



Original Research Article

Organizational climate types prevailing in public and private secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone of Delta State Nigeria

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The study was aimed at determining the prevailing organizational climate types in public and private owned secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial zone of Delta State of Nigeria. Two research questions were stated. The study was a descriptive survey involving a sample of 768 respondents (48 principals and 720 teachers) selected through a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected through a 42-item researcher-developed questionnaire, structured on a four-point Mean scores of the obtained aggregate were used to answer the research questions. The findings indicated that autonomous, controlled, open and paternal school organizational climates were prevalent in public and private secondary schools in Delta North senatorial zone of Delta state. The major implication of the findings of this study is based on the fact that more than one and up to four school organizational climates prevail in secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial zone. The conclusion is that the principals are aware and have been ensuring balanced organizational climate as evident in the prevailing number of organizational climate types in the private and public schools.

Key words: Principals, teachers, organizational climate, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

The school as an organization exists for the sole purpose of coordinating the material and human resources of its environment towards the achievement of some pre-determined educational goals. For the school to carry out its functions, there is the need to effectively organize and coordinate its various units to enable it harness the various resources towards achieving its optimal goal of educating the students. To be able to achieve this task, the school administrator faces the challenges of determining the specific set of activities, which could be taken together, or separately to achieve school programmes. For the school administrator to effectively coordinate the various activities highlighted above, there is need to maintain a positive organizational climate within the school.

Organizational climate is the internal quality that is unique and peculiar to an organization. Organizational climate has been defined as the way in which organizational

members perceive and characterize their environment in an attitudinal and value-based manner (Dorathi, 2011; Kao, 2015). It is a set of attributes specific to a particular organization that may be induced from the way the organization deals with its members and its environment (West, 2002). In generalized term, organizational climate can be seen as the social and psychological environment or atmosphere that characterizes a particular organization. It is assumed that organizational climate comprise shared perceptions about organizational norms, beliefs, values, practices, and procedures that can be observed at general or specific levels (Sinha, 2015; Van Muijen, 1998; Guldenmund, 2000).

School organizational climate has also been described as the personality of the schools. Just as individuals have personalities, so too, do schools. It is this personality of the school that Halphin in Ikediugwu (2008), described as the

organizational climate of the school; that is, personality is to the individual what organizational climate is to the organization. This implies that schools and colleges can be identified with specific climate that describes the interaction and influence patterns among members in that school or college. Halpin and Croft (1963) also conceived of climate as being a blend of two important dimensions of interpersonal interaction, which is conceived as a blend of (a) the principal's and (b) the teachers' interaction. They came up with six types of climates on a continuum: open, autonomous, controlled, familiar, paternal, and closed. An open climate is one characterized by genuineness, low hindrance, low disengagement, average intimacy, and high esprit of teachers; and low aloofness, low production emphasis, and high thrust and consideration of the principal. In an autonomous climate, teachers tend to possess complete freedom to conduct their work and fulfill their social needs as they wish. Spirit and intimacy are relatively high and there is little disengagement or hindrance, and less production emphasis from principals. The controlled school organisational climate is highly task-oriented and gives room for production or achievement of organizational goals. Principals dominate all school activities. Goals are highly emphasized with little attention to consideration and satisfaction of individuals' personal and social needs. In the familiar school organisational climate, there is high degree of consideration and intimacy with little emphasis on production. A congenial and friendly atmosphere exists between principals and teachers. Social needs satisfaction is high while little is done to control or direct the groups' activities towards goal achievement. The paternal school organisational climate is referred to as one in which the principal discourages the emergence of leadership acts from the teachers and attempts to solely initiate all leadership himself. Teachers work in isolation and essentially try to compete with one another, and each has confidence in himself/herself. Bickering and frictions are the order of the day, there is no trust, and the use of grapevine communication is valued. The closed climate is characterized by high disengagement, high hindrance, low esprit, and average intimacy of teachers; and high aloofness, high production emphasis, and high thrust of the principal. There is inadequate communication and poor recognition of skilled employees. West (2002), added that in this close climate type, there are no clear job objectives, staff are not aware of performance gaps, and are therefore less attuned to the need to fill the gaps. These characteristics of organizational climate tend to distinguish one school from another (Adeyemi, 2008; Adeogun and Olosemeka, 2011).

Many studies reported in the literature reviewed, showed that a combination of the open, autonomous, controlled and familiar climate types is vital in producing a positive or balanced organizational climate that facilitates loyalty, commitment, and trust (Bolman and Deal, 1991; Cheng, 1994). Spillane (2005), noted that where there is a balanced prevalence of the open, autonomous, controlled and familiar climate types, a conducive organizational

climate is created in the school; teachers would be happier, more co-operative and have improved task performance irrespective of whether they are in private or public schools. A school that exhibits an open climate through both teacher and principal behaviors increases the school's effectiveness through enhanced staff performance, morale, and student achievement levels (Dorathi, 2011; Coda et al., 2015). A balanced organizational climate is likely to yield benefits such as harmony between an organization and its members. Thus assessing the organizational climate of a school provides a constructive guide for improving the school.

Statement of the problem

Reports of school administration in private schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone have shown an appreciable level of teacher commitment, productivity, discipline and high academic performance for students. Parents are involved in school administration and a cordial relationship exists between the teachers and the parents in most private schools.

In contrast, in public schools, teachers appear to be non-challant and not committed. Lateness to school, absence from classes, inadequate preparation of lesson notes, inadequacy of written work for students and insubordination by teachers are common in these schools. It is also argued that some teachers are not dedicated to their jobs and some teachers take to other businesses during the official school hours. Confrontations, tensions, and disagreements among principals, teachers and students exist in some public schools. Generally, there is a high rate of indiscipline and examination malpractices to the extent that Delta State was listed among the five top examination malpractices ridden States in Nigeria.

The researcher is inclined to believe that the existence of these problems in the system might be the result of prevailing organizational climate in the schools. The problem of this study is therefore to identify which organizational climate types are prevalent in private and public secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone of Delta State.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the prevailing school organizational climate type in public secondary school in Delta North Senatorial zone?
2. What is the prevailing schools organizational climate type in private secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial zone?

Research design

The study utilized descriptive survey research design. According to Ofo (1999), a descriptive survey research

generally collects data from a defined population to describe the present condition of the population using the variables under study. In this study, data was collected from a sample of the defined population based on the variables under study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Area of the study

This study was conducted in Delta North Senatorial zone of Delta State. The zone is made up of nine local government areas namely Aniocha North, Aniocha South, Oshimili North, Oshimili South, Ndokwa East, Ndokwa West, Ukuani, Ika South, and Ika North East. There were a total of 60 public and 28 private secondary schools in the area.

Population of the study

Eighty-eight principals (88) and one thousand, eight hundred and fifty-nine (1,859) teachers serving in public and private schools in Delta North Senatorial zone made up population for the study. Based on data obtained from the Post Primary Schools Service Board (PPSSB) in 2009, this population of 88 principals and 1859 teachers were serving in the 88 secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone of Delta State in the 2008-2009 academic session.

Sample and sampling technique

The sample for the study was 768 respondents (48 principals and 720 teachers. Simple random sampling was used to select twenty-four public and twenty-four private schools. Then from each of the selected schools 15 teachers were randomly selected making it 720 teachers.

Instrument for data collection

The instrument used in the collection of data for this research is a questionnaire titled "Schools Organisational Climate Types Questionnaire (SOCTQ)" developed by the researcher. The questionnaire had a total of 42 items. Each organizational climate has seven items. Responses to items of the questionnaire were on a 4-point scale that ranged from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree to Strongly Disagree.

Validation of the instrument

To determine the face validity of the questionnaire, three copies of the questionnaire were presented to two experts in Educational Management from Delta State University, Abraka. These experts examined the relevance of the items in instrument to the work, the language used (whether they were ambiguous or adequate), suitability of the number of items and appropriateness of the instrument in general to the purposes of the study. The experts made several corrections that led to modifications in some of the items.

Reliability of the instrument

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, copies of the questionnaire were administered on ten principals and thirty teachers, three teachers from 10 secondary schools in Aniocha South Local Government Area of Delta State, which was outside the study area. Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using the split-half technique based on even and odd numbered items. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical analysis was computed for the two sets of scores. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient of 0.76 was obtained indicating suitability of the questionnaire for the study.

Method of data collection

Copies of the instrument were administered on the respondents with the help of five trained research assistants. At the end of three weeks of distributions of the questionnaire, six principals and 32 teachers did not return the copies given to them. On the whole, 38 copies were lost and 730 representing 95.05% percent of the total copies distributed were retrieved and analysed.

Method of data analysis

The mean and frequency of the responses to the questionnaire were used to answer the research questions. The acceptance mean cut -off point for each of the six clusters stood at 17.50. This was obtained by multiplying the number of items with the mean of the weighted responses options. That is $4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5 \times 7 = 17.50$.

RESULTS

Research question 1

What is the prevailing school organizational climate type in public secondary school in Delta North Senatorial zone?

Table 1 reveals that with mean scores above 17.50, the staff of public secondary schools indicated that autonomous, controlled open and then paternal schools organizational climate prevail in most of the secondary schools in their area. Again with mean scores less than 17.50, the respondents in public schools indicated that closed and familiar organizational climate do not prevail in most of their secondary schools.

Research question 2

What is the prevailing schools organizational climate type in private secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial zone?

In Table 2, it was observed that with means scores above 17.50, the respondents from private schools indicated that controlled autonomous open and paternal organizational climate prevail in their schools. Furthermore, with mean

Table 1. Mean scores on various types of organization climate by staff in public secondary schools

School organizational climate types	N	\bar{X}	Remarks
Autonomous	361	18.13	Prevailing
Closed	361	13.84	Not prevailing
Controlled	361	20.08	Prevailing
Familiar	361	16.39	Not prevailing
Open	361	18.52	Prevailing
Paternal	361	17.94	Prevailing

Table 2. Mean scores on the prevailing schools organizational climate in private schools by their school staff

School organizational climate types	N	\bar{X}	Remarks
Autonomous	369	20.08	Prevailing
Closed	369	15.06	Not prevailing
Controlled	369	21.76	Prevailing
Familiar	369	15.68	Not prevailing
Open	369	19.06	Prevailing
Paternal	369	19.92	Prevailing

scores less than 17.50, the respondents in private schools indicated that closed and familiar school organizational climates do not prevail in most of their schools.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this study, it was discovered that autonomous controlled, open and paternal school organization climates are prevalent in various public and private secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone in Delta State. The above findings agreed with the findings of Egenu (1998), who discovered that autonomous, controlled and open school organizational climate prevail in secondary schools in Imo State. Owerri which is densely populated just like Delta North Senatorial Zone was used in that study. The characteristic of the environment might be responsible for the type of school organizational climates prevailing in the areas. The only difference in the findings of the two studies was that in the present study, it was discovered that paternal school organizational climate prevail also in some schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone. This paternal climate according to Peretomode (1991), is characterized by an ineffective principal control, teachers split to factions or cliques, low morale among teachers, poor meeting of social needs and tasks and the principal is intrusive and a poor motivator. These behaviours are common with most schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone as reported earlier in this study.

Again, the findings in the present study disagrees with that of Nwogwugwu (1986), in Ibadan municipal who discovered that the organizational climates in most schools

were relatively closed. Ogbuagu (2006), blamed high population density for the type of organization climate and behaviours of both principals, teachers and students in secondary schools. Also Ossai (2006), reported that the number of teachers leaving the job coupled with low academic achievement of students might be due to the organizational climate prevalent in Delta State. Nevertheless, it appears that the increasing cases of poor decision making, poor resource provision as well as possible information breakdown and stressed that these could have adversely affected the organizational climate of secondary schools in Delta North public schools.

One could see that the only saviour of situations in some public schools is the prevalence of more than one school organizational climate in them. The fundamental thing here is that the prevailing organizational climate in both private and public schools are the same but the behaviours of the principals, teachers and students towards their work in them differ. As observed by Money (2007), in private secondary schools the staff spend their work time judiciously on classroom engagement and work extra school hours to help students pass examinations well. They manifest continuous obedience to constituted authorities, compliance with directives, punctuality and dedication to work affect their school system. The differences in the behaviours of staff of public and private schools having the same school organizational climates might be due to the people's attitude towards government works and things.

Conclusions

This study found that four organizational climate types are

prevalent in private and public secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Zone of Delta State. Specifically, the closed and familiar climates did not prevail in these schools. This implies that the problems obtained in secondary school administration in the State were not caused by the closed or familiar climates as commonly assumed. Therefore, educational planners, principals and teachers should improve on the prevailing climates in the schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and their implications, the following recommendations were made:

1. The various arms of the government especially those in charge of secondary education in the zone and state should try to provide schools with the necessary resources needed by the schools.
2. Since the principals are aware and have been demonstrating dynamic application of the leadership styles as evident in the prevailing number of organizational climate types in public schools, there is need for government to assist them in protecting school rules and regulations by supporting them all the time.
3. Policy makers should work closely with government to ensure the implementation of their policies in schools to ensure the achievement of their aims and objectives.
4. Seminars and workshops should be organized for principals and teachers to help them in sustaining various organizational climate types in the schools.

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