



JEDA

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

Journal of Education in Developing Areas

Vol. 23, No. 2 October, 2015

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Attainment of an academic excellent in any school depends on the prevailing school climate. This paper X-rayed the correlation between school climate and the secondary schools students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis. Three research hypotheses were formulated for testing and data was collected with the use of questionnaire and a proforma. The questionnaire was validated and its reliability was established using test retest method. The proforma was used to collect data on students' performance in Senior Secondary School Examinations in National Examination Council (NECO) for the year 2014 and 2015. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between school climate and secondary schools students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis. It was therefore recommended that school administrator should always strive to ensure positive school climate that will enhance students' academic performance.

Introduction

Education is universally acknowledged as an important instrument for national development, undoubtedly. Education is as old as man on earth and there is no society without one form of education or the other. It is in the light of this that education is usually given greater attention in national planning.

However, as good as education is for national development, its impact could not be felt unless it is geared towards the achievement of the goals for which it is meant. Therefore, in a formal educational setting, it is pertinent to take cognizance of various factors that contribute to the success or failure of the set goals in educational institutions. These factors include the quality of the school staff (both teaching and non teaching); the availability of the instructional materials; School building and facilities; school environment and school interpersonal relationship among others. These could either make or mar the students' academic performance. School is believed to encompass all these factors; hence, there is need for a positive and healthy school climate that will influence students' academic performance positively.

Although, the concept of school climate has been studied extensively, there is lack of agreement as to the definition of the construct. Terms such as "Atmosphere" or "Feeling" are used with imprecision. In recent years, some researchers have chosen to use the term "culture and school ethos" in referring to the internal characteristics of the school. School climate refers to the impressions, belief and expectations held by members of the community about their school as a learning environment, their associated behavior, symbols and institutions that represent the patterned expressions of the behaviour. It includes the explicit mission and policies expected, to the positive relationships, attitudes or dispositions and perceptions.

Clarifying the concept, Emataron (2000) describes school climate as the internal quality that is unique and peculiar to the school organization. This means that each school can be identified with specific climate that describes the interaction and influence pattern among members of the school. Similarly, Les and Suct-ling (2004) view school climate as part of school environment associated with attitudes affective dimension and the belief system of the school which influence students' cognitive, social and psychological development. School climate is also viewed as the milieu, atmosphere, culture, feel, tone, better still, the internal quality of a school especially as experienced by its members and noticed by the visitors to the school.

Hoy and Miskel (2001) define school climate as a relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affect their behaviours and based on their collective perception in school. This implies that the behaviour, of the people in a particular environment will be influenced by the prevailing climate in the school. Cohen (2001) suggests that improved classroom and school climate can create an environment where learning optimally takes place. In the same vein, McLaughlin (2004) opines that school climate provides opportunities for students to engaged as active learners in a way that lead to confident in the value of participatory problems solving. Positive school

climate respects and values student abilities to shape their own learning and participate in solving problems that arise in the teaching and learning process.

Statement of the Problem

Our institutions of learning particularly our secondary schools are characterized with teachers of low morale, poor commitments to duty, indiscipline and incessant transfer from one school to another which has consequently affecting the academic performance of students. This, as a result of poor climatic condition of the school they claimed. Lee (2006) opines that school climate has strong implication on students' academic performance. The need to actually determine whether school climate has correlation with students' academic performance informed this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examining the relationship that might exist between school climate and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated for the testing in the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between school climate and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between school environment and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between school rules and regulations and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey of correlation type. Data were collected from 200 randomly selected respondents. The sample was randomly selected by balloting. The instruments used for the study includes the researchers-designed questionnaire titled "School Climate Questionnaire" and a Proforma. The questionnaire was used to collect data on school climate from selected sample while a proforma was used to collect data on the performance of sample students in Senior Secondary School Examination in National Examination Council (NECO) in the year 2014 and 2015. The validity of questionnaire was established by giving the sample to an expert for perusal while its reliability was ascertained by adopting test retest method whereby the questionnaire was first administered on 20 respondent and was repeated after two weeks while the scores obtained were correlated in order to ascertained it reliability.

Method of Data Analysis

The three research hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

H₀: There is no significant relationship between school climate and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 1: School Climate and Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	Calculated r. value	Table r. value	Decision
School Climate	200	2.01	.833	198	.808	.139	H ₀ rejected
Students' Academic Performance	200	2.24	.549				

P > .05

Table 1 shows that calculated r (.808) is greater than the r (.139) with degree of freedom of 98 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant relationship between school climate and students' academic performance.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between school environment and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 2: School Environment and Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	Calculated r. value	Table r. value	Decision
School Environment	200	2.01	.834	198	.808	.139	H ₀ rejected
Students' Academic Performance	200	2.24	.549				

P > .05

Table 2 shows that calculated r (.808) is greater than the critical r (.139) with degree of freedom of 98 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant relationship between School Environment and students' academic performance thus the null hypothesis is hereby failed to be accepted.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between school rules and regulations and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 3: School Rules and Regulations and Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Calculated r - value	Table r - value	Decision
School Rules and Regulation	200	2.38	.799	198	.872	.139	H ₀ rejected
Students' Academic Performance	200	2.24	.549				
P > .05							

Table 3 shows that calculated r (.872) is greater than the critical r (.139) with degree of freedom of 98 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r-value is greater than the critical r-value, hypothesis three is therefore rejected. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is upheld meaning that there is significant relationship between school rules and regulation and students' academic performance.

Conclusion

School Climate has significant relationship with students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Schools climate could be seen as an ingredient that could make or mar the attainment of school goals, it is therefore necessary for the school administration to be wary of the school climate as it stands to determine the effectiveness of the school administration.

Recommendations

It is recommended among others that school administrators and teachers should strive to ensure a positive school climate that will facilitate effective teaching and learning which will consequently lead to the improvement in students' academic performance. The fact that school environment constitute an aspect of school climate, hence teaching and learning should be democratic in nature whereby every learner will be given equal opportunity and treatment and made to contribute to the teaching and learning process.

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