

SCHOOL CLIMATE AS A DETERMINANT OF TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN EKITI STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study examined school climate as a determinant of teachers' effectiveness in Ekiti State Secondary Schools. It was a survey research. Three hundred teachers were randomly sampled from six secondary schools in the three senatorial districts that make up Ekiti State. The respondents were given copies of questionnaires tagged "School Climate and Teacher Effectiveness". The data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviation, t-test statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings of the study found the controlled school climate as the predominant climate in schools. It was also found out in the study that the level of teachers' effectiveness was low and that, there was significant relationship between school climate and teachers' effectiveness; and also, a significant difference was found between teachers effectiveness in schools having open climate and schools having controlled climate. It was therefore recommended based on the findings that conducive climate which can enhance teachers' effectiveness should be provided in schools by all the stakeholders in education.

Introduction

Secondary education occupies a unique position in the educational system of Nigeria because it is that level that determines the academic and professional career of students' (Ekundayo, 2009). It can also be said in the words of Idowu (2009) that it is the bedrock upon which other levels of education are built.

In view of this, FGN (2004) in the National Policy on Education asserted that the broad aims of secondary education within the overall objectives are to prepare students for useful living within the society

and also prepare them for higher education. However, the above objectives cannot be achieved where the teachers who are the hubs of every educational system are not alive to their responsibilities as expected. The success of any organization (secondary schools inclusive) in achieving its goals and objectives depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of its workers' (Oguntoye, 2002). Also, Adesina (1997) and Ajani (1988) further asserted that the success of any educational programme rested squarely on teachers who constituted the most important foundation upon which success can be built. Teachers occupy a unique position in any educational system.

Having given the objectives of secondary education and the indispensable or unique roles teachers must play before these objectives can be achieved, the question to then ask is that; to what extent are teachers who are the arrow heads of achieving the aims of secondary education are living up to these expectations?

The crux of the matter is that it seems as if teachers' effectiveness in many of the secondary schools in Ekiti State is nothing to write home about. Their productivity seems low in terms of their non-challant attitude towards students' academic achievement. For instance, it seems typical in many secondary schools in the state to find some teachers who do not go for their lesson regularly instead they will be busy sleeping or gisting in the staff room, while some do not bother to prepare their lesson notes before teaching, which therefore implies that the knowledge imparted may not be in accordance to what the pupils should be taught. Akindutire (2001) while stressing the importance of preparation of lesson notes by teachers emphasized that lesson notes do help a teacher to get his/her own thinking straight.

It has been observed that some teachers do engage in farming and trading more than their primary assignment which is "teaching". Worse still, some teachers do engage their pupils in farming and domestic works during the school hours thereby depriving such pupils from the opportunity of learning during such period. Some of these teachers pay less attention to the discipline of their students. Poor methods of teaching appear to be the order of the day in many secondary schools in Ekiti State. Some of the teachers appear not to give enough room for active participation by students, lack of students motivation and consideration of individual differences seem a normal phenomenon in many secondary schools in Ekiti State. All these

observed problems appear to be militating against teachers' effective performance in many secondary schools in the state.

However, the assumed teachers' ineffectiveness has been attributed to so many factors` prominent among them according to Okeke (1990) are students level of seriousness, teacher's qualification, experience, dedication and commitment to duties, school climate, school leadership, instructional techniques, availabilities of physical and material resources and so on and so forth; but school climate appears to contribute more to the assumed teachers' ineffectiveness. It has been expressed that teachers appear to lack conducive school climate required for their effective job performance. No matter how good the secondary school programmes and the teachers, without a favourable school climate, the teachers may not be able to give their best to the system.

School climate in the words of Gary and Judith (2005) refers to the impressions, benefits and expectations held by members of the school community about their school as a learning environment, their associated behaviour and the symbols and institutions that present the patterned expressions of the behaviour. School climate can also be seen as the presence of an atmosphere of conscious commitment to foster the well-being, academic achievement and civic development of students. It includes the explicit mission and policies expected to create positive relationships, attitudes or dispositions and perceptions. It also entails a set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influences the behaviour of people in it (Hoy and Miskel 1987).

Formation of a positive school climate therefore requires the shared recognition and commitment of the school community members – the students as prime focus; the need for intellectual and instructional leadership by the school administration and the need for a competent and caring teaching staff who share common goals with students, parents and the community. A positive school climate includes identification, open and nurturing school methods that attempt to foster a sense of responsibility and efficacy among students and staff. There is also mutual respect and collaboration among administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community.

It is, therefore, the responsibility of the educational system to facilitate learning by creating the ideal situation for a child to discover

things for his/herself, especially through conducive school climate that can present challenges that can stimulate the learners' interest in learning. It is in this light that Ajani (1988) asserted that the way a person perceives his surrounding influences the way the person actually behaves in the environment, and that certain environments are more conducive than the others. This goes a long way to show that the school climate would surely have a great impact on the people therein.

For instance, a school climate may indicate a great deal of cooperation among various groups in the school setting while another might reveal a climate of tension, friction and even lack of cooperation among another group. This is to say that the school climate of any school could influence the effectiveness or productivity of both teachers and students positively or negatively as the case might be. School climates in the words of Fakunle (2010) are in various types. It can be opened, closed, controlled, paternal, familiar or autonomous climate. According to her, open climate is a type of school environment where nothing is hidden from any worker, every teacher feels satisfied with work. There is low hindrance, low disengagement, high intimacy, high morale and high consideration.

Kupermines (1997) further stressed that open climate is characterized with an atmosphere of love and cordial relationship between super-ordinate and subordinate, environment of trust, respect, mutual obligation and concern for others' welfare and also environment where basic amenities that could enhance teachers' effectiveness and students' academic achievement are on ground in relevant and adequate quantity and quality. Also, Omotosho (1992) and Adeyemi (2004) opined that open climate provides an enriching environment for both personal growth and academic success and equally very predominant in many schools. Arogundade (2009) also established in his work that environment as a whole plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of any organization.

On the other hand, closed climate is a type of school environment which is characterized with high disengagement, high hindrance, low morale and low consideration. The teachers are displeased with everybody while exhibiting lack of commitment to work. Autonomous school climate is characterized by complete freedom for teachers to conduct their work; controlled school climate is a school environment where the principal is highly domineering and

highly not considerate but emphasis is on productivity. Teachers' problems are given little attention. It is an atmosphere of hardwork at the expense of social life. Familiar school climate is a school environment where congenial sociability is emphasized at the expense of task accomplishment, and paternal school climate is a school environment where teachers are not overburdened with work but do not get along well with one another and tend to form competing factions.

The school climate in many secondary schools in Ekiti State which is the area of study appears to fall into one of the categories of school climate type identified above. For instance, most of the public secondary schools in the state seem to have principals who appear to put on non-challant attitudes towards the productivity of their teachers. It looks as if they are more engaged in their private businesses which can bring direct gratifications to them than their primary duties of administering their schools' and this seems to be jeopardizing effectiveness of the teachers who are under their supervisions.

It has equally been observed that physical facilities and instructional materials appear to be grossly inadequate in many secondary schools in Ekiti State; and in the words of Ajayi and Ayodele (2001) the availability of adequate instructional materials in schools enhances the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Avoseh (1984) further corroborates the above view that availability of educational facilities has positive effects on both the teachers' productivity and the students' academic achievements.

Moreover, it has been observed that lack of adequate qualified teachers seems to be the order of the day in many secondary schools in Ekiti State and this shortage of qualified teachers may lead to ineffectiveness on the part of few available teachers in the system and invariably poor academic performance of students might result from this. Based on the above observations, there is therefore the need to examine the relationship between the school climate and teachers' effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching activity in secondary schools in Ekiti State appears not to be encouraging. It seems as if some teachers are not discharging their

duties as they ought to. The anomalies in the teaching activities in our secondary schools and how school climate could enhance teaching effectiveness constituted the problem of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between school climate and secondary school teachers' effectiveness in Ekiti State. It is also to find out the type of school climate predominant in secondary schools in the state and the level of teachers' effectiveness in Ekiti State secondary schools.

To achieve these aims, two research questions were raised.

1. What type of school climate is predominant in secondary schools in Ekiti State?
2. What is the level of secondary school teachers' effectiveness in Ekiti State?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the school climate and teachers' effectiveness.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between teachers' effectiveness in schools having open climate and schools having controlled climate.

Methodology

The study employed the survey research design. The population comprised all secondary schools teachers in Ekiti State. The subjects of the study were drawn from six secondary schools selected through the simple random sampling technique from the three senatorial districts that made up Ekiti State. 300 teachers were sample from six schools with 50 teachers randomly chosen from each sampled school and each school was equally represented.

The instrument used in the conduct of this study was a self constructed questionnaire tagged "School Climate and Teachers Effectiveness" (SCATE). The questionnaire has two sections.

Sections A and B. Section A deals with the bio-data of the respondents such as name of school, location of school, school type, teaching experience, age and so on. Section "B" on the other hand deals with the

school climate variables than can be present in schools to promote effective and efficient performance of teachers.

The face and content validity of the instrument was ensured through experts in test and measurement, after which their corrections and suggestions were used to modify the instrument. The instruments reliability was also determine through a test-retest method of testing reliability which was carried out on 30 teachers of a secondary school in Ado-Ekiti metropolis who were not parts of the samples for this study. The test yielded a reliability estimate of 0.78, and this was considered high enough for reliability.

Percentages, frequency counts, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test statistics were used to analyse the research questions and hypotheses raised.

Results

Research Question 1: What type of school climate is predominant in secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 1: Type of school climate predominant in secondary schools in Ekiti State

School Climate	F	%
Open Climate	78	26%
Closed Climate	71	23.70%
Controlled Climate	151	50.3%
Paternal Climate	-	-
Familiar Climate	-	-
Autonomous Climate	-	-
Total	300	

As shown in Table 1, the controlled climate had the highest number of respondents. This therefore indicates that controlled climate was the climate that was predominantly used in the secondary schools sampled for this study. Out of the 300 respondents, 151(50.3%) claimed that the controlled climate was predominant in the schools. This was followed by the open climate with 78(26%) and closed climate with 71(23.7%). Most of the respondents disagreed with paternal, familiar and autonomous climates. This shows that controlled climate is the common feature in all the schools.

Research Question 2: What is the level of secondary school teachers' effectiveness in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Level of teachers' effectiveness

Teachers' Effectiveness	Frequency	Relative Percentage
Low	124	41.3
Moderate	103	34.3
High	73	24.3
Total	300	100

Table 2 indicates the level of teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State. The result indicates that out of 300 teachers used for the study, 124 (41.33%) had low level of effectiveness. Those who had moderate level of effectiveness were 103 (34.33%) while those who had high level of effectiveness were 73 (24.33%).

(24.33%) of respondents used. This then implies that the level of teachers' effectiveness was low.

Figure 1 further gives illustration of the level of teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State.

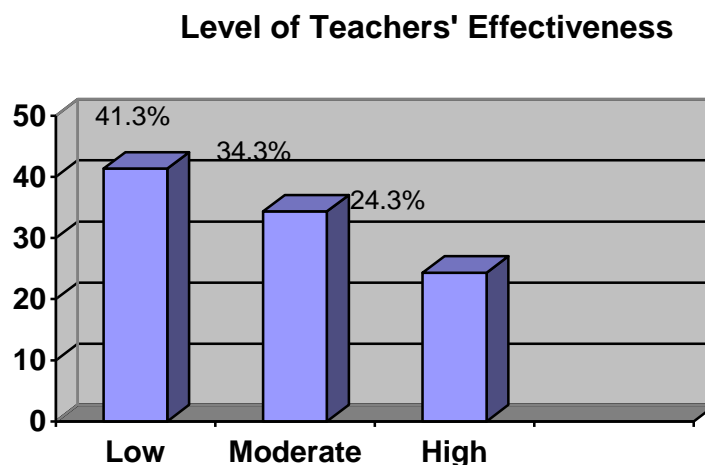


Figure 1: Level of teachers' effectiveness as shown in figure 1
The level of teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Ekiti State was low during the period under investigation.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between the school climate and teachers' effectiveness

Table 3: Pearson correlation summary of school climate and teachers' effectiveness

Variables	N	Mean	SD	F-Cal	r-cal
School Climate	300	14.02	1.71	0.413	195
Teachers' Effectiveness	300	66.42	5.42		

P < 0.05

The result in table 3 reveals that r-cal (0.413) is greater than r-table (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is therefore significant relationship between school climate and teachers' effectiveness.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between teachers' effectiveness in schools having open climate and school having controlled climate

Table 4: t-test analysis of teachers' effectiveness in schools having open and controlled climates

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-tab</i>
Open Climate	128	60.20	4.41	298	8.711	1.96
Controlled Climate	172	63.51	6.23			

P < 0.05

As shown in table 4, the t-cal (8.711) was greater than t-tab (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This then shows that there was a significant difference between teachers' effectiveness in school having open climate and the teachers' effectiveness in schools having controlled climate. Teachers in schools having controlled climate are more effective than teachers in an open climate. This is reflected in the high mean (63.51) for schools having controlled climate as against the lower means score (60.20) for schools having open climate.

Discussion of Findings

The finding revealed that the controlled school climate had the highest number of respondents, followed by the open climate and closed climate, most of the respondents disagreed with paternal, familiar and autonomous climates. This finding was contrary to earlier finding of Adeyemi (2004) whose studies found the open climate as the most predominant climate in schools. The high level of controlled climate in this study might be as a result of some principals' ability to merge two climates together for effective and efficient realization of the school goals.

The study further revealed that the level of teachers' effectiveness was low. This might have been as a result of the type of climate in many secondary schools in the state which are not really conducive for learning. This finding is in line with Okeke's (1990) study which indicated that effectiveness of teachers is a function of school climate, among others. The significant relationship found in this study between school climate and teachers' effectiveness might have

resulted from the fact that school environment plays an indispensable role in influencing and enhancing teachers' job performance, either positively or negatively. This finding corroborated the works of Arogundade (2009) and Fakunle (2010) which found out that work environment was significantly related to workers' performance or productivity.

It was also discovered in the study that there was a significant difference between teachers' effectiveness in schools having open climate and teachers' effectiveness in school having controlled climate. The implication of this is that the type of climate in school may likely affects teachers effectiveness. The finding of this study corroborates the report of Omotosho (1992) which stated that the type of school climate many at times determines the success of a school as an organization. He further stressed that if the school climate is positive, it can provide an enriching environment both for personal growth and academic success.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the controlled climate was the most predominant climate used in the secondary schools sampled for this study. Also, evidence in this study showed that teachers' effectiveness was low. This suggests that teachers' performance in the secondary schools sampled for this study was below expectation. The findings of the study have made the writers to conclude that school climate was a factor in teachers' effectiveness and that the significant difference between teachers' effectiveness in schools having open climate and school having controlled climate suggests that teachers' effectiveness is a function of the type of climate available in the school system.

Based on these findings, it is therefore safe to recommend that conducive climate should be provided in schools by all stakeholders in education in order to boost both the teachers' effectiveness and the students' academic achievement.

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