

Organizational Climate Variables in Correlation to Students' Achievement in Economics

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ABSTRACT The climate of an organization has a lot to do with the performance of the people in it. Therefore, this study examines the relationship that exists between organizational climate variables and students' academic achievement in economics. The ex-post facto type of survey research was used. Two structured questionnaires with reliability coefficient values of 0.90 and 0.88 respectively, were used. From the findings, the lowest contributor to students' academic achievement in Economics was the sense of belonging, while leader credibility made the greatest contribution followed by human relation. The study concludes that the school heads should consider factors that can promote cordial interpersonal relationship between students and teachers as well as examine the right credibility that will foster students' academic achievement in Economics teaching and learning.

INTRODUCTION

The underpinning work is in a school climate, and climate to them means morale but it has been acknowledged that time restrictions affected their contemplation of that concept to the collective collaboration between the school head and the teachers. Their study observed the following:

- (a) Teacher detachment from the education,
- (b) The school head loads teachers with tedious tasks and hassles,
- (c) Educators' view about meeting their wants in order to achieve satisfaction
- (d) Educators' pleasure of approachable social associations with their colleagues,
- (e) School heads' detachment and dependence on regulations and rules rather than familiar interactions with educators,
- (f) Chumminess of supervisor of educators by the school heads,
- (g) Teachers' observations that the school heads is functioning to change the institute in optimistic orders,
- (h) Teachers' opinions that the school head indulgences.

Climate of a school is enhanced with the combination of all the aforementioned factors (Ojelab 2009: 431-432).

According to Emunemu et al. (2014:62), collaborative school climate means the culture of the school that relates to values, norms and beliefs of school members especially the school

management and leadership. The teaching group constructs and internalizations to orientate their personal and professional relationships are germane to job satisfaction and students' academic achievement. It was argued that norms of individualism and non-interference that have defined the teachers' culture traditionally have shown a very weakened teachers' confidence about the efficacy of their practice.

In effective teaching of students, teachers should be familiar with the right climate that can promote effective learning and good performance. Hence, collaboration is needed because collaboration is regarded as a way of changing instruction in order to have a positive effect on students' learning outcomes such as higher standardized test scores. The teachers' belief that he or she possesses the ability to influence learners and have remarkable achievement in not only for the highly achieving learners but also the unmotivated and low achieving learners is commonly referred to as teacher self-efficacy as a result of conducive organization climate. Therefore, the organization climate or the school culture is positively related to students' academic performance.

Economics as a subject being taught enables the students to live evocatively within the varying economic world. This made the National Policy on Education (2011 revised) to assimilate the theoretic foundation of the subject with their real presentations. It is as a result of this that the National Curriculum and Oyo State syllabus for

Senior Secondary School (SSS) (2011) succinctly described the subject economics as having the following aims:

- ♦ To equip students with the basic principles of Economics necessary for useful living and higher education.
- ♦ To prepare and encourage students to be prudent and effective in management of scarce resources.
- ♦ To raise student respect for the dignity of labor and appreciation of economic, cultural and social values of their own society.
- ♦ To enable students to acquire knowledge for the practical solution of the economic problems of the society in Nigeria, developing countries and the world at large (Adu and Galloway 2015)

From the aforementioned aims, there is a posed question, which is: Why does one study Economics?

To answer this question, Adu (2012) gave the following reasons:

- ♦ The study of Economics enables a student to understand the nature of the complexity of the economic activities in which he is only a very small part.
- ♦ It enables students to understand and appreciate various government policies where choices have to be made such as probably to spend more money on free education and therefore provide less employment opportunities.
- ♦ The study of Economics provides the students with basic skills for analyzing Economic problems thereby preparing them better for positions where economic decisions have to be made.
- ♦ The study of Economics helps government promote growth and development therefore improving the quality of life of the citizens.
- ♦ Knowledge of Economics is useful to analyze fascinating patterns of socioeconomic behavior.
- ♦ The study of Economics is useful to understand and alter the inequalities in the distribution of income and opportunities.

In view of the above, every society is faced with three fundamental Economic problems:

- ♦ What to produce?
- ♦ How to produce?
- ♦ For whom to produce?

These problems are solved through the study of Economics. Economics as a subject being of-

fered at senior secondary level has become popular.

The popularity of Economics as a subject does not leave behind some shortfalls. The shortfalls include among others, insufficient teaching materials, and poor methods of teaching, to mention but a few that affect the teaching of Economics (Adu and Galloway 2015).

Research Objective

The academic achievement of Economics as a subject at senior secondary school level has not been encouraging. Therefore, it is imperative to undergo a study in order to ascertain the causes. Hence, the objective of this paper is to look at the effect of sense of belonging, human relations, and leader credibility (organizational climate) on the students' academic achievement in Economics.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. Do organizational climate variables have composite effects on the students' academic achievement in Economics?
2. Is the students' academic achievement relatively affected by organization climate variables?
3. Do organization variables predict the students' academic achievement in Economics?

Literature Review

Organizational Climate and Academic Achievement

Organizational climate is synonymous to organization culture, and organizational culture comprises the norms and beliefs of any organization that governs the people in order to maintain cordial relationship among themselves. Each organization has a culture that serves as values that patterns the effectiveness of such an organization. The climate of an organization serves as the guideline and policy to drive the organization forward. These climates, if acclimatized by the people, will enhance job performance and job satisfaction. Organization climate in the school environment is very imperative to the students' success and teachers' professional

achievement. The school heads and the teachers must adhere strictly to the culture of a school (Emunemu et al. 2014).

Organization climate characterizes the effectiveness of schools. Teachers and students should work in collaboration and have a good interpersonal relationship. It is widely believed that once a student dislikes a teacher, such a student cannot pass the subject being taught by the teacher. Hence, the teachers' attitude and level of professionalism is very important to drive home good academic achievement. According to Emunemu et al. (2014:61), effective schools are characterized by serene environments and a serene environment is associated with cordial interpersonal relationship than with rules and regulations. Effective organization climate of school must promote cohesion, collaboration, consensus, collegiality and sound communication. These climates will promote the willingness of learners to learn and readiness of the teacher to teach. According to them, the commitment of teachers and their level of collaboration and communication must be directed towards the students' academic achievement. Not only that the teachers should be committed and dedicated to their professional duties or articulated the vision of the school towards academic achievement of the students, but school on the other hand should recognize positive performance of teachers with adequate reinforcement as incentive for better work. The teachers need to have problem-solving orientation, readiness to assist learners in solving problems, play a pastoral role in class and adequately search for solutions to overcome the students' obstacle in learning, especially the learners with very low achievement.

It is against the various positions presented above that this study has incorporated seven common aspects of organizational climate such as, confidence, skirmish, self-esteem, payments, battle to change, leader reliability and incriminating into the instrument designed for the assessment of school climate. These aspects have been selected due to their peculiar nature of the school environment within the Nigerian context (Ojelabi 2009).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The ex-post facto type of survey is the research design for this study. The study explored

the effect organization climate variables on achievement of students in Economics.

Variables Used

A. Independent variables:

There is one (1) category of independent variables, that is, teacher effectiveness variables, which are:

- a. Sense of belonging
- b. Human relations
- c. Leader credibility

B. Dependent variable:

There is only one dependent variable in the study, that is,

- a. Students' achievement in Economics

Population

Students of Economics, teachers and the school head of public schools are the population for this study. They are taken from the six states from southwestern part of Nigeria consisting of Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti and Lagos.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

2,160 students, 108 economics teachers and 54 head teachers (Vice Principals) were selected using stratified sampling techniques.

Research Instruments

The instruments used for this study are outlined below.

Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ)

The instrument, which was developed by the researcher, consisted of four divisions. Division A sought for the background information of the respondents such as name, school, sex and rank. Division B, C and D consisted of characteristics, which the respondents reacted to on a scale of 1, 2, 3, and 4 for 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree', respectively. Section B consisted of ten (10) items on the general characteristics of sense of belonging. There were three (3) specific areas under sense of belonging such as trust, morale and reward. Division C consisted of seven (7) items on the

general characteristics of human relations. Meanwhile, there are three (3) specific areas such as conflict, resistance to change and scapegoating. Division D consisted of three (3) items on the general and specific characteristics of leader credibility.

Validity and Reliability of OCDQ

The instrument was validated by ensuring it was handed over to specialists in the field of Educational Management at the University level. The agreement indices of the judges' evaluation using Cohen Kappa gave a score of 0.90. The reliability of the instrument was ensured by trial testing it in ten (10) public secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. The researcher personally administered the instrument on ten (10) vice principals, ten (10) heads of departments of social sciences, ten (10) SS II Economics teachers, ten (10) peer teachers and fifty (50) SS II Economics students. Meanwhile, Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate its reliability, which was 0.72, 0.72 and 0.72 respectively for sections B, C and D.

Economics Achievement Test (EAT)

The instrument, which was developed by the researcher, comprised double divisions. Division A sought for the background information of the respondents such as name, school and sex. Division B consisted of thirty (30) multiple-choice items focusing on three (3) general areas such as basic concepts and tools for economic analysis, human and material resources component of Economics, and price determination system. Meanwhile, there were 15, 7 and 8 items focusing on the three general areas, respectively.

There were three (3) specific areas under basic Economic analysis tools and concepts such as basics of Economics, Economic Analy-

sis tools and concepts. There were two (2) specific areas under human and material resources such as population, production and division of labor. Nonetheless, there were two (2) specific areas under the price determination system such as demand and supply, and price system.

Validity and Reliability of EAT

The instrument was validated by ensuring it was handed over to specialists in the arena of Teacher Education and Economics Education as well as experienced secondary school Economics teachers. The agreement indices of judges' evaluation using Cohen Kappa gave a score of 0.88. The reliability of the instrument was ensured by trial testing it in ten (10) public secondary schools. The researcher, with the assistance of the SSII Economics teachers in the schools, administered the instrument on fifty (50) SSII Economics students. Meanwhile, Kuder Richardson – 21 was used to estimate its reliability, which gave a value of 0.73.

Analysis of Data

The inferential statistics of the regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson correlation were used to analyzed the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

Do organizational climate variables have composite effects on the students' academic achievement in Economics?

Table 1 reveals that sense of belonging was significantly related to academic achievement of students in Economics ($r=.225$; $p<.05$). Human relation took the second position, that is

Table 1: Organizational climate variables and student achievement in economics with Pearson Product Moment Correlations

Variables		Achievement	Sense of belonging	Human relations	Leader credibility
Pearson Correlation (<i>r</i>)	Achievement	1.000	.236*	.176*	-.415*
	Sense of belonging	.225*	1.000	.220	-.577
	Human relations	.163*	.220	1.000	-.289
	Leader credibility	-.415*	-.577	-.289	1.000

* Significant at $P<.05$

human relation is also significantly related to academic achievement of students in Economics ($r=.163$; $p<.05$), while leader credibility was not significant and negatively related to the students' academic achievement in Economics ($r=-.415$; $p<.05$). This in accordance with Schein (2012) that says the leaders' attitude has a lot to do with the morale of the students. That leader credibility made the greatest contribution to the variance of the prediction contradicts Odinko and Adeyemo's (2009), finding that self-concept is the most potent contributor to achievement while home language made significant contribution to the prediction. Also, Onyejiaku (2009) found that intelligence and special abilities account for sixty percent of a student's overall performance.

Table 2: Organizational climate and achievement in economics: summary of regression analysis

<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. error of the estimate</i>
.419	.176	.174	1.7593

From Table 2, sense of belonging, human relations, and leader credibility have positive relationships with the students' achievement in Economics ($R=.419$). Also, the adjusted R^2 value of .174 shows 17.4 percent of the total variance. The residuals and other factors amounted to 82.6 percent. Table 3 shows the composite effect of

the sense of belonging, human relations, and leader credibility on student academic achievement in Economics ($F_{(3, 2156)} = 152.992$; $p<.05$).

Research Question 2

Is the students' academic achievement relatively affected by organization climate variables?

From Table 4, sense of belonging made the least contribution to the students' academic achievement in Economics and hence is not significant ($b=.009$; $P<.05$). This is followed by human relation that took second position ($b=.061$; $P<.05$) and leader credibility took the lead ($b=.403$; $p<.05$). The findings contradict the studies by Eriksen and Dorte (2012) and Weick (2005) who emphasized that superficially, pressure is judgmental that is, high pressure is not necessary and low tension is good but it is possible that high tension can also be good for the organization and low tension might not be too good.

Research Question 3

Do organization variables predict the students' academic achievement in Economics?

Table 4 revealed that out of the three variables, sense of belonging was the only variables that could not predict the students' academic achievement in Economics ($B=-.129$; $t=-.395$; $p>.05$), while human relations ($B=4.006E-02$; $t=2.982$; $p<.05$) and leader credibility ($B=-3.250$; $t=-$

Table 3: ANOVA of regression on the organizational climate variables

<i>Source of variance</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Degree of freedom</i>	<i>Mean square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	1420.631	3	473.544	152.992	.000*
Residual	6673.301	2156	3.095		
Total	8093.933	2159			

* Significant at $p<.05$

Table 4: Students' academic achievement relatively affected by organization climate variables

<i>Source of variance</i>	<i>Unstandardized coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized coefficients</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Beta</i>			
(Constant)	28.438	.655			43.384	.000
Sense of belonging	-.129	.325	.009	3rd	-.395	.693
Human relations	4.006E-02	.013	.061	2nd	2.982	.003*
Leader credibility	-3.250	.197	.403	1st	-16.468	.000*

* Significant at $p<.05$

16.468; $p < .05$) could predict the students' academic achievement in Economics. The greatest contribution, which was by leader credibility, contradicts Odinko and Adeyemo's (2009) finding that self-concept is the most potent contributor to achievement, while home language made significant contributions to the prediction. Also, Onyejiaku (2009) found that intelligence and special abilities account for sixty percent of a student's overall performance. The finding of this study is explicable considering that no matter the effectiveness of the teacher, he does not work in a vacuum, and there is need for leadership credibility within the school setting in order to provide the enabling environment for the teachers and students to function effectively. Availability of credible leadership within the school shows that the organizational climate would be made conducive such that all the factors that would make the teacher to be effective would be ensured.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that two of the independent variables (human relations and leader credibility) make significant contributions to the students' academic achievement in Economics, while sense of belonging could not predict the students' achievement in Economics. Therefore, the school heads should consider factors that can promote cordial interpersonal relationships between students and teachers as well as examine the right credibility that will foster the students' academic achievement in Economics teaching and learning. This researcher's view is that given the right type of leadership that is credible, the teachers will be effective while the students will be willing to learn Economics, thereby improving their academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sequel to the results of the findings, the study recommends among others that the school organizational climate should be low-slung on pressure and low on struggle to change as it has been shown that organizational climate could be influenced by it. Likewise the principals, vice principals, and heads of departments should be trained on how they could develop leadership credibility and human relation traits in themselves.

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