

## Learning Climate in University Students of the Northern Academic Unit of the State of Nayarit

### Clima de Aprendizaje en Estudiantes Universitarios de la Unidad Académica del Norte del Estado de Nayarit

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#### Abstract

This article contemplates an investigation related to the learning climate of the students of the Bachelor's Degree in Accounting at the UANEN. For its development, a validated learning climate survey was used that contains 15 items that measure the autonomy that the teacher grants to the students. 50 surveys were administered randomly between the morning and semi-school shifts. The general results show that the students of the Northern Academic Unit of the State of Nayarit perceive that they are given autonomy during their teaching-learning process. After data analysis and concentration of information, the results were graphed and actions that benefit the Academic Unit and therefore further improve the learning climate are generally recommended

#### Learning Climate, Teachers, University Student

#### Resumen

Este artículo contempla una investigación relacionada con el clima de aprendizaje de los estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Contaduría de la UANEN. Para su desarrollo se utilizó una encuesta validada de clima de aprendizaje que contiene 15 Items que mide la autonomía que el profesor otorga a los estudiantes. Se aplicaron 50 encuestas aleatoriamente entre el turno matutino y semiescolarizado. Los resultados generales demuestran que los estudiantes de la Unidad Académica del Norte del Estado de Nayarit perciben que si se les brinda autonomía durante su proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Posterior al análisis de datos y concentración de información se graficaron los resultados y se recomienda de manera general acciones que beneficien a la Unidad Académica y por ende mejoren aún más el clima de aprendizaje.

#### Clima de Aprendizaje, Docentes, Estudiantes Universitarios

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## Introduction

For most university students, a good working environment in the classroom or an adequate learning climate depends to a large extent on the teachers, the atmosphere they create in class is derived from the activities and dynamics they implement during their lectures. González *et al* (2019) refers that currently the quality of university teaching is evaluated as the teaching-learning process focuses on the professional training demanded by society, this position requires changes focused on the student being able to build their own knowledge, values and skills required and demanded by the work environment.

All this is possible if the teacher accompanies the student, creating pleasant moments, a healthy atmosphere in class and, above all, awakens the students' interest in learning and acquiring new knowledge. In this sense, in order to evaluate the quality of university classes, it is important to analyse existing research and different studies on the learning climate, as they offer very important data and information on how students perceive this process.

On the other hand, Matos (2009) affirms that motivation is one of the basic pillars in psychology and it is said that students need to feel motivated so that an adequate and active participation in the teaching-learning process takes place, allowing them to continue learning throughout their lives. However, what is motivating for one pupil or student may not be motivating for another, as it often depends largely on the context in which the event, environment or personal characteristics of each individual take place.

Stover *et al* (2017) states that motivation is focused on the feeling, direction, consistency and purpose of behaviour, encompassing what is intended and the results of these actions; therefore it is located within the biological, cognitive and social sense of the individual. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) approaches the subject in a particular and important way because it is constantly being revised and updated. In order to be successful, any educational system requires motivated students, and for this to be achieved, motivated teachers are the fundamental pillar for the creation of an adequate environment.

The TAD considers in a central way the influence that the quality of the social environment in which a person develops has on the motivation, performance and personal well-being of the people who belong to that environment. This theory also differentiates between different types of behavioural regulation by referring to autonomous versus controlled behaviour. Intrinsic motivation is said to exemplify autonomous behaviour and extrinsic motivation is said to be more controlled (less autonomous).

Ruidiaz *et al* (2019) address the issue by stating that the educational environment (EA) is a factor to be taken into account in Education at all levels and professional profiles. Its importance has been recognised by the degree of influence on student success and satisfaction. Academic achievement has been recognised in a positive way on the perception they have of their learning environment.

Within this context Espinoza (2022) states that within the educational environment it is necessary that a good learning climate prevails within the classroom, defining this as strategies or procedures carried out by students and teachers inside and outside the classroom. The learning climate contemplates classroom characteristics and situations that affect the teaching-learning process and as a consequence affects the academic performance of students, which encompasses not only physical conditions but also the emotions of students and their needs such as self-esteem, personal growth, coexistence, identity.

Within the reviews of research related to the topic it was deduced and found that the academic performance of students is related to the learning climate that occurs in the classroom and is directly related to the motivation of students. It is clear that the learning environment is very important for the teaching-learning process to take place, which is why it is said that any educational institution or organisation that wants to be excellent must identify the learning climate experienced by the students who study there.

Taking into account how important motivation is for the behaviour of students and therefore one of the triggers of the learning climate that occurs in the classroom, it was decided to conduct an investigation to identify how the learning climate is with students of the Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Administration within the Academic Unit of the North of the State of Nayarit in order to identify areas of opportunity and take actions for the benefit of the same.

## Objectives

### General Objective

To identify the learning climate of university students at the Academic Unit of the North of the State of Nayarit.

### Specific Objectives

- To analyse the results of the learning climate test.
- To propose general recommendations for the improvement of the learning climate in the Academic Unit of the North of the State of Nayarit.

## Methodology

In order to carry out this research work, a random sample of 50 students of the Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from the morning and semi-school shifts was taken. Their average age ranges between 19 and 25 years old. For this research, the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ) was used, taken and adapted from the study by Antonio Granero Gallegos, carried out in 2014, which consisted of the Spanish validation of the instrument.

According to Granero *et al* (2014) the instrument consists of 15 items that measure teacher autonomy support based on the dimension of autonomy support. In the instructions, students are asked to choose the degree of agreement with the items, using a likert scale ranging from strongly disagree with the lowest score to strongly agree with the highest. The aim of the present research was explained to the participants and there was a very good response from each of them.

## Description of the study

The Learning Climate Questionnaire includes 15 items related to the autonomy that the teacher offers to each of the students. The items are to be answered on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). This instrument assesses the students' perception of the autonomy that the teacher promotes in his or her students. Thus, a high score indicates or refers to greater support for student autonomy on the part of the teacher. This instrument considers four dimensions: communication, interest, respect and interpersonal relationships. It is important to mention that the overall total results measure the autonomy that the teacher grants to the students in their opinion.

In this sense, Matos (2009) affirms that this instrument has obtained good results in university students and has obtained good psychometric properties. The factorial validity was investigated by William Deci in 1996 who reported that the 15 items of the instrument form a single scale and an eigenvalue is obtained. This research work contains a quantitative and exploratory study. It is important to mention that the survey used is anonymous in order not to compromise or intimidate the students and that the answers are objective.

## Results and discussions

As a first point, the highest and lowest scores are interpreted to give an idea of the overall results.



**Graph 1** Overall Results

Source: Own Elaboration

It can be seen from graph 1 that the highest points are concentrated in items 2 and 3, which refer to the pupils' ability to choose and feeling understood by their teachers.

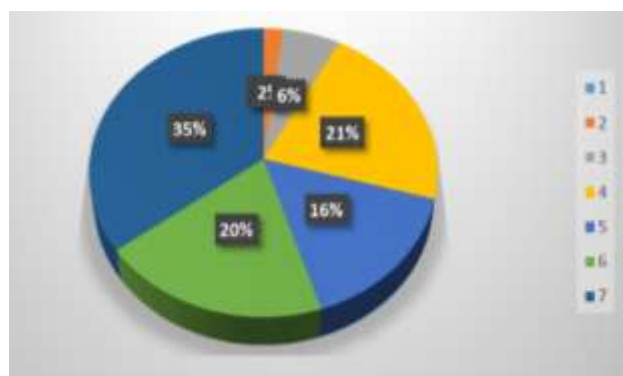
In relation to item 4, which refers to the confidence that students perceive their teachers have in their abilities, the results were favourable, with 43 % at the second highest level.

On the other hand, the lowest value was concentrated in item 11 concerning the student's perception of the teacher's emotions.

In this sense, item 5, which concentrates on the teacher's acceptance of the student's perception of the student, the results showed that the percentage of students who responded totally in agreement was 41 %.

The graphs relating to each item are presented below for better interpretation:

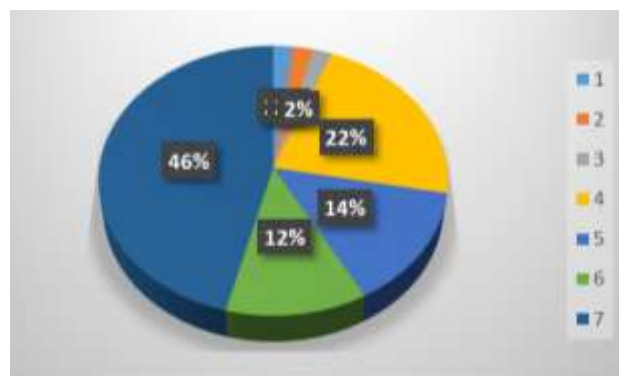
1. I feel that my teacher gives me options and possibilities to make choices.



**Graph 2** Possibility to choose  
Source: Own Elaboration

In the first question related to the options and possibility of making choices, 35 % of the students answered strongly agree, which is considered the maximum response value, and only 2 % answered strongly disagree. The remaining values were distributed across the other items, with 21 % concentrating on the neutral value.

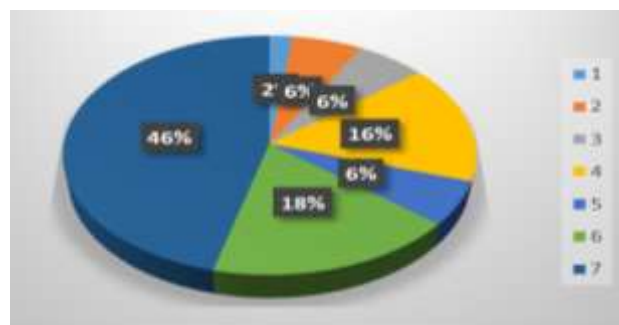
2. I feel that my teacher understands me



**Gráfico 3** Teacher's understanding  
Source: Own Elaboration

The second item related to understanding showed very favourable results, with 46 % of the students agreeing strongly that they feel understood by the teacher.

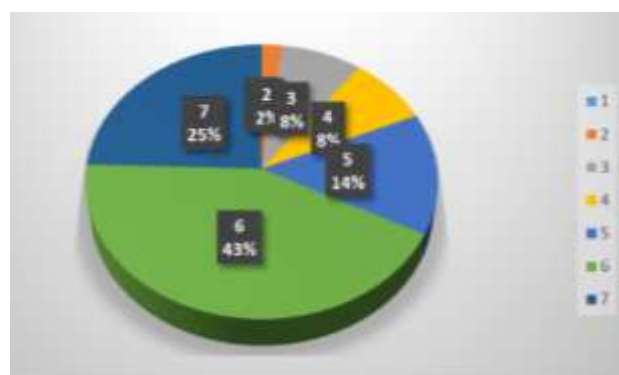
3. During the lesson, I have the possibility to open up (be honest) with this teacher.



**Graph 4** Perception of openness  
Source: Own Elaboration

According to Item No. 3, 46 % of respondents strongly agreed and only 2 % strongly disagreed.

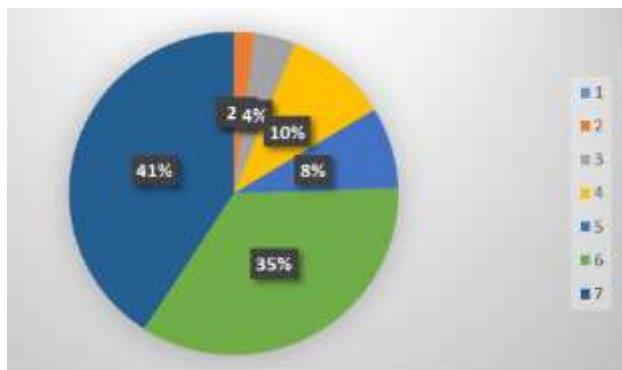
4. My teacher has confidence in my ability and that I will do well in this class.



**Graph 5** Confidence  
Source: Own Elaboration

The results for Item No. 4 are: 43 % were at the penultimate highest level, i.e. number 6, followed by 25 % strongly agreeing, which is the highest score, and again only 2 % disagreed.

5. I feel that my teacher accepts me



**Graph 6** Acceptance  
Source: Own Elaboration

The results for Item No. 5 showed that 41 % of the students feel accepted by the teachers, 35 % at level 6, and again 2 % totally disagreed.

6. My teachers make sure that I have really understood the course objectives and what I need to do.



**Graph 7** Course objectives  
Source: Own Elaboration

35 % of the students responded that they strongly agree with the perception that teachers ensure their learning, 31 % of the students were inclined to agree with the second value and only 2 % were inclined to respond strongly disagree.

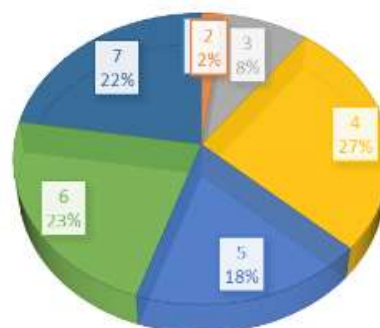
7. My teacher encourages me to ask questions.



**Graph 8** Questioning  
Source: Own Elaboration

The maximum score for this response in terms of the teacher encouraging the student to ask questions was 31 % corresponding to the value strongly agree and the lowest with 2 % respectively values 2 and 3 which are below the neutral level.

8. I feel a lot of trust with my teachers

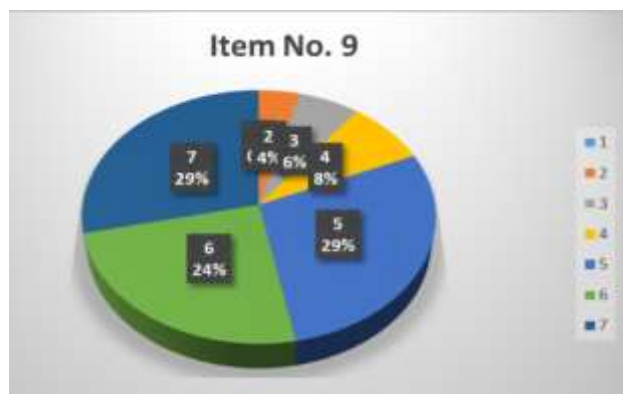


**Graph 9** Confidence with teachers  
Source: Own Elaboration

In relation to the trust students feel with teachers, 23 % answered the second value at 6 points, 22 % the maximum score related to strongly agree and only 2 % said they strongly disagreed.



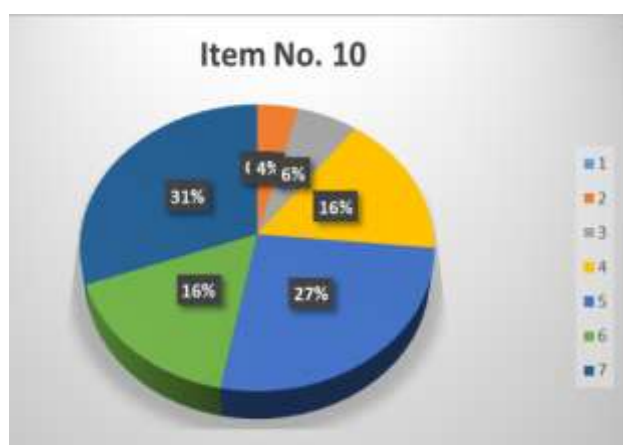
9. My teacher answers all my questions carefully.



**Graph 10** Teacher's answers  
Source: Own Elaboration

The maximum value for the item related to the students' perception that the teacher answers all their questions was reflected with the same percentage in the score 7 and 5 referring to strongly agree, and the next to the neutral value, the option with 6 points obtained 24 % and the response option with 2 points obtained the lowest percentage with 4 %.

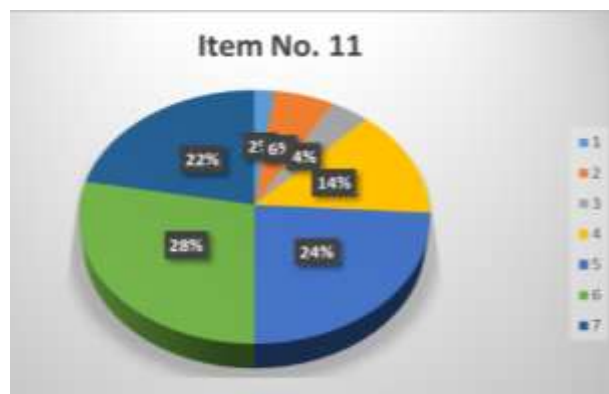
10. My teacher listens to how I would like to do things.



**Graph 11** Students feel that they are listened to  
Source: Own Elaboration

The results of this item regarding the students feeling listened to showed that 31 % agreed completely, followed by 27 % which is above the neutral value and the minimum value was obtained by 4 % with results above the minimum value.

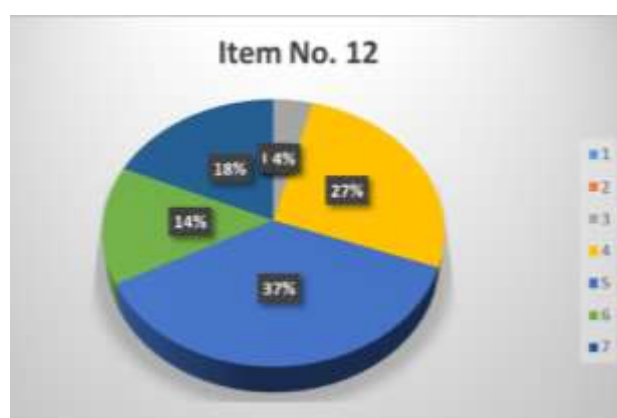
11. My teacher handles people's emotions very well.



**Graph 12** Handling of emotions  
Source: Own Elaboration

Item No. 11 related to the teacher's handling of emotions obtained 28 % in level 6, 24 % in the highest level related to strongly agree, 22 % in the value above neutral, and the rest distributed in the other values.

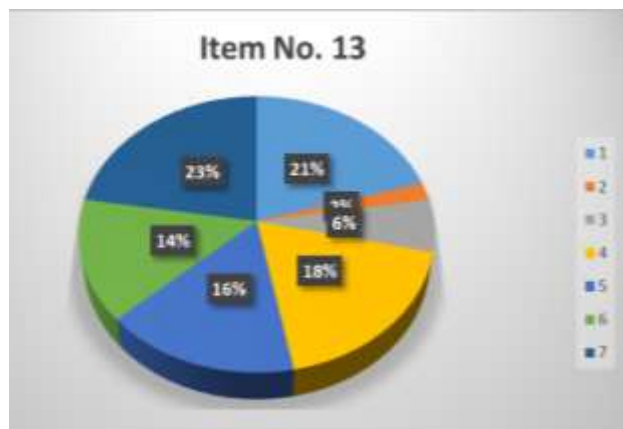
12. I feel that my teacher cares about me as a person.



**Graph 13** Teacher acceptance  
Source: Own Elaboration

The highest scores for this item were 37 % in total agreement, although it is noteworthy that 27 % expressed a neutral opinion, although the majority responded favourably to the fact that they felt that they were important for teachers.

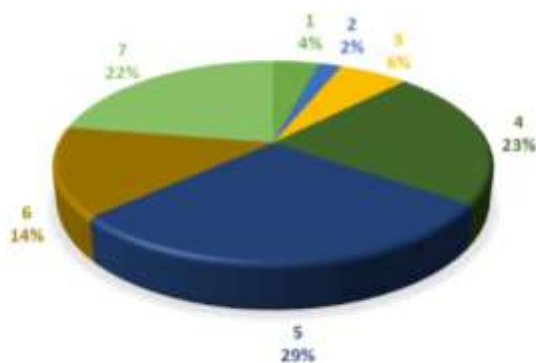
13. I don't feel good about the way my teacher talks to me.



**Graph 14** Empathy with the teacher  
Source: Own Elaboration

This question is presented in the form of negation and was perhaps misunderstood by some students as the results show the highest value in the score 7 with 23 % meaning strongly agree, however the second value resulted with 21 % in the lowest value which is 1 with strongly disagree, the rest was distributed similarly in the rest of the values.

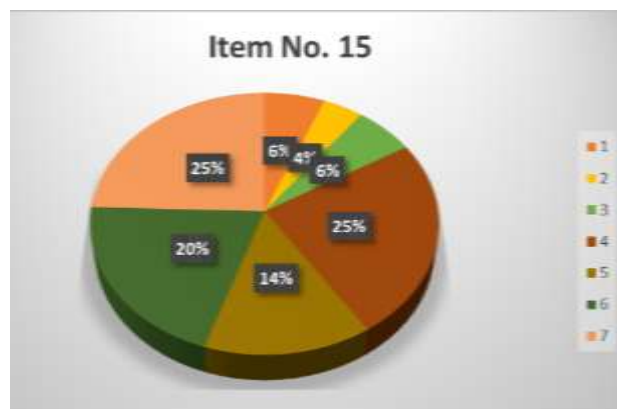
14. My teachers try to understand how I see things before suggesting new ways of doing them.



**Graph 15** Teacher understanding  
Source: Own Elaboration

Item No. 14 obtained 29 % in the upper value of neutral, 23 % in neutral, 22 % in strongly agree and the rest of the other scores.

15. I feel able to share my emotions with my teacher.



**Graph 16** Emotions  
Source: Own Elaboration

The highest results for this item concerning students' confidence in expressing their emotions to the teacher are in strongly agree with 25 % and 25 % also in the neutral value, 20 % in value 3 referring to two points above strongly disagree and the rest distributed in the other values.

## Conclusions

The data analysis and processing of this research yielded favourable results that denote a good learning climate.

The instrument that was used basically measures the perception that students have in relation to the autonomy that teachers give to their students, resulting in the majority with the highest points in the option totally agree.

Similarly, the dimensions of communication, interest, respect and interpersonal relations showed favourable results. This indicates that the learning climate in the Academic Unit of the North of Nayarit State is good, achieving empathy with students, teachers and other members of the university community.

Dominguez *et al* (2020) refers that a learning climate must be interactive, as it benefits student learning. In this regard, Tomas *et al* (2016) state that a motivating learning climate should be promoted within the classroom, as this is related to the goals and objectives that students have.

Taking into account the current results within the Academic Unit of the North of the State of Nayarit, the researcher recommends that future studies be carried out on other degree programmes in order to compare the two types of learning climate.

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