CREATING A CONSTRUCTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

John A. Karwur
Universitas Klabat
Airmadidi, Manado

Abstract

The real meaning of climate is the kind of weather a place has over a period of years. Climate includes conditions of heat and cold, moisture and dryness, clearness and coldness wind and calm that affect the feelings of people in their daily lives. Figuratively, this article try to discuss the situation and condition of the climate of an organization reflected through various feelings that exist among the people within an organization itself. The way of people interact and their attitudes, how they approach and response, the kind of acceptance and rejection will reflect the condition of the present climate. Climate seemed to have a greater effect on job satisfaction than on performance according to Scott, Mitchell, and Birnbaum (1981). But, in a school organizations especially, shows that indicators of an organizational climate ore degree of trust, respect, cohesiveness, caring, opportunity for input, high morale, and school renewal. Those aforementioned aspects are a result of specific practices and programs in a school's operation. Thus, administrators, staff members, faculty members, and students are playing important roles for creating an orderly environment conductive to affective teaching and productive learning.

Keywords: Organizational climate, effective teaching, productive learning.

INTRODUCTION

Literature continues to discuss the importance or school environment, even though Shaw and Reyes (1992) mention that "there is no single comprehensive organizational theory that fully explains the complexity of the school as a social organizational" (p. 295). The people in an institution continue to create the quality of that organizational, through the formation of constructive organizational climate.

The degree of success achieved by school thus arises from the beliefs, values, and philosophy that guide the teacher, administrators, and students. The actions of members of the organization build and maintain a culture of excellence or mediocrity. According to Deal and Peterson (1993), "policy makers and parents are demanding quality schools. The keys question troubling most practitioners is, How do we create the kind of schools that we can all be proud of? (p. 89). The general moral within a school can make teachers and students feel good, it creates also a constructive organizational climate conducive to effective and productive teaching learning situation.

The Concepts of Organizational Climate

When someone visits a school campus and its buildings for the first time, that person's attention is early drawn to notice the physical environment of the school. Perhaps the first impression is the attractiveness of buildings and grounds, including color, proportions, shape lighting, texture of interior surfaces, and furniture. These all contribute to the atmosphere produced within a school. Threes, shrubs, flowers beds, and arrangement of walks drivers contribute also the general environment of the school buildings. Administrators and teachers should always be aware that the design layout, and development of the site are important ingredients in the creation of an atmosphere that is educationally stimulating.

Second, climate is influenced by the organizational environment. When a new worker or teacher is employed in an educational institution or a new student enrolls in a school, one of the first things to identify to each other? Is there mutual trust among staff members and teachers? Do people respect each other? Are people motivated to be enthusiastic about working or learning? Is the morale of the people low or high? These are impressions that new workers or students pick up ad they perceive what happens around them in this new organizational or school.

School administrators are responsible for planning how to operationalize a healthy atmosphere though the improvement of school climate. The cooperativeness of teachers and staff members, along with the supportive attitudes of students are crucial factors for creating a place of effective teaching and productive learning. Though collaborative efforts of people, an integrated culture and climate can be realized and felt by all people in a school organization. Thus, leaders, teachers, staff members, and students are the sources of strength and creativeness for creating and productive learning. Frase and Hatzel (1990) mention that in effective schools people have mutual trust and show genuine caring for each other.

The Importance of School Climate

Literature supports the importance of school environment. Freiberg (1983) writes that "the 1950s saw a revived internst in the issue of school environment as Halpin and Croft in 1963 called it—organizational climate of the school" (p.1).

According to Reichers and Schneider (1990) early studies considered climate to be a correlated of work motivation and productivity. In this connection, Kopelman, Brief, and Guzzo (1990), state that a number of studies conducted in educational settings indicate that dimensions of climate directly affect motivation. They cited also the statement of James, Hartman, Stebbins, and Jones who wrote that psychological climate was significantly and related to various aspects of instrumentality refers to the perceived probability that an incentive with a valence will be forthcoming after a give level of performance of achievement. Valence refers to the perceived positive or negative values, worth or attractiveness that an individual ascribes to potential goals, outcomes, rewards, or incentives for working in an organization.

Scott, Mitchell, and Birnbaum (1981) found that climate seemed to have a greater effect on job satisfaction than on performance. The result of study conducted by Rensis Likert based on his classics instrument, showed that an attitude of consideration on the part of leader fosters performance and job satisfaction (David and Newstroom, 1985). These studies point out that climate is one variable which may have an effect on other variables, such as performance and job satisfaction.

Climate in an organization is influenced also by other variables within the organization itself. Scanlan and Keys (1983) note that one group of research development a model for studying organization climate. The participants of this study were several hundred directors of research and scientist and scientist in 21 organizations. The findings indicate that organizational climate is most influenced by things that directly affect a person's daily work experiences. Norton (1984) reports that Clark in 1977 "identified several considerations which tend to promote an improvement of school climate: total student involvement in the learning process, individualized performance expectations, a varied learning environment, and a varied reward system")p. 44).

Elements of Climate

Organizational climate contains a number of elements. According to Reichers and Schneider (1990): the first paper that relatively comprehensively conceptualized and operationalized climate as it is studies now has presented by Litwin and Stringer in 1966 at a conference on climate. Thus article presented a now familiar set of six climate dimensions—including structure, reward, and warmth and support—as reported by organization member precipitation (p. 19).

Freiberg (1983) in a presentation at a seminar on organizational development in schools, discussed the results of a school twice a year from (1979 to 1982. The questionnaire identified seven categories (subscales). These categories are as follows: leadership qualities of principles; teacher—colleague relations; parent—teacher relations; students—teacher interpersonal relations; student—teacher instruction related interaction; school buildings and facilities; and students—relations. This study included both the organizational environment and the physical environment of a school in the concept of climate.

The environment in an organization is described by Howard, Howell and Brainerd (1987). Indicators of an organizational climate are degree of trust, respect, cohesiveness, caring, opportunity for input, high morale, and school renewal. These aspects are a result of specific practices and programs in a school's operation.

Morale is an important element of the school environment. Shinn (1986) categorizes the morale factors into three parts:

1. What supervisors want from you
2. What subordinates want from you
3. What colleagues what from you

What supervisors want from you
1. Responsibility
2. Self-confidence
3. Honesty
4. The ability to take criticism
5. Judgment
6. Discipline
7. Self-control
8. Conscientiousness (pp. 15-16)

What subordinates want from you
1. Respect for others
2. Willingness to share information
3. Readiness to praise
4. Tact
5. A sense of justice
6. Enthusiasm
7. Helpfulness
8. Availability
9. Loyalty
10. Courtesy
11. The to encourage others (p. 17)

What colleagues what from you
1. Cooperation
2. Loyalty
3. Respect
4. Courtesy
5. Open-mindedness
6. Modesty
7. A sense of proportion (p. 20)

to enrich the quality of academic climate as an important part of school climate Tampubolon (2001) describes the eleven prime attributes as follows:
1. Relevancy
2. Efficiency
3. Effectiveness
4. Accountability
5. Creativity
6. Win-Win situation
7. Tangibility
8. Empathy
9. Responsiveness
10. Productivity
11. Academic capacity (pp. 122-126).

In *Educational Policy Manual,* Issued by SSD 1998 Revised Edition, emphasizes the atmosphere of the classroom should be Christlike:
a. A spirit of orderliness should be manifested
b. The atmosphere should give an indication that the students are happy and interested in their work.
c. A spirit of cheerful cooperation, respect for others, love and unity should be cultivated. (p. 7, 12).

The harmonious blend of various elements of organizational climate as enumerated above will cultivate a healthful atmosphere and supportive environment. Everyone will strive to gain the best performance through cooperative interaction and job satisfaction.

Studies Related to Organizational Climate

Several studies regarding school climate are presented in this section. VanderStoep, Anderman, and Midgley (1994) discussed the importance of school leadership in developing a school climate. They stressed that the action of school leaders may strongly affect teachers and other members of educational institution. At the same time, the action and attitudes of teachers strongly influence their students. Research has demonstrated, moreover, that much of what teachers do in the classroom affect their students. For example, when teachers exhibit low interest in teaching a particular subject. Such as mathematics, students often will perform poorly in that domain. These research findings are supported by several other studies. VanderStoep et al. Indicated also that teacher commitment is positively related to student commitment to the school.

Flinchbaugh (1993) wrote that a recent study of 3,000 boys and girls in twelve communities in ten states of the United States found that low esteem prevented girls from competing with boys in mathematics and science. The report said that teachers should bolster the self-esteem, instill confidence, and shape the interest and aspirations of the female students.

Flowers (1992) found uniqueness in the climate of Christian colleges as compared to other colleges. The Cristian college Coalition institutions differed significantly from other liberal arts college in levels of satisfaction and morale. Distinct organizational variables were identified with the Cristian College Coalition environment: supportive work environment; trust and respect among colleagues; captivation with work; and religious and character modeling.

Catena (1990) studied which organizational climate of selected universities in Metro Manila was likely to influence student behavior. This study showed that the climate of participating universities in Metro Manila are collegial, intimate, and supportive. The organizational climate influenced student behavior. The moderator variables that also affected student behavior were socioeconomic status, type of institution, and school size. There was a significant difference between perceptions of faculty and students toward organizational climate. For example, the faculty perceived that a supportive or intimate climate positively related to students' school spirit; while the students perceived that a supportive or intimate climate negatively related.

The study by Africa (1991) in selected institutions of higher learning in Metro Manila was to determine the role expectations, personal factors, and school climate which are significantly and positively related to the deans' actual role performance on five major functions of deans, as perceived by faculty, administrators, and students. The study found that the actual role performance of deans was significantly associated with school climate. There was also a positive relationship between actual role performance of academic deans and the personal variables of age, family income, teaching experience, and educational attainment.

Kampangkaew (1992) conducted a study to compare the perceptions and expectations of the leadership role and function of department chairpersons held by deans, faculty members, and department chairpersons themselves at six teachers' colleges in Bangkok, Thailand. The instrument used was the Leader Behavior Description questionnaire (LBDQ). This instrument was designed to identify leadership behavior in two dimensions: initiating structure and consideration. The mean scores of the perceptions of the department chairpersons were

significantly higher than the mean scores of the perceptions of either deans of faculty members. There was no significant difference for the expectations of deans, faculty members, and department chairperson on either dimensions.

Jannik (1992) analyzed perceptions of undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff in relation to their satisfaction with campus climate at a selected Southern university, USA. Subjects were asked their perception of the importance of student expectations concerning career counseling, advising, and campus climate. The findings indicated that were a difference in perceptions between the groups; with undergraduate students, graduate students, and staff perceiving that the institution should do more to meet students need and expectations.

CONCLUSION

The organizational environment is just as important as the physical aspects of an educational institution. Both aspects should be given priority in school management because the organizational environment is created and shaped by the people within a school. Freiberg (1983) illustrates that "the climate of a school may be compared to the air we breathe—we ignore it until it becomes noticeably offensive" (p.1)

Again, the school administrators, teacher, and students should be proactive for planning how to create a healthy atmosphere by the improvement of organizational climate. The cooperative spirit, supportive attitude, collaborative work of people in a school organization will be fruitful sources of strengths and abilities. An orderly environment conductive teaching and learning.

AUTHOR

John A. Karwur is presently the Vice President of Academic Administration and an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education of Universitas Klabat, Airmadidi, Manado. His interest in research and teaching are educational administration and supervision, and educational evaluation.

REFERENCES:

Afrika, C.M. (1991). *Role expectation, school climate, and personal factors associated with role performance of deans in selected institutions of higher learning in Metro Manila.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Philippines, Manila.

Catane, J.A. (1990). *Organizational climate and students behavior.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Philippines, Manila.

Davis, K., & Newstrom, J.W. (1985) *Human behavior at work: Organizational behavior.* (7th ed.) NY: McGraw-Hill.

Deal, T.E., & peterson, K.D. (1993). *Strategies for building school cultures: Principals as symbolic leaders.* Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Educational Policy Manual. (1998). Silang: Southern Asia Pacific Division.

Flinchbauhg, R.W. (1993). *The 21st century board of education.* Lancaster, CA: Technomic.

Flowers, M.E. (1992). *Christian college distinctive: A study of the institutional satisfaction and morale at Christian College Coalition Institution* (CD-ROM). Abstract from: ProQuest File: Dissertation Abstract Item: A 53/03.

16

Frase, L., & hatzel, R. (1990). *School management by wandering around.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing.

Freiberg, J.H. (1983). *Improving school climate—a facilitative process.* Paper presented at the Seminar in Organizational Development in Schools University of Laverne, Laverne, CA.

Howard, E., Howel, B. & Brainard, E. (1987). *Handbook for conducting school climate improvement project.* Bloomington, ID: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Jannik, C.N. (1992). *Perceptions of satisfaction with campus climate at a selected southern university, Mississippi* (CD-ROM). Abstract from: ProQuest File: Dissertation Abstract Item: A 53/12.

Kapangkaew, P. (1992). *A study of the perceps in leadership roles of department chairpersons in the faculty of education at six teachers colleges in Bankok Thailand,* (CD-ROM). Abstract from: ProQuest File: Dissertation Abstract Item: A 53/12.

Kopelman, R.E., Brief, A.P., & Guzzo, R.A. (1990). *Role of climate and culture in productivity.* San Fransisco; Jossey-Bass.

Norton, M.S. (1984). What's so important about school climate? *Contemporary Education,* 56 (1), 43-45).

Reichers, A.E., Schneider, B. (1990). *Climate and culture: An Evolution of constructs.* San Fransisco; Jossey-Bass.

Scanlan, B., & Keys, B. (1983). *Management and organizational behavior* (2nd ed.) NY: John Wiley & Son.

Scoot, W.G., Mitchell, T.R., & Birnbaun, P.H. (1981). *Organizational theory: A Structure and behavioral analysis.* (4th ed.) IL: Irwin.

Shaw, J. & Reyers, P. (1992). School culture: Organizational value orientation and commitment. *Journal of educational Research,* 85 (5), 295-311.

Shinn, G. (1986). *Leadership development.* 2nd ed.). New York: Mcgraw-Hill Book Company.

Tampubolon, D.P. (2001). *Perguruan tinggi bermutu.* Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Vanderstoep. S. W., Anderman, E.M. & Midgley, M. (1994). The relationship among principal "venturesomeness", a stress on excellence, and the personal engagement of teachers and students. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement. An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice,* 5. (3), 254-271.