included the twoway interaction terms for the four dimensions of climate, six interaction terms in total.

Adding the interaction terms did not explain any additional variance in social competence and resilience. While it is likely that in real life the dimensions of socioemotional climate influence each other, there are several possible reasons these results were non-significant. First, there was limited variance in four dimensions of climate due to the dichotomous nature of data collection discussed previously. Secondly, adding the interaction terms does not truly overcome the assumption of independence as the interaction terms are also entered as presumably independent predictors in the model. Thirdly, there was only sufficient sample to include two-way interactions. Given that there are four dimensions of socio-emotional climate, it is quite reasonable that the appropriate interaction terms might be three-way or four-way interactions. And fourthly, the whole method of HLR was a second choice approach to analyzing these data. HLM would have been more adept at isolating distinctions between program level and student level influence. However, even HLM would have assumed independence among variables. Had I had more than 37 sites that were more distinct from each other, a cluster analysis might have allowed me a better method for exploring the different "types" of programs based on these four GROW dimensions. For example, a cluster analysis might conclude that the majority of programs are high on Organization and Warmth but low on the other dimensions.

Returning to discussing the mixed results of Model 2, a second alternative explanation is that the relationship between socio-emotional climate and the outcomes for youth in terms of social competence and resilience is not linear. HLR examines linear

relationships. With a greater number of programs in the sample, alternative non-linear relationships could be explored such a parabolic, cubic, or exponential. The pathways among these constructs are likely complex and may not lend themselves to quantitative qualification. For instance, students' level of social competence and resilience prior to attending the program may have influenced the climate of the program (Elias & Haynes, 2008). Given that these four GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate are newly found as a result of factor analysis in Research Question One, it may be most fruitful to conduct additional qualitative studies based on these four dimensions to better understand the unique elements of the climates of OST programming. Certain elements may be effective at promoting social competence and resilience, but this may vary by characteristics of the individual student or the type of program. Moreover, since social competence develops by interpreting environmental cues (Dodge, et al., 1986; Downer, et al., 2010), perhaps if the environment were not powerful enough or novel enough growth would be limited.

The goal of every OST program is to provide the environment or climate in which students can achieve their optimal functioning, but there may or may not be one set of climate characteristics that directly link to specific outcomes across all youth. The GROW dimensions may promote social competence and resilience, but Organization and Resolve and Focus may have been negative here but had a positive result on a different, unmeasured outcome such as academic achievement (Pianta, et al., 2008). Similarly, some climates might produce positive behaviors in the current moment but could have negative effects on students in the long run. As an illustration, an organized but harsh teacher might have a compliant and seemingly well-mannered classroom, but over time

that climate may negatively impact students' self-esteem or discourage their creativity and independent thinking skills.

In running the three HLR models, the largest proportion of variance in social competence and resilience was explained by the demographic variables. In this way, Model 1 demonstrates a lot about what is going on for youth enrolled in these summer programs. Students' life experiences and circumstances up until the point of the intervention greatly influence the skills and resources they have. These demographic variables serve as a proxy for these experiences and circumstances. As discussed extensively in Chapter One, the opportunities outside of public education vary tremendously between low-income and high-income youth. These programs may be wonderful, but the students bring themselves into the programs. It is unlikely that any one intervention or summer program could compensate for years of difference in a matter of weeks. So inevitably, these demographics persisted as a significant predictor of youth outcomes.

It is important to note that it is not students' race or IEP status that is predicting their level of social competence. While often independent variables in a regression are considered as malleable variables that can change to achieve the desired effect in the outcome variable, demographic variables cannot be changed. Similarly, an individual's identification with a given racial group is not causing their social competence. In the case of these data, and many other social science data, these demographic variables serve as a proxy for a pre-test. This research study did not include a pre-test of students' social competence and resilience. The lack a true pre-test limits the power to detect change in students' social competence and resilience due to the intervention. However, social

functioning and mental health are closely related to environmental and economic risk and protective factors. Sadly, societal imbalances of power and privilege create circumstances resulting in youth from communities of color having higher rates of poverty and stress and therefore less socio-emotional support and higher rates of mental illness. In this way, demographic variables can serve only as controls and should never be considered true predictors (Helms, Henze, Satiani, & Mascher, 2005).

In conclusion, while it may seem small, the change between Model 1 and Model 2 was significant. This means that the socio-emotional climate of summer programs does predict change in social competence over demographics. There is potential for the climates of summer programs and afterschool programs to make a difference in children's wellbeing. OST providers are trying to offer a positive climate and experience that combats the disadvantages that many youth have in other domains of their life, which was captured by the demographic variables in Model 1. While the details as to which aspects of climate are positive under which circumstances requires further study, it is clear that the climate of OST programs can make a difference. Because social competence has been linked to longer-term success (Elias & Haynes, 2008), these results have potential implications for more in-depth studies.

Limitations

While the original hypothesized factor structure or dimensions or socio-emotional climate had credence given the conceptualization and review of the literature, there were several limitations that influenced the outcomes. The first limitation to this study's approach to examining the dimensions of socio-emotional climate was that the approach was quantitative rather than qualitative. At its core, this study attempted to quantify and

name an aspect of OST programming that has yet to be well defined qualitatively within these types of settings that vary greatly. The available quantitative data reflected an operational definition of socio-emotional climate construct. While being able to articulate the aspects of programming that are most beneficial to students is important for future program development, the socio-emotional climate of this setting represents a relatively new research domain that requires more systematic conceptualization and organizational assessment for sophisticated quantitative measurement. Some previous qualitative studies looked at specific aspects of the climate of OST programs or of students' experiences at those programs, but there was not a holistic qualitative evaluation of the socio-emotional climates of OST programs. Perhaps a rigorous qualitative study like that would have been helpful in identifying, explaining, and theorizing about the dimensions of socio-emotional climates.

The second limitation of this study is the unexpected organization of that the factors of socio-emotional climate, in part due to a theoretical flaw. While there is significant overlap between this study's initial hypothesized dimensions and the GROW dimensions, the hypothesized dimensions failed to adequately account for the role of academic press in OST programs. And relatedly, this study de-emphasized academic outcomes by focusing on social competence. In this way, the GROW dimensions might have predicted other outcomes not assessed in this study. The author's own personal experiences may have shaped the initial hypotheses. Specifically, having spent a significant proportion of doctoral training in various OST programs and educational settings, academic press had been rare in OST programs compared to school-day programs. Further, having served as one of the observers collecting this data for RAND,

the author observed an emphasis on fun over academic press. However, the factor analysis found Resolve and Focus, a quality similar to academic press. While the observation tool did not set out to measure academic press, some items conceptually related and factored clearly into the Resolve and Focus dimension. Thus, a subsequent validity study would need to correlate these findings with an established measure of academic press. Similarly, the data found Teacher-Student and Student-Student Relationships factored together rather than separately.

The third limitation for the purposes of this study was the dichotomous nature of data collection. RAND strived for consistency and accuracy, whereas this study would have benefited from greater variability. In order to better guarantee inter-rater reliability, RAND chose to have all observers rate items as "yes" or "no" rather than on a Likert scale of proportion or degree of presence. This not only limited the variability among items and among sites, but also resulted in some items being low frequency. As discussed extensively in Chapter Four, these low frequency items ended up being dropped from the measure, as they were weaker items. However, if each item were collected on a Likert measure there likely would have been fewer complete "no's" or zeroes. Greater rating variability within items would have reduced weak items allowing more meaningful information to be captured through the quantitative assessment tool.

The fourth limitation related to the ability of the GROW dimensions of socioemotional climate to detect change in students' social competence and resilience. While the GROW dimensions might have been strengthened in the ways discussed above, the overarching issue was insufficient variance among program sites. There is evidence that climate can promote social competence and resilience (Heron, 2008; Maier, et al, 2012).

This study aimed to look at how differences in programs' socio-emotional climate influenced their outcomes. However, the data were collected as part of a randomized control trial of summer learning programs where the programs were designed to be similar to each other. RAND aimed to standardize program experience as much as possible, in order to guarantee that all students received high quality programming. While the hypotheses expected variance among the dimensions of socio-emotional climate, the standardization efforts by RAND's design effectively communicated expectations about how programs should construct their climates. For example, the unifying target goal for all programs discussed was "fun but structured learning" environments" and it seems that RAND did indeed achieve their goal of standardizing climate across programs. They had high standards for hiring, training, and implementation and additionally effectively utilized the two trial summers to maximize program quality to these standards. A qualitative study or a quantitative study with programs with more designed differences might have better captured how the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate influence outcomes for youth in terms of social competence and resilience. Relatedly, as scholars increasingly recognize that resilience may be located both within an individual and within a system (Pianta & Walsh, 1998; Woodland, et al., 2011), it may be that this outcome variability is located both within the child and within the climate. Since the data required using HLR instead of HLM and the outcome measure was at the individual level, this possibility could not be adequately examined in this study.

Implications and Future Directions

The findings from this dissertation have important implications for both counseling psychologists and Out-of-School Time providers. For counseling psychologists, implications and suggestions for future directions were discussed in terms of theory, research and practice. For OST providers, implications and suggestions for future directions are discussed for direct care providers and administrators or program designers.

For counseling psychologists

In terms of *theory*, this dissertation has two main implications for counseling psychologists. The first underscores the importance of extending our expertise into the field of OST programming. While counseling psychologists have a long history of involvement in education (Baker & Subich, 2008), OST represents a relatively new expansion of the field of education. Counseling psychology offers a strengths-based and systems-oriented perspective that offers valuable insight for the emerging field of OST. Given counseling psychologists' vast experience in the field of education, this should be extended to OST. Awareness of the field of OST and its positive potential is a critical first step. Furthermore, this study found that the dimensions of socio-emotional climate in OST differed from the dimensions of socio-emotional climate in school-day programs. While differences were to be expected, this underscores the importance to understand the uniqueness of this setting.

Moreover, the second major implication of this study is actually the finding of the GROW dimensions. While Positive Youth Development and counseling psychology emphasize prevention and intervention programming, research has found variability in

program type and quality influencing outcomes for youth (Keiler, 2011; Omelicheva, 2012). When an OST program is an intervention, counseling psychologists will be able to combine their community experience with their clinical knowledge when consulting with and working in these settings. When an OST program is prevention, counseling psychologists' consultation about supports for youth from various backgrounds and life experiences improves the value and impact of the program. Thus, counseling psychologists can aid in better understanding the quality of prevention programming, like OST (Nichols, 2002). Socio-emotional climate is one important piece of program quality that counseling psychologists can help to optimize.

The GROW dimensions represent the first systematic classification of OST program socio-emotional climate. No previous research has attempted to specifically examine the socio-emotional climate in OST settings. The GROW dimensions indicate that indeed there is something unique about OST. Schools may be increasingly becoming equalizers for youth outcomes (Downey, et al., 2008), but what is happening outside of school-day needs to be more than just the same (Dessoff, 2011; Hughes, 2011). Thus, psychologists have been advocating for OST to go above and beyond school-day offerings. Scores and wellbeing decline for at-risk students when school is not in session, but merely offering more of the same does not have scientific evidence (Hughes, 2011). Because differences in OST programs contribute to their mixed outcomes (Farb & Matjasko, 2012), the GROW dimensions offer a mechanism for understanding some of this variability among programs. While future work may refine these GROW dimensions, these findings represent a specific tool for evaluating OST program quality. Future work will understand what balance of the GROW dimensions might best foster

agency (Heron, 2008), as evidence suggests that dimensions of socio-emotional climate influence each other (Gest & Rodkin, 2011; Wilson, et al, 2007).

This finding expands on the PYD theory of protective factors by providing dimensionality to one type of programming, OST programming, frequently posited to be a protective factor. PYD theory argues that well-rounded interventions support students socio-emotional and 21st century skills (Gabrieli, 2011). For example, participating in OST programming has been found to promote self-regulation skills and, in turn, an increased tendency toward positive contributions to self, family, community, and society (Mueller, et al., 2011). The GROW dimensions may help to assess whether a program is well rounded. In this way, articulating these GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate represents one platform through which counseling psychologists can expand on the relationship between PYD theory and OST.

The findings in this study offer several implications for counseling psychologists in terms of research. One key step for counseling psychologists would be to better align conceptualizations of socio-emotional climate and the measurement of it. While this study found the GROW dimensions, further study about the unique climates of OST programs would aid in developing more evidence for these dimensions. Specifically, a qualitative examination would build on the GROW dimensions. Now that these aspects of socio-emotional climate have been identified, a qualitative study could target these items both through observations and interviews with key stakeholders, including OST providers and students. This type of study would need to remain open to the possibility of other or varied dimensions.

Another critical area of research into the socio-emotional climate of OST programs would be the development of a measure that specifically targets these concepts. While these data offer a systematic review of a large number of programs, the items used here were not designed to capture socio-emotional climate specifically, and particularly for OST settings. Given what we have learned here, future research could design specific observation items off of these dimensions and in an effort to develop a measure specifically designed to measure the socio-emotional climate of OST programs. Perhaps this would serve to refine the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate, including a confirmatory factor analysis, but it may also result in generating new or different dimensions of climate. Ideally, a future measure could expand to include a Likert scale for items rather than the dichotomous "yes" or "no." This not only allows greater variability to detect how changes in climate influence youth outcomes, but also allows for more possibility in refining the conceptualization of the GROW dimensions of socioemotional climate in OST programs. Key to this process will be sampling from more diverse programs.

While the findings of this study with regard to social competence and resilience were limited, they indicate an area for future research and study. The DESSA has a strong reputation as a measure of social competence and resilience, but perhaps there are other closely related constructs that might actually be influenced by attending an OST program with a positive socio-emotional climate. For example, rather than immediately building students' social competence, perhaps the program climate just provides opportunities to build friendships and practice social skills that will eventually lead to improved social competence. Thus, future research might do well to explore possible short-term

mediators supporting the development of longer-term outcomes such as social competence and resilience.

In addition to theory and research, counseling psychologists are uniquely positioned to work directly with OST programs. PYD theory emphasizes the role of large-scale prevention interventions. OST programs represent a systems-level influence on youth development. The practicality of OST interventions creates another sphere of potential influence on the child in addition to school, community, and family. In some ways or perhaps under the best circumstances, OST programs represent the intersection of school, community, and family. Counseling psychologists are adept at bringing together these various stakeholders to organize and develop tailored community-based prevention programming.

As counseling psychologists increasingly work to adapt their expertise to the OST setting, keeping in mind the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate will aid in this process. The GROW dimensions have implications for how we design programs. For instance, programs should not only be organized and warm, but also have goals and include Growth-promoting Instruction. Additionally, counseling psychologists are likely to be called in as consultants to OST programs either for staff training, program evaluation, or direct service. OST providers will need support in understanding how to interact with students most effectively and how to structure their program to foster a supportive and successful socio-emotional climate. This is also a helpful framework for evaluating program efficacy and areas for improvement. Moreover, OST programs are designed to serve students and enhance their wellbeing. Individual students may benefit from individual or targeted interventions such as therapy, but whole-group interventions,

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such as Growth-promoting Instruction and ensuring that students experience an optimal socio-emotional climate, also represent an important area for counseling psychologists to offer intervention and support (American School Counseling Association, 2012).

For Out-of-School Time providers

In the field of OST programming, there are two types of OST providers. The first type of OST provider is a direct care worker. OST direct care workers or care workers are staff members who work directly with students on a regular basis. Care workers might be called teachers, instructors, group leaders, assistants, or counselors, for example. OST care workers actually deliver the program. The second type of OST provider is an administrator. OST administrators might design programs, apply for grants, oversee several programs, select curriculums, and/or evaluate staff and student progress. OST administrators sometimes visit programs and interact with students, but their physical presence is not required in order for children to be adequately supervised, for example.

While the role of the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate in promoting positive youth outcomes needs further research, the findings of this dissertation have some practical implications for both types of OST care workers. Many people think of summer programs and afterschool programs as simply a time to have fun. However, this study underscores the importance of Resolve and Focus. OST care workers would do well to incorporate goals and persistence into their daily conversations with students. Similarly, OST care workers can contribute to their socio-emotional climate by offering Growth-promoting Instruction. For instance, OST care workers might teach social skills or even incorporate a curriculum or lesson plans towards this end. The findings affirmed

that Organization and Warmth are key components of socio-emotional climates. Setting routines and providing structure are frequently suggested strategies for OST care workers. When coaching or providing professional development trainings for OST care workers, the combination of Organization and Warmth must be emphasized.

For OST administrators the findings demonstrated a few key points. Primarily, the RAND Corporation successfully standardized 37 programs across five districts such that there was no significant variability among them. This process required a great deal of planning, coordination, and revisions. Individual districts and programs had some freedom in curriculum and staffing choices, but the united vision of these summer learning programs was successfully communicated and implemented through both trial summers and months of preparation with program administrators. For larger OST organizations, such as the YMCA or the Boys and Girls Club, unifying disparate programs into a larger organization vision and mission presents challenges. These GROW dimensions were present across many sites showing that an organization culture can inspire a consistent socio-emotional climate.

With the rise of Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) programs (Durlak, et al., 2011), Growth-promoting Instruction represented a manifestation of this push to directly teach and provide opportunities for students to practice social and emotional skills. OST administrators may choose to further pursue both holistic and targeted SEL programs in order to have curriculum with practical tools and a unified vision for OST care workers around how to provide Growth-promoting instruction. In addition to providing training for staff with regard to Growth-promoting Instruction, the findings indicated that administrators might also want to emphasize Resolve and Focus, Organization, and

Warmth. Trainings and curriculums can be targeted to support staff and design programs with these qualities in mind.

OST administrators not only need to improve program quality, but also to report program quality to both current funders and potential funders. Socio-emotional climate represents one aspect of program quality that has been difficult for administrators to evaluate, especially quantitatively. Studies often rely upon anecdotal information such as testimonies by present and former participants, obviously representing sampling bias. While this dissertation does not present a unified measure, the GROW dimensions of socio-emotional climate lay the groundwork for future research and provide strategies for quantifying socio-emotional climate. This gives administrators a place to start in evaluating their program's quality, specifically in terms of the degree to which care workers and the socio-emotional climate provide: (1) Growth-promoting Instruction, (2) Resolve and Focus, (3) Organization, and (4) Warmth. Hopefully, a future measure will provide a tool for administrators to do this systematically and with strong validity and reliability.

Moreover, these findings push OST providers to prioritize a PYD orientation to program development and delivery. A deficit-based approach to OST, while potentially preventing some negative outcomes, does not counteract the effects of stereotype threat (Hawkins, et al., 2005; Steel, 1997). Stereotype threat explains that when students are reminded of their personal characteristics that make them "at-risk," notably through remediation type interventions, they perform less well. However, emphasizing that students' personal characteristics are special encourages them to succeed. These GROW dimensions are strength-based assessment of socio-emotional climate. Similarly, the

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outcome examined was social competence and resilience. This, too, looks at the potential protective factors within each child (Nickerson & Fishman, 2013). A true PYD program would value internal and environmental protective factors (Taub & Pearrow, 2005). In this way, an OST program looking to promote internal strengths, like social competence and resilience, and to promote environmental supports, like a positive socio-emotional climate, reflect the values of PYD theory.

Conclusions

Out-of-School Time programs have potential to aid in promoting Positive Youth Development. However, differences among OST programs in terms of quality need to be understood in order to determine how to best support youth. Socio-emotional climate represents one area of quality and an area that may be especially linked to social and emotional competencies.

This dissertation represents the first empirical profiling of the socio-emotional climate of multiple OST programs, specifically 37 summer learning programs. Factor analysis found four key "GROW" dimensions to the socio-emotional climate of OST programs: (1) Growth-promoting Instruction, (2) Resolve and Focus, (3) Organization, and (4) Warmth. These dimensions related to conceptualizations of school day socio-emotional climate, but provided important distinctions. While there were some limitations within data collection and variability among programs, these findings laid a foundation for future measure development. Moreover, understanding the role of socio-emotional climate provides insight for psychologists and OST providers working to optimize program efficacy.

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Table 1

Demographics of Students Included in Sample.

District	Treatment group students who attended 1+ days	African American (%)	Hispanic (%)	Asian (%)	White (%)	Eligible for a free or reduced price meal (%)	ELL (%)	Low achieving (%)	With IEPs during SY 12-13 (%)
Boston	478	41.4	41.8	5.4	9.0	90.8	29.3	25.0	15.7
Dallas	749	17.9	79.2	0.7	1.5	95.1	61.1	42.3	5.6
Duval	361	81.2	3.6	1.7	10.3	85.9	3.1	13.6	8.0
Pittsburgh	332	69.6	2.4	1.5	19.6	82.2	6.0	38.6	21.5
Rochester	595	68.1	20.5	3.9	6.7	68.4	14.3	81.8	15.6
Total	2,515	50.1	37.2	2.6	7.8	84.9	28.4	43.9	12.4

Note. Demographic profile of treatment group students who attended 1+ days of summer programs across districts. Low achieving is defined as students scoring at lowest level on either mathematics or ELA spring 2013 state test. Racial and ethnic categories may not add to 100% since "other" is not shown. Eligible for a free or reduced price meal may be an underestimate in Rochester. In 2012-2013 every student in the district received free lunch because the district qualified for community eligibility option from the New York State Department of Education. As a result there is less need for schools to consistently gather or update income qualifications data in order to determine if students are eligible for a free meal.

Table 2

Factor Loadings, Means, and Standard Deviations for the Observation Tool Items

	Item	F1	F2	F3	F4	М	(SD)
10	LIKE TEACHER. Teacher shows explicit signs of positive affect towards youth.	0.85	0.29	0.22		0.20	(0.40)
12	LIKE STUDENTS. Students show explicit signs that they have warm, positive	0.85	0.26	0.24		0.30	(0.46)
	affect to teacher (not just respect).						
9	FRIENDLY. Students verbally encourage each other, are overtly friendly and	0.66				0.19	(0.39)
	supportive.						
4	REDIRECT. In a majority of cases where students were overtly off-task, teacher		0.81		0.21	0.82	(0.38)
	effectively redirected students back on task.						
3	ONTASK. Large majority of students are on-task throughout the class period.		0.80			0.83	(0.38)
7	WELL_OILED. The class resembles a "well-oiled machine" where a majority of	0.28	0.70	0.32		0.44	(0.50)
	students know what is expected of them and how to go about doing it.						
13	ENTHUSIASM. All or almost all students exhibited obvious signs of enthusiasm for	0.46	0.31	0.69		0.21	(0.41)
	the class throughout the class period.						
14	CONTENT. The teacher exhibited obvious signs of enthusiasm about the content of	0.43	0.30	0.68	0.23	0.19	(0.39)
	the class.						
17	CHOICES. Are students allowed to make a decision about their activities or else			0.55		0.26	(0.44)
	choose their strategies to complete their activities in this class?						
16	SOCIALSKILLS. The teacher explicitly taught social skills such as respecting,			0.54	0.39	0.11	(0.32)
	listening, cooperating with, or helping others or teaching of politeness.						
6	MONITOR_ALL. During independent practice the teacher monitors all, not just		0.47	0.49		0.49	(0.50)
	some, students as they work.						
11	COLLABORATE. Students had the opportunity to collaborate during independent			0.44		0.20	(0.40)
	practice or enrichment activities.						
1	STATE_GOAL. The teacher explained or wrote down what students would do or				0.81	0.87	(0.34)
	what skills they would cover during the overall session.						
15	PERSIST. The teacher (a) explicitly encouraged at least one student struggling with		0.29	0.20	0.62	0.61	(0.49)
	a particular task to persist at tasks that were difficult for them or (b) explicitly taught						
	students strategies to persist at tasks.						

Note. Abbreviated item descriptions. Refer to Appendix A for the full descriptions.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Primary Measures

		Social Competence	Growth- Promoting	Resolve	Organization	Warmth
	M (SD)					
Social Competence	75.76 (20.89)	-	0.048**	-0.022	0.024	0.056**
Growth- Promoting	1.41 (0.55)		-	0.28***	0.29***	0.23***
Resolve	1.44 (0.23)			-	-0.014	-0.20***
Organization	2.05 (0.33)				-	0.31***
Warmth	0.63 (0.49)					-

* *p* < 0.05. ** *p* < 0.01. *** *p* < 0.001

Table 4

Regression Models for the Interaction Effects of the Dimensions of Socio-emotional Climate

	Step 1		Step 2			Step 3			
Independent Variables	R^2	B(SE)	R ²	ΔR^2	B(SE)	\mathbb{R}^2	ΔR^2	B(SE)	
Preliminary Model:									
IEP	0.11***	-12.97(1.27)***							
Gender (Male)		-8.51(0.80)***							
Free Lunch		-3.13(1.35)*							
ELL		0.26(1.17)							
Age		-0.81(0.81)							
Attendance		1.30(0.99)							
White		4.38(1.54)**							
Asian		10.92(2.51)***							
Other		3.53(2.61)							
Latino		4.83(1.12)***							
Main Model:									
IEP	0.11**	-13.04(1.25)***	0.12***	0.005***	-12.71(1.25))*** 0.12***	0.003	-12.46(1.26)	***

Gender (Male)	-8.52(0.79)***	-8.45(0.79)***	-8.55(0.80)***
Free Lunch	-3.37(1.34)*	-3.67(1.34)**	-3.81(1.34)**
White	4.32(1.54)**	4.05(1.55)**	4.06(1.56)**
Asian	11.09(2.39)***	11.90(2.41)***	11.91(2.42)***
Other	3.43(2.61)	3.12(2.61)	3.10(2.62)
Latino	4.95(0.86)***	5.81(0.93)***	5.67(0.94)***
Growth-Promoting		0.79(0.82)	7.55(7.61)
Resolve		-3.23(1.83) †	-23.93(15.58)*
Organization		-2.06(1.30)**	-9.52(9.03)
Warmth		2.44(0.92)	16.67(7.18)
Warmth x Organization			-2.13(2.76)
Growth x Organization			-5.24(3.96)
Resolve x Organization			11.58(7.60)
Warmth x Growth			0.88(2.23)
Resolve x Growth			2.40(3.99)
Warmth x Resolve			-7.70(4.71)

† p < 0.10. * p < 0.05. ** p < 0.01. *** p < 0.001.

Appendix A

Observation Tool

Items from observation tool used to model socio-emotional climate. Observers rated these items "yes" or "no" for each class they observed. Items are listed as they appeared on the observation tool with some clarification provided. Words in all capital letters represent variable names (e.g. STATE_GOAL).

	Full Description	Clarification
1	STATE_GOAL Prior to students doing independent	A goal may be a simple
	practice, the teacher explained or wrote down what	statement of the activity for the
	students would do or what skills they would cover	period. Relatively easy to
	during the overall session.	attain a "yes."
2	STATE_PURPOSE Prior to students doing independent	A purpose is more complex
	practice, the teacher stated the purpose for what they	expression of the relevance of
	will do $-$ i.e., why students learn the skill in terms of	the activity. Relatively
	real world relevance.	difficult to attain a "yes."
3	ONTASK Large majority of students are on-task	"Segment of the class" is
	throughout the class period. Students are focused and	determined from the running
	attentive to the task/project. They follow along with	log with time stamps observers
	the staff and/or follow directions to carry on an	took. A new segment begins
	individual or group task. Noise level and youth	when students engage in a
	interactions can be high if youth are engaged in the	different task (e.g. switching
	expected task(s). Mark "no" if more than 10% of	from listening to the teacher to
	students are off-task for 1 or more full segment of the	working on their project).
	class.	
4	REDIRECT In a majority of cases where students were	
	overtly off-task, teacher effectively redirected students	
	back on task. If no students overtly off-task, mark as	
	yes. Mark no il several students are off-task at one	
	time and teacher didn't try to redirect.	Deletionales estas ettaines
3	PARTICIPATION Encourage the participation of all.	Relatively easy to attain a
	Mark no is teacher shows clear signs of lavoritism by	yes.
	repeatedly calling on/giving attention to the same few	
	students. Mark no in teacher seems to intentionally	
	ability or other evident differences among youth	
	teachers try to angage youth who appear isolated: they	
	do not favor (or ignore) a particular youth or small	
	cluster of youth Teachers need not force participation	
	Ok if the teacher has spoken to student and allowed that	
	student not to participate	
6	MONITOR ALL During independent practice the	Independent practice refers to
0	teacher monitors all not just some students as they	when students are working
	work Check if the teacher consistently circulates	independently or in small
		merer and a strain and a strain and a strain and a strain

	throughout the space and looks at student work/activities while circulating.	groups. Marked "no" if teacher circulates without actually looking at students' work or if when the observer circulates students who the teacher had previously monitored without intervention were actually not doing their work or doing it correctly. Relatively difficult to attain a "yes."
7	WELL_OILED Little to no time is wasted, pacing is efficient. Plus, procedures are in place & material available to occupy children productively throughout the class (e.g. differentiated materials during independent practice). During each activity, kids knew what to do and a majority were on task. The class resembles a "well-oiled machine" where a majority of students know what is expected of them and how to go about doing it throughout the whole class.	Relatively difficult to attain a "yes."
8	RESPECT Students respect one another. They refrain from derogatory comments or actions about an individual person and the work s/he is doing; if disagreements occur, they are handled constructively.	Relatively easy to attain a "yes."
9	FRIENDLY Students verbally encourage each other,	Friendliness evident among
	are overtly friendly and supportive.	multiple students rather than just one friendly student. Relatively difficult to attain a "yes."
10	are overtly friendly and supportive. LIKE_TEACHER Students show explicit signs that they have warm, positive affect to teacher (not just respect for teachers). For example, throughout the class they may smile at the teacher, laugh with them, and/or share good natured jokes.	multiple students rather than just one friendly student. Relatively difficult to attain a "yes." Relatively difficult to attain a "yes."
10	are overtly friendly and supportive. LIKE_TEACHER Students show explicit signs that they have warm, positive affect to teacher (not just respect for teachers). For example, throughout the class they may smile at the teacher, laugh with them, and/or share good natured jokes. COLLABORATE Students had the opportunity to collaborate during independent practice or enrichment activities (e.g. group/pair work where students had differentiated roles; students have to work together to achieve a goal). Unsuccessful and successful collaboration count. Rate "no" if fewer than almost all the students are supposed to be collaborating.	multiple students rather than just one friendly student. Relatively difficult to attain a "yes." Relatively difficult to attain a "yes."

	demonstrates a positive and caring affect toward youth.	
13	ENTHUSIASM All or almost all students exhibited	Relatively difficult to attain a
	obvious signs of enthusiasm for the class throughout	"yes" in academic instruction;
	the class period (e.g. jumping out of seat, quickly and	easier in enrichment
	enthusiastically answering teacher's questions). If most	instruction.
	students enthusiastic, but there is more than one student	
	who is checked out throughout the class period, rate	
	"no" For enrichment all or almost all kids are having	
	fun in intended activity.	
14	CONTENT The teacher exhibited obvious signs of	Relatively difficult to attain a
	enthusiasm about the content of the class (e.g. conveys	"ves."
	that the content is important to understand, exuberant	5
	affect about the material, good explanations about why	
	students are doing the material or reflects deep	
	knowledge of content. T gets excited about or helps	
	students make connections brings in additional	
	materials to extend the content of the lesson).	
15	PERSIST The teacher (a) explicitly encouraged at least	Relatively easy to attain a
	one student struggling with a particular task to persist at	"ves."
	academic/content-related tasks that were difficult for	<u> </u>
	them (e.g. exhortations to keep trying, you know you	
	can do it, helping student stick with rather than guit a	
	task, to stretch to a higher level than the student	
	currently performs at), or (b) explicitly taught students	
	strategies to persist at tasks.	
16	SOCIALSKILLS The teacher <i>explicitly</i> taught social	
	skills such as respecting, listening, cooperating with, or	
	helping others or teaching of politeness. Do not check	
	if these skills were implicitly involved.	
17	CHOICES Are students allowed to make a decision	
	about their activities or else choose their strategies to	
	complete their activities in this class? (e.g. self-select	
	from activity stations, choose a medium to create	
	artwork, write a persuasive essay on a topic of their	
	choosing, draw whatever you want, open-ended tasks	
	that students can solve in multiple ways, pick a book to	
	read from a box). The choices have no right or wrong	
	answer. Don't rate "ves" if the choice is to work with a	
	partner or by yourself.	
18	GROUP GOAL Students' individual work builds	
-	towards a classroom community, culminating event	
	(e.g. individual students contributing to a class mural or	
	a class book or class team that's going to play in a	
	tournament).	

19	(-) DISRESPECTFUL In at least one instance, the
	teacher was disrespectful to students. This includes
	yelling at one or more students, intimidating or being
	rude or dismissive to students, using physical
	aggression, intentionally humiliating or ignoring a
	student, using discriminatory acts or derogatory
	language to students.
20	(-) MISBEHAVIOR There was one or more flagrant
	instance of student misbehavior. This includes a
	physical fight or persistent bullying or persistent use of
	discriminatory or derogatory language.
21	(-) INTERRUPT When the teacher disciplined students,
	the majority of the class was either interrupted for a
	long period of time (2+ minutes) or a series of short
	interruptions that are nitpicking, unnecessary
	interruptions (about sitting up straight, hands folded,
	holding pencils correctly).
22	(-) TDISENGAGED The teacher responsible for
	activity was disengaged in the classroom because of
	distractions by factors that were within her control (i.e.,
	a teacher stopping by to have a conversation about the
	weekend, the teacher checking his/her cell phone,
	texting, or taking or making a personal call that was not
	related to an emergency, personal chat with a co-
	teacher or paraprofessional while students are working).
23	(-) ADISENGAGED There were adults other than the
	teacher in the classroom who engaged in activities that
	distracted from learning (e.g. checking cell phone,
	interrupting the lesson, asking off-topic questions). Do
	not check if that distraction is isolated or brief. Also,
	do check if you know the person(s) is supposed to
	support instruction, such as a paraprofessional, but isn't
	for a majority of the class time. Don't check this item
	if an adult whose role you do not know is quietly
	observing a classroom.
24	(-) BORED All or almost all students in the class
	appeared bored throughout the class. Boredom
	characterized the class period, even if students
	complied with teachers' requests.

Appendix B

Hypothesized Dimensions of Socio-emotional Climate

Items from observation tool hypothesized to reflect socio-emotional climate. Observers rated these items "yes" or "no" for each class they observed. Descriptions included here are abbreviated from the full text listed in Appendix B. In this table, the observation items are listed in groups corresponding to the four hypothesized dimensions of socio-emotional climate.

Item #	Abbreviate description from observation tool
Structu	re and Predictability
1	STATE_GOAL Prior to students doing independent practice, the teacher explained or wrote down what students would do or what skills they would cover during the overall
	session
3	ONTASK Large majority of students are on-task throughout the class period
4	REDIRECT In a majority of cases where students were overtly off-task teacher
	effectively redirected students back on task.
6	MONITOR ALL During independent practice the teacher monitors all, not just some.
-	students as they work.
7	WELL OILED Little to no time is wasted, pacing is efficient. Plus, procedures are in
	place & material available to occupy children productively throughout the class. The
	class resemble a "well-oiled machine" where a majority of students know what is
	expected of them and how to go about doing it throughout the whole class.
21	INTERRUPT When the teacher disciplined students, the majority of the class was
	either interrupted for a long period of time (2+ minutes) or a series of short
	interruptions that are nitpicking, unnecessary interruptions (about sitting up straight,
	hands folded, holding pencils correctly). *
Teache	r-Student Relationships
5	PARTICIPATION Encourage the participation of all. Regardless of gender, race,
	language ability, or other evident differences among youth, teachers try to engage
	youth who appear isolated; they do not favor (or ignore) a particular youth or small
	cluster of youth.
10	LIKE_TEACHER Students show explicit signs that they have warm, positive affect to
10	teacher (not just respect).
12	LIKE STUDENTS Teacher shows explicit signs of positive affect towards youth.
	l eacher tone is warm and caring. He of she uses positive language, smiles, laughs, of
12	snares good-natured jokes throughout the class.
15	ENTHUSIASM All of almost all students exhibited obvious signs of enthusiasm for the close throughout the close period
14	CONTENT. The teacher exhibited abvious signs of anthusiasm about the content of the
14	convicts signs of entitusiasin about the content of the
10	DISRESPECTEUI In at least one instance the teacher was disrespectful to students *
22	TDISENGAGED The teacher responsible for activity was disengaged in the classroom

23 ADISENGAGED There were adults other than the teacher in the classroom who

engaged in activities that distracted from learning. *

Studen	t-Student Relationships
8	RESPECT Students respect one another. Refrain from derogatory comments or
	actions.
9	FRIENDLY Students verbally encourage each other, are overtly friendly and
	supportive.
11	COLLABORATE Students had the opportunity to collaborate during independent
	practice or enrichment activities (e.g. group/pair work, work together to achieve a
	goal).
20	MISBEHAVIOR There was one or more flagrant instance of student misbehavior. *
24	BORED All or almost all students in the class appeared bored throughout the class. *
Growth	n-Promoting Instruction
2	STATE_PURPOSE Prior to students doing independent practice, the teacher stated the
	purpose for what they will do $-i.e.$, why students learn the skill in terms of real world
	relevance.
15	PERSIST The teacher (a) explicitly encouraged at least one student struggling with a
	particular task to persist at tasks that were difficult for them or (b) explicitly taught
	students strategies to persist at tasks.
16	SOCIALSKILLS The teacher explicitly taught social skills such as respecting,
	listening, cooperating with, or helping others or teaching of politeness.
17	CHOICES Are students allowed to make a decision about their activities or else choose
	their strategies to complete their activities in this class?
18	GROUP_GOAL Students' individual work builds towards a classroom community,
	culminating event.
* Reve	rse coded

Appendix C

GROW Dimensions of Socio-emotional Climate

Items from observation tool listed in groups corresponding to the four dimensions of socioemotional climate attained from EFA in Table 2.

Item #	Abbreviate description from observation tool
G – Gr	owth-Promoting Instruction
16	SOCIALSKILLS The teacher explicitly taught social skills such as respecting,
	listening, cooperating with, or helping others or teaching of politeness.
17	CHOICES Are students allowed to make a decision about their activities or else choose
	their strategies to complete their activities in this class?
11	COLLABORATE Students had the opportunity to collaborate during independent
	practice or enrichment activities (e.g. group/pair work, work together to achieve a
	goal).
6	MONITOR_ALL During independent practice the teacher monitors all, not just some,
	students as they work.
14	CONTENT The teacher exhibited obvious signs of enthusiasm about the content of the
	class.
13	ENTHUSIASM All or almost all students exhibited obvious signs of enthusiasm for
	the class throughout the class period.
R - Re	solve and Focus
1	STATE_GOAL Prior to students doing independent practice, the teacher explained or
	wrote down what students would do or what skills they would cover during the overall
	session.
15	PERSIST The teacher (a) explicitly encouraged at least one student struggling with a
	particular task to persist at tasks that were difficult for them or (b) explicitly taught
	students strategies to persist at tasks.
<u> </u>	ganization
3	ONTASK Large majority of students are on-task throughout the class period.
4	REDIRECT In a majority of cases where students were overtly off-task, teacher
_	effectively redirected students back on task.
7	WELL_OILED Little to no time is wasted, pacing is efficient. Plus, procedures are in
	place & material available to occupy children productively throughout the class. The
	class resemble a "well-oiled machine" where a majority of students know what is
	expected of them and how to go about doing it throughout the whole class.
W - W	armth and Personalism
9	FRIENDLY Students verbally encourage each other, are overtly friendly and
10	supportive.
10	LIKE_IEACHER Students show explicit signs that they have warm, positive affect to
10	teacher (not just respect).
12	LIKE_SIUDENIS Teacher shows explicit signs of positive affect towards youth.
	I eacher tone is warm and caring. He or she uses positive language, smiles, laughs, or
	shares good-natured jokes throughout the class.