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A Longitudinal Study of Young Adolescents' Perceptions of the Middle Grades Instructional Climate

Audra K. Parker

*University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida*

Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett

*University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia*

ABSTRACT

Young adolescents experience many cognitive, physical, and emotional changes during their middle school years; however, the middle school literature suggests that structural reforms supporting the emotional and social needs of young adolescents are implemented far more readily than the instructional reforms necessary for addressing young adolescents' increasingly complex cognitive capacities (Jackson & Davis, 2000). The purpose of this study was to understand the current instructional climate in the middle grades from young adolescents' perspectives. The study examined 78 young adolescents' perceptions of their classroom instructional climates prior to and during their middle school experiences using the Modified Classroom Climate Inventory. Repeated measures analyses of the five subscales of the MCCI (personalization, participation, independence, investigation and differentiation) suggest that young adolescents have mixed perceptions of their middle grades instructional climates and that these perceptions varied little in comparison with their elementary experiences.