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Sense of Presence and Anxiety Depending on the Daily Schedules in Junior High Schools

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Abstract

In the present study, a questionnaire for easily assessing class adjustment depending on the daily schedule was developed, and characteristics of each setting were examined. Criteria for detecting such students were also developed depending on the daily schedule settings. All the students enrolled in a public junior high school participated in the survey. The number of participants was 331. The sense of presence and anxiety felt in relationships with others were inquired depending on the eight daily schedules below: school arrival/entering classrooms, morning meetings/morning studies, lessons, breaks, lunch, cleaning, end-of-day meetings, and club activities. Aiming to detect students that needed secondary or tertiary support, criteria were examined, with regard to whether a student belonged to the unsatisfied group or not as an objective variable (1: unsatisfied 0: not unsatisfied), with the scores of the sense of presence and anxiety in eight schedules as explanatory variables. Stepwise discriminant analysis was conducted to select the explanatory variable that was the most effective. The results indicated that the sense of presence in the morning meetings and breaks, as well as anxiety in lessons, were selected and significant discriminant function was obtained (Wilks' λ = .723, p < .01). The discriminant function was below z = −0.18 × presence in morning meetings − 0.32 × presence in breaks + 0.64 × anxiety in lessons + 1.10 and the positive discriminant ratio was 80.4%. Providing student guidance based on daily schedules is considered effective for teachers to understand students and identify students that need secondary support at an early stage.

Keywords

Psycho-Educational Support, Classrooms, School Satisfaction

1. Introduction

Children develop by dealing with various tasks in their school life and teachers

are expected to support children so that they can proactively attend to these tasks. Such support provided by teachers to children is comprehensively known as psycho-educational support services. Ishikuma (1999) classified the services into the following three stages: "Primary services," or the support for dealing with all the needs of children, consisting of preventive support and development promotion support. The former provides services in advance by predicting tasks that many children will face, whereas the latter facilitates the development of adaptability that is required of children during school life. "Secondary services" are the support given to some children needing special consideration, such as those unwilling to go to school, showing a decline in learning motivation, or having difficulties in making friends, among others. "Tertiary support services" are the support for specific children needing individual and special support, such as those absent from school for a long time, getting bullied, or having learning disabilities, among others.

Most of the educational activities conducted in schools are implemented in classrooms. Psycho-educational services are also often provided in classrooms. A classroom is the base unit specified by the educational system. It is a learning group for efficiently achieving educational goals and promoting subject learning. Moreover, it functions as a life group, which facilitates students' sociality. The condition and the environment of a class have a significant effect on students that are enrolled in the class. Psychosocial characteristics of classes are called the classroom climate, which affects various aspects such as children's academic achievement (Anderson et al., 2004; Liu & Wang, 2008; Patrick et al., 2011) and social behaviors (Benard, 2004; Thomas et al., 2011), among others. Findings related to functional aspects of a class in dealing with problem behaviors such as bullying and school refusal as well as school adjustment have been accumulated (Wang et al., 2013; Young et al., 2012).

A questionnaire consisting of multidimensional subscales has often been used as measures for evaluating children's class adjustment and the classroom climate (Chávez, 1984; Ito & Matsui, 2001; Kawamura, 2000; Kurihara & Inoue, 2010; Ito & Matsui, 2001). The Classroom Environment Scale (Trickett & Moos, 1995) and the Learning Environment Scale (Fraser, 1982) are scales for evaluating class adjustment and the classroom climate. Findings related to characteristics of a class and instructional intervention methods have accumulated as a result of using these scales. However, characteristics of classes often differ depending on various environmental factors. For example, the class atmosphere would be different depending on the existence of teachers. Moreover, the content of activities would also affect the class atmosphere; it would be different for example, during lessons from the sports day. The classroom climate is dynamic, and it is important to consider the situation of activities. Therefore, it is difficult to generally quantify a class atmosphere.

Various activities are conducted at schools, such as giving or receiving lessons, taking breaks, and having lunch, among others. Such daily activities are regarded as "daily schedules" in this study, and children and classes were examined de-

pending on the settings of each schedule. Yoshida and Kida (2014) developed a scale for quantitatively evaluating the sense of presence and anxiety in classrooms, by focusing on daily schedules. This scale was designed to detect students that need secondary or tertiary support, and it is highly useful for student guidance. This scale has been standardized depending on daily schedule settings, and comparison between the settings could not be conducted. Furthermore, it was difficult to easily implement the scale, because it consists of 50 or more items.

In the present study, a questionnaire for easily assessing class adjustment depending on the daily schedule was developed, and characteristics of each setting were examined. From the perspective of student guidance, it is especially important to detect students that would require secondary or tertiary support in the early stages. Therefore, criteria for detecting such students were also developed depending on the daily schedule settings.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

All the students enrolled in a public junior high school participated in the survey. The number of participants was 330 (1st year students; N = 118, boys = 66, girls = 52: 2nd year students; N = 106, boys = 53, girls = 53: 3rd year students; N = 106, boys = 65, girls = 41). The mean age was 13.6 years. The atmosphere of the school was calm, with few students having serious problems related to student guidance.

2.2. Content of the Survey

The sense of presence and anxiety felt in relationships with others were inquired depending on the eight daily schedules below: school arrival/entering classrooms, morning meetings/morning studies, lessons, breaks, lunch, cleaning, end-of-day meetings, and club activities. Regarding the sense of presence, participants were inquired as follows; "Do you feel that your behaviors, ideas, and presence have approved? Do you sometimes have a feeling of satisfaction or fulfillment? Do you sometimes feel happy?" They were also inquired as follows regarding their anxieties; "Do you sometimes feel that you are out of place? Have you ever experienced unpleasant things done by others?" Participants were required to respond using a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very often).

Furthermore, the school satisfaction scale (Questionnaire-Utilities: Q-U) developed by Kawamura (2000), consisting of 20 items was administered. Participants were required to respond using a five-point scale: often (5 points), sometimes (4 points), occasionally (3 points), rarely (2 points), and never (1 point). This scale consists of two subscales (1) approval score (whether one's presence and behaviors are approved by others) and (2) infringement score (whether one is bullied or teased by others, or has maladaptive feelings). The reliability and the validity have been confirmed. Each subscale consists of 10 items.

2.3. Survey Period and Implementation Methods

The survey was implemented in November 2012 during school hours and class activity time in each class where participants were enrolled. Questionnaires were distributed simultaneously by all the class teachers, responses were made immediately and collected. Class teachers were given instructions on points to note in advance and required to read them aloud before conducting the survey. The questionnaires were filled out anonymously, and participants were clearly informed that their anonymity would be protected. Regarding the consent to the survey, participants were orally informed that they responded by their own free will and need not respond to items that they cannot or do not want to respond. The above procedures were common to all the classes.

2.4. Analysis Procedures

For approval scores and infringement scores, two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted with sex (male/female) and school years (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) as between-subject factors. For the scores of sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily schedules, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with the daily schedules as within-subject factors. Cluster analysis (Ward's method, Euclidean distance) was conducted using the mean values of each daily schedule. A two-way ANOVA was conducted with the schedules as within-subject factors and four types of class satisfaction as between-subject factors. IBM SPSS 22 was used for statistical analysis.

3. Results

3.1. Degrees of Class Satisfaction

Fundamental statistics on approval scores and infringement scores of the class satisfaction scale were calculated depending on the school year and sex (Table 1). Two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted with sex (male/female) and school years (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) as between-subject factors. The results indicated there were no significant interactions or main effects of approval scores. Nor were significant interactions observed in infringement scores. There were significant main effects of the school year and sex. Males indicated significantly higher scores compared to females. Multiple comparisons were conducted using the Bonferroni method on school years, which indicated that 2nd year students had significantly higher scores compared to 3rd year students.

Next, participants were classified into the following groups based on Kawamura's criteria (2000): the satisfied group (n = 161), infringement recognition group (n = 36), unapproved group (n = 70), and unsatisfied group (n = 64). Table 2 shows cross-tabulation based on the sex and school years. A chi-squared test was conducted and residuals were examined to investigate the effects of sex and school years on the type of class satisfaction. Results indicated that 1st year male students in the unsatisfied group had a significantly higher score compared to female students.

Table 1. Class satisfaction scale.

	School year		
	1st	2nd	3rd
Approval Scores			
Males	33.0 ± 8.3	34.2 ± 5.9	34.6 ± 7.5
Females	35.9 ± 6.1	33.6 ± 5.6	35.3 ± 6.5
Infringement scores			
Males	20.8 ± 7.8	21.0 ± 7.4	18.4 ± 8.1
Females	17.5 ± 7.5	20.0 ± 7.5	17.0 ± 6.3

Table 2. Four types of the class satisfaction.

School years	Sex	4 types								Total
		Satisfied group		Infringement recognition group		Unapproved group		Unsatisfied group		
1st	Males	29	(43.9%)	10	(15.2%)	9	(13.6%)	18	(27.3%)	66
	Females	31	(59.6%)	4	(7.7%)	14	(26.9%)	3	(5.8%)	52
	Total	60	(50.8%)	14	(11.6%)	23	(19.5%)	21	(17.8%)	118
	$\chi^2 = 13.0$**									
2nd	Males	20	(37.7%)	9	(17.0%)	11	(20.8%)	13	(24.5%)	53
	Females	22	(41.5%)	4	(7.5%)	14	(26.4%)	13	(24.5%)	53
	Total	42	(39.6%)	13	(12.3%)	25	(23.6%)	26	(24.5%)	106
	$\chi^2 = 2.4$									
3rd	Males	34	(52.3%)	5	(7.7%)	13	(20.0%)	13	(20.0%)	65
	Females	25	(61.0%)	3	(7.3%)	9	(22.0%)	4	(9.8%)	41
	Total	59	(55.7%)	8	(7.5%)	22	(20.8%)	17	(16.0%)	106
	$\chi^2 = 2.0$									

**, $p < .01$.

3.2. The Sense of Presence and Anxiety Depending on the Daily Schedules

Table 3 shows basic data on the sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily schedules. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with the daily schedules as within-subject factors. The results indicated significant main effects of both the sense of presence and anxiety (presence; $F = 72.6$, $p < .01$; anxiety; $F = 785.4$, $p < .01$). Multiple comparisons were conducted, and schedules were classified into four groups depending on the sense of presence. Morning meetings and morning studies had the lowest score, which was significantly lower than all other schedules. Club activities and breaks had significantly higher scores than all other schedules. Lunch was significantly higher compared to end-of-day meetings, lessons, cleaning, and school arrival and entering classrooms. On the other hand, anxiety was significantly higher in lessons, compared to lunch, end-of-day

Table 3. Evaluation of the sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily schedules.

Daily schedules	Score	
	Presence	Anxiety
Arrival/entering classrooms	4.45 ± 1.39	1.97 ± 1.43
Morning meetings/studies	4.03 ± 1.39	1.93 ± 1.35
Lessons	4.37 ± 1.37	2.08 ± 1.48
Breaks	5.36 ± 1.38	2.01 ± 1.45
Lunch	4.78 ± 1.38	1.91 ± 1.33
Cleaning	4.42 ± 1.45	1.98 ± 1.40
End-of-day meetings	4.29 ± 1.41	1.92 ± 1.35
Club activities	5.22 ± 1.42	2.08 ± 1.38

meetings, as well as morning meetings and morning studies.

Cluster analysis (Ward's method, Euclidean distance) was conducted using the mean values of each daily schedule. Based on the shape of a dendrogram, it was judged that the eight schedules should be classified into four categories (Figure 1). The first category includes morning meetings and morning studies, school arrival and entering classrooms, cleaning, and end-of-day meetings. In this category, both the sense of presence and anxiety indicated low scores. The second category included only lessons, showing low scores for the presence and high anxiety. The third category included only lunch time, indicating high scores for the presence and low anxiety. The fourth category includes breaks and club activities, showing high scores of both presence and anxiety.

3.3. Class Satisfaction and the Sense of Presence and Anxiety

Table 4 shows the mean values of responses for the sense of presence and anxiety in each daily schedule, based on the results of the class satisfaction scale. Figure 2 shows scatter plots indicating the mean values of each schedule. A two-way ANOVA was conducted with the schedules as within-subject factors and four types of class satisfaction as between-subject factors. The results indicated significant interactions in both the sense of presence and anxiety (presence; $F = 2.1$, $p < .01$: anxiety; $F = 2.4$, $p < .01$). Therefore, simple main effects were examined. Regarding the sense of presence, the satisfied group and the infringement recognition groups showed significantly higher scores during lessons, compared to the unapproved group and unsatisfied group. Regarding school arrival, breaks, and lunch time, the satisfied group showed significantly higher scores compared to the unapproved group and unsatisfied group. Moreover, the infringement recognition group showed significantly higher scores compared to the unsatisfied group. In morning meetings, the score of the infringement recognition group was significantly higher compared to the unapproved and the unsatisfied groups. Moreover, at the end-of-day meetings, the scores of the infringement recognition group and the satisfied group were significantly higher
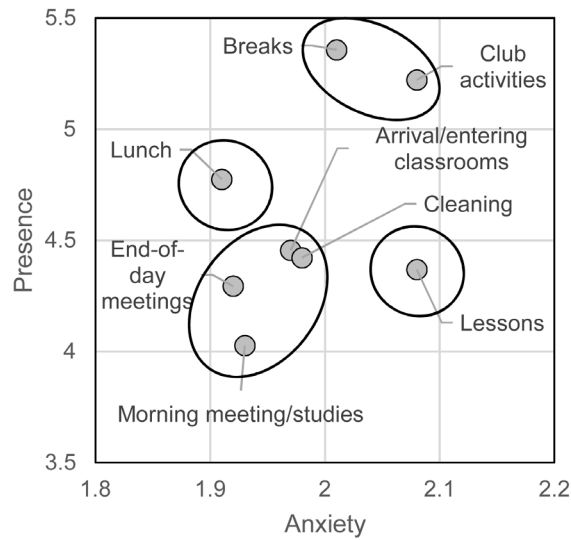
Figure 1. The sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily schedules.

Table 4. Class satisfaction levels and the sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily shedules.

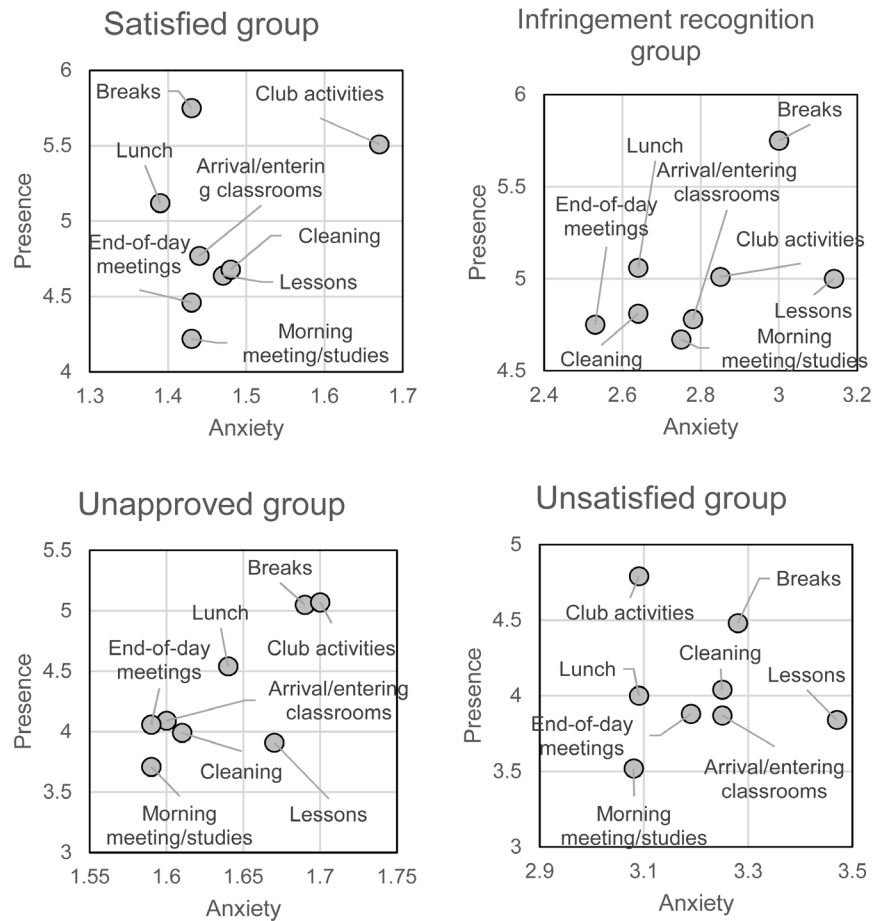|	Class satisfaction levels				
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	
	Satisfied group	Infringement recognition group	Unapproved group	Unsatisfied group	
	$n = 161$	$n = 36$	$n = 70$	$n = 64$	
Presence					
Arrival/entering classrooms	4.77 ± 1.39	4.78 ± 1.22	4.09 ± 1.37	3.87 ± 1.22	D < B; D,C < A
Morning meetings/studies	4.22 ± 1.31	4.67 ± 1.45	3.71 ± 1.43	3.52 ± 1.26	D < A; D,C < B
Lessons	4.64 ± 1.35	5.00 ± 1.31	3.91 ± 1.42	3.84 ± 1.07	D,C < A,B
Breaks	5.75 ± 1.27	5.75 ± 1.08	5.05 ± 1.42	4.48 ± 1.30	D < B; D,C < A
Lunch	5.12 ± 1.32	5.06 ± 1.49	4.54 ± 1.40	4.00 ± 1.10	D < B; D,C < A
Cleaning	4.68 ± 1.40	4.81 ± 1.79	3.99 ± 1.51	4.04 ± 1.10	C < B; C,D < A
End-of-day meetings	4.46 ± 1.40	4.75 ± 1.44	4.06 ± 1.48	3.88 ± 1.22	D < B,A
Club activities	5.51 ± 1.40	5.01 ± 1.58	5.07 ± 1.20	4.79 ± 1.45	D < A
Anxiety					
Arrival/entering classrooms	1.44 ± 0.91	2.78 ± 1.78	1.60 ± 1.16	3.25 ± 1.54	A,C < B,D
Morning meetings/studies	1.43 ± 0.88	2.75 ± 1.66	1.59 ± 1.15	3.08 ± 1.45	A,C < B,D
Lessons	1.47 ± 0.93	3.14 ± 1.84	1.67 ± 1.21	3.47 ± 1.41	A,C < B,D
Breaks	1.43 ± 0.89	3.00 ± 1.96	1.69 ± 1.19	3.28 ± 1.50	A,C < B,D
Lunch	1.39 ± 0.85	2.64 ± 1.61	1.64 ± 1.17	3.09 ± 1.45	A,C < B,D
Cleaning	1.48 ± 1.01	2.64 ± 1.64	1.61 ± 1.18	3.25 ± 1.40	A,C < B,D
End-of-day meetings	1.43 ± 0.88	2.53 ± 1.52	1.59 ± 1.15	3.19 ± 1.50	A,C < B < D
Club activities	1.67 ± 1.06	2.85 ± 1.73	1.70 ± 0.91	3.09 ± 1.62	A,C < B,D

Figure 2. Class satisfaction levels and the sense of presence and anxiety depending on daily schedules.

than the unsatisfied group. Furthermore, regarding club activities, the score of the satisfied group was significantly higher compared to the unsatisfied group. As for anxiety, the scores of the infringement recognition group and unsatisfied group were significantly higher compared to the satisfied group and unapproved group for all the schedules. Regarding end-of-day meetings, the score of the unsatisfied group was significantly higher compared to the infringement recognition group.

Next, scores of the sense of presence were compared among daily schedules. Breaks and club activities showed the highest scores and morning meetings showed the lowest score in all the four groups. In the satisfied group, the scores of lesson hours and school arrival were significantly higher compared to morning meetings. On the other hand, in the infringement recognition group, the score of school arrival was low without significant differences from morning meetings. In the unapproved group, the score of lesson hours was low without significant differences from morning meetings. In the unsatisfied group, scores of both lesson hours and school arrival were low without significant differences from morning meetings. As for anxiety scores, the results of comparison among schedules were as follows: in the satisfied group, the score of club activities was

significantly higher compared to lunch. In the infringement recognition group, scores of breaks and lessons were significantly higher than those of end-of-day meetings, cleaning, and lunch time. There were no significant differences in the unapproved group. In the unsatisfied group, the score of lessons was significantly higher compared to morning meetings, club activities, and lunch.

Aiming to detect students that needed secondary or tertiary support, criteria were examined, with regard to whether a student belonged to the unsatisfied group or not as an objective variable (1: unsatisfied 0: not unsatisfied), with the scores of the sense of presence and anxiety in eight schedules as explanatory variables. Stepwise discriminant analysis (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter < .05; Probability-of-F-to-remove >.10) was conducted to select the explanatory variable that was the most effective, by taking multicollinearity into consideration. The results indicated that the sense of presence in the morning meetings and breaks, as well as anxiety in lessons, were selected and significant discriminant function was obtained (Wilks' λ = .723, p < .01). The discriminant function was below

z = −0.18 × presence in morning meetings − 0.32 × presence in breaks + 0.64 × anxiety in lessons + 1.10 and the positive discriminant ratio was 80.4%.

4. Discussion

4.1. Class Satisfaction Levels

Infringement scores in females were lower than that in males. Previous studies have indicated that pubescent girls tend to consider interpersonal relationships as more important than boys (Ito, 1993), and women's groups showed behavioral characteristics such as intimacy and exclusivity, which were not observed as often in the men's groups (Mishima, 2003). This suggests that women tend to value interpersonal relationships more than men and feel stronger anxiety. The results of the present study contradicted these findings of previous studies. According to Kawamura's (2000) assessment criteria for class satisfaction, the mean value of approval scores was 32.9, and that of infringement scores was 22.0 in junior high school students. When comparing the results of this study with the national mean values above, approval scores were higher, and infringement scores were lower in both sexes in all the school years. The school environment where this survey was conducted was rather calm, and many students were supposed to be satisfied with class life including relations among classmates. Therefore, stronger anxiety characteristic of pubescent girls might not have been observed in this study. Moreover, although there were significant sex differences in infringement scores, the effect size was small. Therefore, differences depending on the sex and school years were not considered in the following discussion.

4.2. Characteristics of Daily Schedules

The questionnaire conducted in this study adopted identical question items about each daily schedule, which made facilitated comparisons among the eight daily schedules, and they were classified into four groups from the perspective of

the sense of presence and anxiety.

Both the sense of presence and anxiety were low in morning meetings/studies, school arrival/entering classrooms, cleaning, and end-of-day meetings. In these situations, teachers are usually in the classroom and lead these activities in a planned manner. Students play various roles systematically and intentionally while being supported by teachers and they have plenty of opportunities to interact with each other by conducting these activities. Moreover, each student's role is not hard compared to lesson hours. Therefore, students might not feel strong anxiety.

During lesson hours, students indicated a low sense of presence and high anxiety. Lessons are activities that are mainly executed by teachers. Nevertheless, more proactive activities are expected of students during lessons than in morning meetings and end-of-day meetings. Furthermore, students feel anxiety more often than in other situations, such as when giving a speech and interacting with other students in learning. Teachers should give lessons by building a relationship among students, by considering the relationship between teachers and students. At junior high schools, lessons are given using the subject-based teacher system, and teachers other than class teachers tend to have weak relationships with students in their classes. They should try to understand students' subjective adjustment and the class climate in detail.

Students indicated a strong sense of presence and strong anxiety during breaks and club activities. In these situations, teachers usually have fewer opportunities to play a leading role by interacting with students, and students spend the time in a free atmosphere. Direct interactions among students are more freely conducted and students might feel the sense of presence more strongly. On the other hand, students tend to act without considering others because of less intervention by teachers and might have problems in subjective adjustment, which might have increased anxiety. Teachers should note in student guidance that relationships among students have a high degree of influence in these situations.

Students showed a strong sense of presence and little anxiety at lunch time. Activities at lunch time are limited because students mainly eat, and free interactions among students as well as between teachers and students are limited, which might have decreased anxiety.

Based on the above results, it is suggested that in situations with less interactions between teachers and students, such as breaks and club activities, students tend to feel uncomfortable because of others words and activities. Teachers should pay attention to students' anxiety in such situations. On the other hand, in morning meetings, end-of-day meetings, and cleaning, students are protected from anxiety because they are under the teachers' guidance. In these situations, teachers should consider students' sense of presence for increasing their class adjustment and improving the class climate by giving roles to students and providing feedback about their achievements.

4.3. Class Satisfaction Levels and the Sense of Presence and Anxiety Depending on Daily Schedules

The sense of presence and anxiety in each daily schedule were examined depending on the four types of class satisfaction. In the satisfied group, scores during breaks were characteristic. In other three types, both the sense of presence and anxiety were high. On the other hand, in the satisfied group, the sense of presence was high but anxiety was low. It is suggested that teachers' guidance for decreasing anxiety during breaks would be especially important.

In the unsatisfied group, scores during cleaning time, school arrival and entering classrooms, and club activities were characteristic. In other three types, both the sense of presence and anxiety were low during cleaning time and during school arrival and entering classrooms. In the unsatisfied group, in contrast, the sense of presence was low and anxiety was high. Though these settings are under the teachers' guidance, interactions between teachers and students are relatively weak compared to during lessons, and students more often take the initiative in activities. Especially, when arriving in school and entering the classroom, as well as during breaks students spend time in a free atmosphere. From the perspective of guidance, as much consideration as during break times is required in these situations. Regarding club activities, the unsatisfied group showed a low sense of presence and high anxiety, whereas other three types indicated high presence and high anxiety. Activities based on free interactions among students are often observed during club activities. Therefore, sufficient consideration about students' subjective adjustment is required.

Finally, discriminant analysis was conducted with students in the unsatisfied group, because they tend to become the target of bullying and refuse to attend school, which requires secondary or tertiary services. The results indicated that special consideration is necessary for students that have a low sense of presence during a breaks and morning meetings, and feel strong anxiety during lessons. Students that do not have friends and tend to be alone during breaks cannot have a sense of presence because they have few chances to interact with other students. Regarding morning meetings, it is difficult to detect the reasons for the low sense of presence. Students that cannot feel motivated by study or other activities in the morning might have a low sense of presence in the morning meetings. Through giving them a role during morning meetings and during studies, might increase their sense of presence. Teachers should be careful about students' anxiety during lessons. There are various opportunities and situations in which students feel anxiety during lessons. Teachers should recognize these situations and examine when and how they feel anxiety. Students interact with each other when conducting group activities by depending on teaching styles. When they make a speech, they attract other students' attention and might feel anxiety. Lively discussions in class might increase the sense of presence, whereas it might also simultaneously increase anxiety. Infringement might decrease as a result of using the conventional mass teaching style. However, increasing students' sense of presence it also a teaching goal. Therefore, it is suggested that

teachers should keep trying to introduce an interactive teaching style.

As described above, providing student guidance based on daily schedules is considered effective for teachers to understand students and identify students that need secondary support at an early stage. Furthermore, it is a new approach to examine a class climate and students' subjective adjustment from the perspective of daily schedules. It is expected that such studies would increase in the future.

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