

PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOUR AND SCHOOL CLIMATE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

An uncondusive school climate is inimical to the attainment of effective teaching and learning in schools. Studies have focused on issues bordering on the relationship between school climate and school effectiveness. The extent to which principals' practices have contributed to the nature of school climate in secondary schools appears to be under-researched. This study examined Principals' Managerial Behaviour and School Climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State. One research question was answered in this study. One hypothesis was tested in the study. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 281 principals in public secondary schools in Cross River State. 150 principals were selected as sample for this study. Principals' Managerial Behaviour and School Climate Questionnaire (PMBSCQ) was used for data collection. The research question was answered using Mean and standard deviation, while data for hypothesis were analyzed using Multiple Regression analysis at the .05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State is negative and that principals' managerial behaviour significantly predicted the nature of school climate in the schools. Based on this result, possible recommendations were made for school effectiveness including that principals should adopt effective conflict management approaches, maintain good leadership behaviour, ensure that facilities are adequately provided and allow teachers, students and parents to participate fully in the decision-making process of the school system.

Keywords: Managerial behaviour, school climate, conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour, decision-making behaviour.



Introduction

The effectiveness of schools is very significant to the development of every society. This is because schools are established to equip citizens with the desired knowledge, skills, competencies and aptitude that are needed to propel the growth and development process of the society. The 21st century has shifted tremendously from the old industrial-based economies where the emphasis was placed on the accumulation of industrial infrastructure as a measure of development, to the modern knowledge-based economies where the progress, growth and development of nations are measured by the quality of knowledge and ideals available and the competencies of the citizens in knowledge reconstruction and application (Hadad, 2017; Hogan, 2011; Kefela, 2010; Mbon, Ukpong & Ekpenyong, 2019; Mehmood & Rehman, 2015; Urbanová, Dundelová & Rozbořil, 2011; Viedma & Cabrita, 2012). This scenario has heightened the quest for effective and quality schools in modern societies of the world, of which Nigeria is not an exception.

Secondary schools occupy a very strategic position in the development of Nigerian society in that they are designed to prepare citizens for functional living in the society and for higher learning (the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013; Ige, 2013). This implies that maintaining effective secondary school system in Cross River State may be a feasible mechanism for securing a sustainable future for the State, whereby youths would be made to imbibe moral values for a peaceful existence, have functional skills and competencies to engage in productive ventures and acquire the requisite aptitude for higher learning. This espouses the need for secondary school administrators to possess the managerial tact, prowess, acumen and behaviour needed to maintain a conducive school climate for an effective school system in the State.

The effectiveness of any school system tends to hinge on the level at which teaching and learning activities are carried out in the school system (Bashar & Yasin, 2020; Botha, 2010; Özgenel, 2020; Owan, 2019; Owan, Arop, & Agunwa, 2019; Scheerens,

2016). It is also practically obvious that effective teaching and learning is maximized when appropriate and conducive school climates are designed to boost the morale of both teachers and students ((Bashar & Yasin, 2020; Botha, 2010; Dulay & Karadağ, 2017; Durham, Bettencourt & Connolly, 2014; Greenway, 2017; Özgenel, 2020; Owan, 2019; Owan, Arop, & Agunwa, 2019; Scheerens, 2016). Many educational physiologists are of the view school climate originates from the concept of organizational climate (Chirkina & Khavenson, 2018; Zullig, Koopman, Patton & Ubbes, 2010). This implies that the attainment of the goals and objectives of the educational system may not be maximized if appropriate and a conducive school climate is not maintained to in schools (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron & Osher, 2020; Edeh, 2010 Omemui, 2018; Shindler, Jones, Cardenas & Williams, 2016; Stichter, 2008). The concept of school climate originates from the concept of organizational climate (Chirkina & Khavenson, 2018; Zullig, Koopman, Patton & Ubbes, 2010). Organizational climate is as a concept is seen by different researchers as the general perception of all the people working in an organization or an institution regarding the formal system of task, responsibilities, roles of all individuals, the size, complexity, structure, products, vision, and mission of the organization, and the relationships between the workers and the management (Babu, 2013; Madhukar & Sharma, 2017; Moghimi & Subramaniam, 2013). The concept of organizational climate as explained by these scholars denotes how employees feel about the general work atmosphere created by their managers, which means two groups of people are involved: the managers and the employees.

It could be seen from the foregoing that organizational climate is used to describe how employees feel about their organizations, their work in the organization, and their relationships with organizational leaders, which are all shown in their overt behaviour towards duties in the organizations. This limited scope of organizational climate maybe because the internal environment of all formal organizations except schools have only two groups of people: those who create the climate (the managers) and those who are affected by the climate (the employees). This seems to be different in schools, where the internal environment is made up of the administrators, the teachers, the students and the parents. This peculiar characteristic of the school system makes the concept of school climate broader in scope than organizational climate which gave birth to it. School climate is the prevailing and enduring situation, tone, atmosphere and school environment created by school administrators, and have a direct effect on the way students, teachers and parents feel

about the school, which in turn influences their values, beliefs, behaviour and attitudes toward school and work (Liu, Ding, Berkowitz & Bier, 2014; Maxwell, Reynolds, Lee, Subasic & Bromhead, 2017; Rapti, 2012; Reynolds, Lee, Turner, Bromhead & Subasic, 2017; Thapa, Cohen, Guffey & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013). School climate may further be explained as to how teachers, students, parents, non-teaching staff and administrators interact with school life, and which is a reflection of the pattern of formal and informal relationships, the nature of teaching and learning activities, the leadership structures, the norms, the vision, the mission, the goals, the values and the physical condition of the school organization (Gorgonio, 2017). School organizational climate may also be referred to, as the way teachers perceive the general work environment of the school, which includes their perception of the formal relationships, their perception of the informal relationships, their perception of personalities of students and principals, and their perception of the leadership behaviour of the principals (Adejumobi & Ojikutu, 2013).

It is apparent from the above expressions that different scholars seem to have a different conception of the term "school climate". While some researchers like Rapti (2012) and Gorgonio (2017) looked at it from the perspective of the students, teachers, staff and parents, researchers like Adejumobi and Ojikutu (2013) looked at the term from the angle of teachers only. This implies that there is a need for a holistic understanding of the constituents of the school climate and its primary role in school effectiveness. School climate is made up of all the dimensions of the school (people, place, policies, programmes, processes and structure) and affects all stakeholders in a school system (administrators, teachers, students, non-teaching staff and parents) (Gorgonio, 2017; Loukas, 2007). This means that there are six dimensions of school climate that defines the characteristic of school life and personalities affected by school climate. The people dimension of the school climate is made of administrators who are responsible for determining the culture, the tone, the structure, the vision, mission, values, the programmes, the procedures and processes in the school system. They are the paramount determinants of the climate of any school system. The place dimension of the school climate involves the physical location and the infrastructural condition of the school system. The policies dimension of the school climate covers rules, mission, values, regulations, codes, procedures and standards that direct the responsibilities and functions of each stakeholder in the school system. Similarly, the dimension of the programme of the school climate covers all organized instructional contents (curriculum contents) meant to achieve the goals and objectives of the school

system. The processes dimension of school climate includes all instructional activities (curriculum experiences) in the school system, while the structure dimension of school climate covers the pattern of formal and informal relationships in the school system.

Accordingly, one of those affected by the school climate is the administrators. This is an area that seems not to be properly addressed by some scholars when explaining the concept of school climate. Though administrators are the determinant factors of the school climate, they are also indirectly affected by the work atmosphere they create in their schools. For instance, principals may only be able to deliver his administrative roles when teachers, students and other staff are committed to their roles in schools. So, if principals create a negative or controlled climate in the school, he tends to have difficulties carrying out his duties effectively because staff may be resistance to his orders, instructions and directives in the school. An open school climate in any school system is capable of promoting the development of students, parents, teachers, and administrators which are the constituents of the school community (Koth, Bradshaw & Leaf, 2008). Similarly, teachers, students and parents are those directly affected by school climate (Gorgonio, 2017). This Implies that school climate can be holistically explained as the perennial nature of all the dimensions of school life as designed by school administrators, and affect the perceptions of teachers, students, non-teaching staff, parents and administrators about their roles in school, and which is expressed in their overt behaviour in the school system. This is affirmed by Jacobs (2018) who submitted that school climate is "the atmosphere of the school, the character and quality of school life" (p. 8), and Rapti (2013) who argued that school climate is "the sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, organizational structures within a school, teaching practices, diversity, leader-teacher relationships, teacher-teacher relationships, parent-teacher relationships, and student-teacher relationships, is the concept of school climate" (p.112)

From the foregoing, it means no school may attain effective teaching and learning in an unconducive or negative school climate. This explains the theoretical basis of this study, and which is rooted in Abert Badura's Social Cognitive Theory. Social Cognitive Theory is based on the notion that the behaviour of an individual is determined by social influences and internal and external reinforcement. It explains that individuals' behaviour in a social setting is shaped by their past experiences and their perceptions about the reinforcements, expectancies and expectations, which act together to determine whether a behaviour should be maintained or not.

The implication of the theory to this study is that the learning behaviour of students, the work approaches adopted by teachers and the level of parents' support and collaboration in schools are dependent on their experiences in the school and their general perceptions about school. Thus a proper understanding of the intricacies of school climate and how it can influence the effectiveness of instructional processes in schools may help principals to design a school system that can effectively achieve secondary education goals in Cross River State.

A positive school climate is seen as an accessible, collaborative respectful, pleasant, approachable, supportive and highly motivational interaction among principal and teachers, students, parents, and improves student motivation to learning and teachers' motivation to teach, thereby enhances the level of instructional effectiveness and students' achievement in schools (Christensen, Marx & Stevenson, 2006; Emu & Nwannunu, 2018; Kozina, Rožman, McEvoy & Welker, 2000; Omemui, 2018; Payne, 2018; Peguero & Bracy, 2014; Perše & Leban, 2008; Reynolds *et al.*, 2017; Smith, Connolly & Prysieski, 2014; Tubbs & Garner, 2008). A school with a positive school climate is likely to create a safe and supportive school environment that can impact positively on the mental, emotional, physical, social, behavioural and academic wellbeing of students including contributing to a decrease in risky behaviour and depressive symptoms and an increase in feelings of belonging and affiliation both with teachers and school leadership, which in turn enhancing the quality of relationships between students, parents, teachers and the community (Demaray, Malecki & Jenkins, 2012; Egwu, 2015; Loukas, 2007; Omemui, 2018). The key features of a positive school climate include collaboration and strong relationship among all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, students, non-teaching staff, parents and community members); care, trust and respect for students and staff; there is a high-level engagement of stakeholders in school administrative issues, teachers have adequate growth opportunities; the disciplinary measures are not punitive; their cohesiveness and high moral standard for all; students can interact freely with teachers and school administrators; and above all, every stakeholder have adequate and uninterrupted opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of the school system (Geleta, 2017; Hanuliaková & Barnová, 2015; Loukas, Suzuki & Horton, 2006; Kuperminc, Leadbeater & Blatt, 2001; Kutsyuruba, Klinger & Hussain, 2015; Rapti, 2013).

From the foregoing, a negative school climate may be responsible for poor learning environment observed in most secondary schools in Cross River State. Negative school climate tends to elicit negative learning behaviour among students and can lead to

poor instructional processes, as well as diminish achievement for both students and the school as a whole (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2000; Heck, 2000). Poor or negative school climate is characterized by poor interpersonal relationships among students, teachers and principals, poor communication network, autocratic leadership style, autocratic decision-making process, punitive disciplinary measures, leadership dictatorship and low staff and students' motivational strategies (Edeh, 2010; Lacks, 2016; Lombardi, Traficante, Bettoni, Offredi, Giorgetti & Vernice, 2019; Mitchell, Bradshaw & Leaf, 2010; Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018; Van Eck, Johnson, Bettencourt & Johnson, 2017; Waasdorp, Pas, O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2011). A negative school climate seems to be characterized by incessant conflicts between teachers and administrators, among teachers and students and between administrators and parents, and which can result in the poor instructional process, teachers' poor performance and students' low academic achievement. School climate is the learning environment created through the interaction of human relationships, physical setting, school policies and procedures, and the psychological atmosphere that characterizes the school organization, such that a favourable school climate tends to provides the structure within which students, teachers, administrators, and parents function cooperatively and constructively (Perkins, 2006). This implies that the level at which teachers are willing to carry out their jobs effectively, the level at which students are committed to their learning activities in school and the level at which parents and other stakeholders are willing to be involved in school affairs, lend credence to the nature of the school climate (Bradshaw, Koth, Thornton & Leaf, 2009; Bradshaw, Waasdorp, Debnam & Johnson, 2014b; Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Caridade, Pedrosa E Sousa & Dinis, 2020; Durišić & Bunjievac, 2017; Gage, Meriden, Sugai & Chafouleas, 2016; Lewno-Dumdie, Mason, Hajovsky & Villeneuve, 2019; Jacobs, 2018; Wang & Degol, 2015; Wang, Selman, Dishion & Stormshak, 2010).

Though different scholars (Ifeoma, Uzoechina & Olamma, 2015; Okon, 2004; Rapti, 2013; Raza, 2010; Vedavathi, 2017) among others, have attempted to differentiate among the different types of school climates such as open, controlled, autonomous, familiar, and closed climates, it could be observed that school climate can be broadly categorized into positive and negative school climates. Thus the school climate in this study is examined in these two broad categories or types. Principals seem to be key factors in the determination of the nature and type of school climate in secondary schools. This is because they are responsible for designing the communication network in schools,

determining the model to be adopted in the decision-making process of the school, determining the functionality of school facilities, carrying out staff motivation and are responsible for instructional supervision in schools. With these managerial roles, principals set the tone, atmosphere and environment for the effective functioning of all the participants of the school system. It is the duties of principals to actively, support, assist, guide and motivate teachers, students and the rest of the members of staff to create a favourable work-oriented atmosphere within the school system (Perkins, 2006). Principals' managerial behaviour seems to determine their ability to design an effective school climate for effective teaching and learning in schools. The learning environment and the overall performance of any school are mostly linked to the managerial behaviour of the school administrators (Mbon, 2017). The school manager must be able to create a task-oriented climate through their managerial tact, where teachers would be committed to work and students would be willing to learn and parents are willing to participate in all school improvement efforts (Ensley, 2014; Okon, 2004; Rajbhandari, Rajbhandari & Loock, 2016). It is also noted that secondary schools that make a difference in students' learning, teachers' instructional delivery and school effectiveness are led by principals who make significant and measurable contributions to creating a favourable school climate (Egwu, 2015; Omubele & Igbedu, 2012).

Managerial behaviour of a principal includes all the managerial functions of a school administrator. It is the qualities, duties, roles, responsibilities, attributes and attitudes of a secondary school principal (Kant & Rangannavar, 2013). Fasasi (2011) explained that "managerial behaviour implies how the head of an organization behaves towards subordinates in the work environment and includes a combination of managerial functions (what he does) and managerial styles (his manner of doing things)" (p. 15). Principals managerial behaviour may also be seen the persuasive ability and approaches adopted by principals to induce all stakeholders to passionately pursuing the objectives of their schools, providing guidance and direction to staff and students in all instructional activities, ensuring the improvement of the schools through collaboration, devising means of satisfying the needs of all individuals in the school organization, creating opportunities for innovative ideas through stakeholders engagement and building a sense of belonging among stakeholders through interpersonal relationships (Naik, 2012). Such attributes and administrative functions as decision-making behaviour, leadership behaviour, communication behaviour, conflict management behaviour and motivation behaviour have been identified among others as key components of

principals' managerial behaviour that have direct links with the school climate in a given school system (Fem, 2014; Majoni, 2015; Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016; Okon, 2004; Sule, Ameh & Egbai, 2015)

It implies from the forgoing that principals' conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour, communication behaviour, decision-making behaviour, supervision behaviour and motivation behaviour may determine the nature and type of climate in secondary schools in Cross River State. However, the researchers limited this study to principals' conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour and decision-making behaviour in the schools. Principals' conflict management behaviour is the approach adopted by principals to ensure peace and co-existence in the schools' organizations. Several researchers as Babu and Kumari (2013), Boateng (2014), Boucher (2013), Chandolia and Anastasiou (2020), Crossfield and Bourne (2018), Kalagbor and Nnokam (2015), Oboegbulem and Alfa (2013), and Shanka and Thuo (2017) have conducted different studies on conflict management or resolution strategies of principals and how these related to different aspects of school life. These aspects of school life ranged from teachers' performance, students' achievement, school-community collaboration, and so on. These researchers found that the different conflict management approaches such as open communication network, shared governance, participative management had effects on different areas of school life. This agrees with Okon (2004) who stressed that schools can only thrive in an open climate, marked by high morale (*esprit de corps*), absent of disagreement and friendly relations among groups.

Similarly, principals' leadership behaviour is the leadership styles and approaches adopted by principals in schools. Another group of researchers (Adeyemi & Adu, 2013; Adeyemi, 2009; Finnel, 2014; Khan, 2018; Kinsella, 2012; Majoni, 2015; Phyu & Vinitwatanakhun, 2018; Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011; Wakanyei, 2013; Williams, 2009; Yadessa, 2014) carried out separate studies on administrators' leadership styles and their impact on school climate, teachers' performance, teachers' job satisfaction, school collaboration and students' achievement. These researchers found out that the leadership approaches adopted by school heads had a significant impact on different aspects of school life examined. For instance, Phyu and Vinitwatanakhun (2018) found that many teachers perceived their principals' leadership behaviour as supportive, and thus improved their performance in the schools. Accordingly, principals' decision-making behaviour is the decision-making approach used by principals in making key managerial decisions in schools.

Different studies were carried out by Ajlouni and Yasseen (2018), Androniceanu and Ristea (2014), Duze (2011), Hollyns (2017), İnandi and Giliç (2016), Isah (2012), Mokoena (2011), Omobude and Igbudu (2012), Wadesango (2012), Ziolkowski, (2015), on decision-making approaches adopted by the head of schools and organizations, and how these approaches impacted on different areas of school organizations such as culture, discipline, students behaviour, staff performance, which of course are the aftermath of the climates of the schools or the organizations. These empirical studies found differently that the decision-making behaviour of school managers had implications on different aspects of school life.

Statement of the problem

There is no doubt that effective teaching and learning is attainable in the secondary schools when the right school climate is created such that teachers are motivated to put in their best in teaching the students, students are motivated to take part in the learning activities in the school and parents are enthused to participate in the running of the school. The state of affairs in secondary schools where an unwholesome and non-professional behaviour of teachers and students such as absenteeism, tastiness, malingering, trading and general low level of commitment to teaching and learning seem to explain the high level of underdevelopment or low rate of development in Nigeria (Adetula. 2005; Gbenu, 2012). These have clearly shown the poor teaching and learning situation in secondary schools, which are clear evidence of a negative school climate in secondary schools in the country. This undesirable trend may be occasioned by the managerial behaviour of principals in the schools. Cross River State is not exempted from this condition as many studies have reported that secondary school teachers in Cross River State are not committed to their jobs and are reluctant to put concerted efforts for the success of the schools (Owan, Duruamaku-Dim, Ekpe, Owan & Agurokpon, 2019; Arop, Owan & Ibor, 2019). The researchers on their own have also observed constant disputes between students and teachers and between principals and teachers in some of the schools, which according to the teachers, led to their poor attitude to work in the schools. The researchers further noted that parents were reluctant to participate in school programmes or make inputs in the school improvement process. These seem to be responsible for the poor instructional processes and students' poor academic achievement observed in the state over the years, and may further damp the performance and effectiveness of secondary school system in the State if feasible measures are not put in place. Arising from the literature review, it is glaring that the application of proper conflict resolution behaviour, leadership behaviour and proper decision-making

behaviour, among others by principals can enhance positive school climate in secondary schools in the State. Given this scenario, it becomes necessary to examine principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to examine principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to investigate the following:

1. The nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State
2. The relationship between principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research questions

One research question was posed to direct the study.

What is the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Methodology

This research work was conducted in Cross River State. The correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all the 281 principals in the 281 public secondary schools across the 3 Education Zones in Cross River State. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 150 principals from 150 schools (50 each) from the 3 Education Zones (Strata) in Cross River State, as a sample for this study. The main instruments used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Principals' Managerial Behaviour and School Climate Questionnaire (PMBSCQ). The instrument was subjected to face validity by experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Calabar. The reliability of the Instrument was established at 0.82 coefficient using Cronbach Alpha reliability measure of internal

consistency. Teachers were the respondents in this study. The PMBSCQ was administered to the 3 teachers in each of 150 selected schools to measure the managerial behaviour of their principals and the nature of their school climates. Letters of participation were given to all the participating teachers through their principals with detailed explanations of the purpose of the research, and the advantages and dangers of participating in the study. The teachers who accepted to be in the sample were pleaded to respond objectively to the items and were given two weeks duration to do so without interference. The instrument was designed using a modified four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). In rating the scale, positive items were rated 4,3,2,1, while the rating was reversed for negative items. 18 items were designed to measure the nature of school climate along the 6 dimensions (3 items per dimension) of school climate (people, place, policies, programmes, processes and structure) in that order, while 18 items were also developed to measure principals' managerial behaviour based on the three sub-variables(conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour and decision-making behaviour). Out of 450 questionnaires administered, 432 were retrieved and used for data analysis in this study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. The research hypothesis was analyzed using Multiple Regression analysis at 0.05 alpha level. Both principals' managerial behaviour variables and school climate dimensions were measured continuously. In deciding for school climate items, scores below the criterion mean of 2.50 were taken to mean the climate was negative, while those above the criterion mean was taken to mean that the climate was positive. This formed the decision rule for the research question.

Results

Research question:

What is the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State? The responses to the research question are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Mean and standard deviation of the responses on the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
1	Students are always very free to interact with my principal	1.98	.653	Negative
2	My principal is admired by all students, teachers and parents in my school	2.03	.525	Negative
3	Staff and students are comfortable with the way my principal does things in the school	1.69	.514	Negative
4	My school has adequate and functional school facilities for effective teaching and learning	1.77	.527	Negative
5	Classrooms in my school are conducive for learning	1.75	.536	Negative

6	Parents, students and teachers do not complain about the condition of facilities in my school	2.40	.734	
7	Punitive measures are not applied to enforce rules and regulations in my school	2.43	.671	Negative
8	Teachers are given the freedom to deal with students the way they deem appropriate	2.54	.890	Positive
9	Rules and regulation are determined by all stakeholders in my school	2.03	.694	Negative
10	Syllabi are not very elaborate and complex to exhaust in a term	2.33	.934	Negative
11	Students are happy with the increasing number of subjects they are required to offer every term	2.03	.607	Negative
12	Teachers in my school are satisfied with the number of subjects they required to teach in a day	1.91	.666	Negative
13	Parents are satisfied with the volume of homework given to their wards	2.45	.547	Negative
14	There are no overcrowded classrooms in my school	1.90	.582	Negative
15	Teachers are discouraged to go to classes due to the high level of students' indiscipline behaviour	2.60	.767	Positive
16	There is a cordial relationship between the principal and other stakeholders in my school	1.95	.708	Negative
17	Teachers, students and parents are given opportunities to contribute to school improvement	2.62	.660	Positive
18	Every suggestion must pass through the formal communication line in my school	2.75	.730	Positive
Overall Mean & Std. Dev		2.18	.663	Negative

The result in Table 1 indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16 have mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.50, while items 8, 15, 17 and 18 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that all the dimensions of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State were observed to be poor or negative, except the structure dimension. This result also shows that the overall mean and standard deviation are 2.18 and .663. Given that the overall mean is less than the criterion means of 2.50, the high degree of acceptance means that the nature of school climate in

public secondary schools in Cross River State is negative. This implies that the general teaching and learning atmosphere in public secondary schools in Cross River State is motivating, satisfying and encouraging to students, teachers and parents in the State.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State. The result of the analysis is presented in

TABLE 2: Summary of Multiple Regression analysis for the relationship between principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.465	.217	.211	4.242			
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-ratio	Sig.
Regression		2128.524	3	709.508	39.430	.000
Residual		7701.476	428	17.994		
Total		9830.000	431			
Variable			Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)		18.792	1.928		9.746	.000

Conflict management behaviour	.681	.100	.309	6.788	.000
Leadership behaviour	.305	.101	.143	3.028	.003
Decision-making behaviour	.292	.085	.166	3.435	.001

a. Criterion: School climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

b. Predictors: (Constant), principals' conflict management behaviour, principals' leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour.

The result in Table 2 shows a Multiple Regression coefficient (R) of .465 and a coefficient of determination (R²) of .217. This implies that there is a positive relationship between principals' managerial behaviour and school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State. This result also shows that the analysis of variance in the regression output produced an F-ratio of 39.430 ($p < .05$), which is statistically significant at .05 probability level with critical F-ratio of 2.62 and 3:431 degrees of freedom. This implies that all the sub-variables of principals' managerial behaviour (principals' conflict management behaviour, principals' leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour) significantly contributed to the observed variance like school climate in public secondary schools in the State. Furthermore, The result in Table 2 indicates that the coefficient of determination (R²) is .217. This means that 21.7 % of the variance in school climate across the schools is attributed to the variation in principals' conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour. Thus 78.3 % of the variance in school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State is attributed to variable extraneous to this study.

Discussion

The result of the research question revealed that the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State is poor and negative. This implies that many students, teachers and parents in public secondary schools in Cross River State are not happy with the teaching and learning atmosphere set by the school administrators, the condition of available facilities in the schools does not promote effective teaching and learning, the way discipline is being enforced in the school is not satisfying to stakeholders, teachers and students are not happy with the volume of curriculum content they are to cover in a term, and that the way instructional activities are being organized in the schools is not motivating to students and teachers, except for relationships among principals and other stakeholders in the schools that were observed to be considerably better. This situation may likely explain the poor quality of secondary education in the State and the

Similarly, the result in Table 2 also shows that the unstandardized Beta for all the sub-variables of principals' managerial behaviour is: conflict management behaviour (.681), leadership behaviour (.305) and principals' decision-making behaviour (.292). This implies that the three areas of managerial behaviour examined in this study have a direct relationship with school climate such that an improvement in these principals' managerial functions in the schools will lead to a positive school climate and enabling atmosphere for teaching and learning in the schools. Accordingly, the analysis in Table 2 reveals that t-values for all the principals' managerial behaviour variables are: Principals' conflict management behaviour (6.788, $p < .05$), principals' leadership behaviour (3.028, $p < .05$), and principals' decision-making behaviour (3.435, $p < .05$). This means principals' conflict management behaviour, principals' leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour predicted the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State significantly. This result indicates that principals' conflict management behaviour was most potent in predicting the variance in school climate across the schools, seconded by principals' decision-making behaviour and then principals' leadership behaviour generally poor performance of secondary school students. No school may attain effective teaching and learning when the learning environment is not conducive. This result is in tandem partly with the theoretical tenets of Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which explains that people respond to social influences arising from their interaction with their environment and their resultant behaviour are based on internal and external reinforcement. It means that the way teachers carry out their instructional duties, the extent to which students are committed to learning and the level at which parents are willing to support school improvement are all dependent of the nature of the school climate created by the principals. This is supported by the opinion of different researchers who submitted that school administrators must be able to design a task-oriented school environment that where students will be committed to their learning activities, where teachers will deliver their instructional duties enthusiastically

and where parents will be willing to school improvement efforts (Mbon, 2017; Okon, 2004; Omubele & Igbudu, 2012; Egwu, 2015; Perkins, 2006). This implies that public secondary schools in Cross River State may not be able to attain effective teaching and learning when urgent, conscious and concerted efforts are not put in place to improve the nature of the school climates.

The analysis of the research hypothesis revealed that all the sub-variables of principals' managerial behaviour (conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour and decision-making behaviour) contributed significantly to the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in the State. This means that the conflict management approach adopted by the principals, their leadership styles and the approach they adopt in taking basic decisions in their schools have a lot to do with the observed negative nature of the teaching and learning atmosphere in public secondary schools in Cross River State. This result also revealed that principals' conflict management behaviour, principals' leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour have unstandardized Beta of .68, .305 and .292 respectively, which means that these principals' managerial behaviour variables have a direct relationship with the school climate in the schools. This practically explains the fact that school climate is poor and negative in the schools because principals have not been able to apply the right conflict management strategies to reduce incessant burnout among students, teachers, parents and management in schools, have not applied the right leadership approach to guide, direct, instruct and motivate teachers, students and parents, and are not able to put in place a participatory decision-making approach to accommodate all stakeholders in the school system.

This result is in line with the opinion of different scholars who have established that the conflict management approach of administrators (Babu & Kumari; 2013; Boateng, 2014; Kalagbor & Nnokam, 2015; Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013; Shanka & Thuo, 2017), administrators' leadership behaviour (Adeyemi & Adu, 2013; Adeyemi, 2015; Finnel, 2014; Kinsella, 2012; Majoni, 2015; Phyu & Vinitwatanakhun, 2018), and administrators' decision-making behaviour (Androniceanu & Ristea, 2014; Duze, 2011; Hollyns, 2017; İnandi & Giliç, 2016; Isah, 2012) Mokoena, 2011; Omobude & Igbudu, 2012; Shmueli, 2012; Wadesango, 2012), have implications on different aspects of school life. This means that an effort to maintain positive school climates in public secondary schools in Cross River State will involve all measures to ensure that principals acquire the managerial competencies that will enhance their skills in carrying out their managerial functions effectively in the schools. This analysis also showed that 21.7 % variance in school

climate across the schools was accounted for, by changes in the managerial behaviour (conflict management behaviour, leadership behaviour and decision-making behaviour) of principals in the schools. This implies there other things outside this study that could also contribute to the observed nature of school climate in the schools. Thus the supervisory approach of the principals, the motivational strategies they adopt and the staff development mechanism they apply in the schools may have also contributed to the nature of the school climate observed in the State. This implies that these areas also need to be explored to have a holistic knowledge of principals' managerial behaviour and they also relate to school climates in the State.

However, one of the major limitations of this study is that the researchers did not cover other factors surrounding students, parent and teachers which may have contributed to the nature of the school climate in the schools. This is because factor surrounding teachers such as the way they relate with students and parents, their classroom management behaviour, their instructional delivery skills and their guidance and counselling skills may also constitute to the observed teaching and learning atmosphere in a schools system. Similarly, factors surrounding parents such as their willingness to support the school management, ability to provide the needs of their wards and so on, may also contribute to the teaching and learning situation in schools. Students on their own have a part to play in maintaining an effective climate in schools. The researchers here concentrated on principals as a key determinant of the nature of school climate, which tend to limit the full application of the triadic reciprocal causation or determinism model of Social Cognitive Theory that explains that behaviour, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental influences all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other bidirectionally (Bandura, 1989). Thus these unexplored areas may be considered in another study for adequate knowledge of school climate and its implications on school effectiveness in the State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the nature of school climate in public secondary schools in Cross River State is negative. Similarly, it was further concluded that the nature of the school climate in the schools is determined by the managerial behaviour of the principals. Lastly, it was concluded that principals' managerial behaviour has a positive relationship with school climate in the schools and that an improvement in principals' conflict management behaviour, principals' leadership behaviour and principals' decision-making behaviour will lead to improvement like school climate, which will, in turn, lead to an improvement in the effectiveness of public secondary schools in Cross River State. This study has implications for the professional development of principals in the State.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Principals, including vice principals in secondary schools in Cross River State, should be trained on modern school conflict management approaches that would help them to maintain a school climate that would promote effective teaching and learning in the schools.
2. Principals should maintain good leadership behaviour that would encourage the involvement of teachers' parents and students in the leading mainstream of the school to motivate all parties in the school system for maximum productivity.
3. Teachers, students and parents should be allowed to participate fully in the decision-making process of the school system as this would help in the maintenance of an effective learning environment in the schools
4. The government should ensure that facilities are adequately provided in the schools, manageable curriculum contents and experiences are designed for teachers and students, and that disciplinary policies are made friendly to create enabling atmosphere for effective teaching and learning in the schools.

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