

African Research Review

An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia

Vol. 3 (4), July, 2009

ISSN 1994-9057 (Print)

ISSN 2070-0083 (Online)

Organizational Climate as Correlates of Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary School Economics in Oyo State, Nigeria (Pp. 429-440)

Ojelabi, S.A. - Department of Teacher Education, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

E-mail: femioje2005@yahoo.com

Abstract

The introduction of organizational climate as a variable that affect students' performance has attracted the interest of economics educators and researchers. This concern arose from the fact that students' achievements in the Secondary School Certificate Economics have remained poor. Several studies have explained students' poor performance in economics through the isolation of one factor but this study combined student and school factors. It is against this background that this study investigated the relationship among organizational climate (sense of belonging; human relations and leadership credibility) and secondary school students' achievement in economics. The study adopted survey research design of the ex-post facto type. A purposive sampling technique was used to select sample for this. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment correlation and multiple regression statistics. The three variables have a joint positive multiple correlation with student achievement in economics ($R=.638$). The three independent variables also accounted for 40.4% of the variance of student achievement in economics (Adjusted $R^2=.404$). Leadership credibility made the most significant contribution to achievement in economics ($\beta=.445$; $P<0.05$) It was also revealed that human relations ($B = 4.006E-02$; $t = 2.982$; $p<.05$) and leader credibility ($B=-3.250$; $t=-16.468$; $p<.05$) could predict student

achievement in Economics while sense of belonging ($B=-.129$; $t=-.395$; $p>.05$) could not predict student achievement. It is, therefore, recommended that these factors should be taken into consideration in order to enhance the understanding of economics and leadership credibility and sense of belonging traits should be developed in the school administrators.

Keywords: Organizational climate, leadership credibility, sense of belongings, Human Relation and Students' Academic Achievement

Introduction

Background to the Problem

The purpose of education is to make an individual to be functional within his/her family, society, town, state and country. It is in view of this, that Dada (1999), attempted to formulate the aims of education which may be found in what any good father would wish for his son. It is a kind of all-round development (intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral) for the learners.

Education has been an agent of change and an instrument of national development. Adepaju and Akinwumi (2001), observed that the role of education in national development has received considerable attention in developed countries where it is argued that heavy investment in education has a great potential for enhancing rapid economic growth. Education is important in the development and improvement of skills.

Education has been responsible for the upliftment of the human conditions. Alade (2004), observed that the primary concern of education is the elevation of human conditions. Through education, people are enabled to develop their knowledge and skills, adopt new behaviour and be able to survive in the society. In the same vein, Oderinde (2005), opined that all over the world, education is the key to development which clearly demonstrated that education play vital roles in the development of the individual, society and the nation as a whole.

Although, education goes on in all aspects of human endeavour, most societies have set up specific institutions that use variety of means to promote efficient and desirable learning. Dada (1999), opined that usually in these institutions, the major concern of learners and teachers is the acquisition of what is considered to be knowledge. The responsibility of imparting knowledge revolves around the teacher who plans, organizes and implements

the teaching learning process. Nonetheless, one of the issues to be resolved is whether or not the teachers are effectively performing their role in the teaching – learning process and to see the effects of their role in students' academic achievement.

For many years, educators and researchers have debated over which variables influence student achievement. A growing body of evidence suggests that schools can make a great difference in terms of student achievement, and a substantial portion of that difference is attributable to teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Sanders and Rivers, 1996

Several studies such as Ibang (1997) in Accounting, Ifamuyiwa (1998) in Mathematics, Okpala (2001) in Physics, Anuka (2002) in Financial Accounting and Adu (2002) in Economics have tried to identify the causes of poor performance in school subjects and each have come out with its own findings. In spite of all these findings, students' performance has not improved significantly to justify the efforts of previous research studies. This situation, therefore, calls for more research directed at identifying the actual problem associated with students' achievement in Economics.

Keeping in view all the variables discussed by different researchers, the present study had chosen some of those variables that are recognizable in developing countries such as Nigeria (Anderson, 2004). The recognizable variables that are chosen are under organizational climate. They are chosen in order to explain students' achievement in Economics. When there is a lack of consensus in the literature on an issue such as this one, further empirical work is usually necessary. It is often useful in such work to employ a methodology different from those in previous studies. This does not only provide fresh perspective, but it also increases confidence in a study's results when those results confirm the findings of previous work.

Although, the Merriam-Webster on-Line Dictionary (2005) provides no definition of climate that could easily be linked to organization, Owens (2004) related it to such terms as atmosphere, personality, tone, or ethos.

The foundation work in school climate is generally recognized as that of Halpin and Croft (1963), who roughly related their definition of climate to morale but admitted that time constraints restricted their consideration of that construct to the social interaction between the principal and the teachers. Their research examined the following: (a) teacher disengagement from the teaching-learning process, (b) the extent to which the principal

burdens teachers with routine duties and demands, (c) teachers' perceptions that their personal needs are being satisfied and they are accomplishing positive things in their work, (d) teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with each other, (e) principals' aloofness and reliance on rules and policies rather than informal contacts with teachers, (f) closeness of supervisor of teachers by the principals (g) teachers' perceptions that the principal is working to move the organization in positive directions; and (h) teachers' perceptions that the principal treats them humanely. All these factors combine to help the climate of a school.

Many authors including Scheming (1992), have drawn sharp lines of demarcation between the constructs of organizational climate and culture. Rousseau (1990), differentiated between these two constructs on the basis of climate being the descriptive beliefs and perceptions individuals hold of the organization, whereas culture is the shared beliefs, values and expectations that develop from social interactions within the organizations. The boundaries between organizational climate and culture can appear to be artificial, arbitrary, and even largely unnecessary.

It is generally agreed that assessment of an organization's climate is a relatively straight forward process, especially when compared to the methodologies needed to assess the organization's culture. As climate is defined as individuals' perceptions, quantitative survey instruments have become the most widely accepted means of gathering and analyzing organizational climate data.

Based on the nature of the Nigerian school system and what the literature examined have in common, seven (7) characteristics of the organizational climate have been selected for use in this study. These characteristics are trust, morale, reward, conflict, resistance to change, scapegoat and leader credibility. Meanwhile, these characteristics have been arranged under three (3) clusters such as sense of belonging (trust, morale, and reward); human relations (conflict, resistance to change, and scapegoating); and leader credibility.

Statement of the Problem

There has been a trend of poor achievement in Economics in Secondary Schools. It is therefore necessary to gear research work in Economics Education towards finding solutions to the factors responsible for students' failure in the subject. Hence, this study investigated the relationships between organizational climate and students' academic achievement in

Economics. The study also investigated the relative contributions of each of the sense of belonging; human relations; leader credibility (organizational climate) to the variance of achievement in Economics. Furthermore, it sought to find out the variables that could predict senior secondary school students' achievement in Economics.

Research questions

Based on the problem stated above, the study sought answers to the following research questions.

1. What is the significant composite effect of the organizational climate variables viz: sense of belonging; human relations and leader credibility on students' achievement in Economics?
2. What are the relative effects of the organizational climate variables (sense of belonging; human relations and leader credibility) on students' achievement in Economics?
3. Which of the organizational climate variables (sense of belonging; human relations and leader credibility) would predict students' achievement in Economics?

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design of the ex-post facto type. The study aimed at the composite and relative effects of organizational climate variables on the student achievement in secondary school Economics.

The population for the study consisted of all the senior secondary school Economics students, Economics teachers and Vice principals of all public senior secondary schools in the thirty three Local Government areas of Oyo States

Six [6] Local Governments were randomly selected while Five (5) schools were randomly selected in each local government which gave a total of thirty (30) schools that were involved in the study while twenty (20) senior secondary school class II Economics students were randomly selected in each school. This gave a total of six hundred (600) students that were involved in the study. The choice of SSII students was borne out of their maturity and to allow for follow up. They had been exposed to Economics in SSI, thus they already had some good knowledge of the subject. The Economics teacher of

SSS II and Vice Principal for senior secondary school were purposively selected

The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, involving frequency counts and percentages were used to present the characteristics and responses of the respondents descriptively. Also, inferential statistics, involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple regression analysis were used to determine the relationships among the independent variables and the dependent variable. All tests were carried out at $\alpha = .05$.

Results and Discussion

The results will be discussed bearing in mind the research questions.

Research Question 1: *What is the composite effect of the organizational variables viz.: sense of belonging; human relations and leader credibility on students' achievement?*

Table 1 shows that sense of belonging has a positive and significant relationship with student achievement in Economics ($r=.236$; $p<.05$). It therefore follows that a good sense of belonging will ensure improved achievement of students in Economics. Also, human relations has a positive and significant relationship with the dependent variable ($r=.176$; $p<.05$). Therefore, a good human relation will lead to better achievement of students in Economics. Leader credibility and student achievement in Economics ($r = -.415$; $p<.05$) have negative but significant relationship with one another. This means that leader credibility negatively relates to students' achievement in Economics.

From Table 3, the organizational climate variables i.e. sense of belonging, human relations and leader credibility have positive multiple correlation with student achievement in Economics ($R=.419$). Also, the adjusted R^2 value of .174 shows that 17.4% of the total variance in students' achievement in Economics is as a result of the variance in organizational climate variables. Other factors and residuals accounted for the remaining 82.6%. To test for the significance of the composite effect of the three organizational climate variables on achievement in Economics.

Table 3 shows that the composite effect of the three organizational climate variables on student achievement in Economics is significant ($F_{(3,2156)} = 152.992$; $p<.05$).

Research Question 2: *What are the relative effects of the organizational climate variables viz: sense of belonging, human relations and leader credibility on students' achievement in Economics?*

From Table 4, leader credibility made the greatest contribution to student achievement in Economics ($\beta=.403$; $p<.05$). The next in the order of magnitude of contribution is made by human relations ($\beta=.061$; $P<.05$). These two variables made significant contribution.

However, sense of belonging which made the lowest contribution to student achievement did not make a significant contribution ($\beta =.009$; $P<.05$).

Research Question 3: *Which of the organizational variables viz: sense of belonging, human relations and leader credibility would predict students' achievement in Economics?*

It was discovered that human relations ($B = 4.006E-02$; $t = 2.982$; $p<.05$) and leader credibility ($B=-3.250$; $t=-16.468$; $p<.05$) could predict student achievement in Economics while sense of belonging ($B=-.129$; $t=-.395$; $p>.05$) could not predict student achievement.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the creation of an enabling environment for the development of a good sense of belonging by the students and teachers of Economics will improve achievement of students in Economics. Again, the existence of good human relations as well as leader credibility within the school system will lead to better achievement of students in Economics. These findings have shown that organizational climate that is low on tension and low on resistance to change is highly desirable for better students' achievement in Economics.

These results revealed that students' achievement in Economics could be predicted fairly accurately given information about the conduciveness of the organizational climate (leader credibility and sense of belonging); Conducive organizational climate is the key to success in teaching and learning in the school. This is because an environment that is conducive will ensure that the teacher is effective while the students will be able to improve on their quantitative ability.

Organizational climate that is conducive would facilitate learning and improve academic achievement by promoting teacher effectiveness and

students' quantitative ability. This is sequel to the fact that learning has to occur within a social context, (Akinade, 1996).

Summary and Conclusions

- Sense of belonging has a positive and significant relationship with student achievement in Economics.
- Human relation has a positive and significant relationship with student achievement in Economics.
- Leader credibility has a negative but significant relationship with student achievement in Economics.
- The variables [sense of belonging, human relations and leader credibility] have positive multiple correlations with student achievement in Economics.
- The composite effect of the organizational climate variables on student achievement in Economics is positive and significant.
- Leader credibility made the greatest contribution to student achievement in Economics. The next in order of the magnitude of the contributions is made by human relations. These two variables made significant contributions. However, sense of belonging made the least contribution to student achievement which is not significant.
- Human relations and leader credibility could predict student achievement in Economics while sense of belonging could not predict student achievement in Economic

Conclusions

The study has shown that the three independent variables contribute to the prediction of the variance of secondary school students' achievement in Economics. Therefore, appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that the variables are adequately and appropriately managed so that their contributions to Economics teaching and learning would be positive rather than negative.

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Table 1: Pearson Correlations of Organizational Climate Variables and Student achievement in Economics

VARIABLES		Achievement	Sense of belonging	Human relations	Leader credibility
Pearson Correlation (r)	Achievement	1.000	.236*	.176*	-.415*
	Sense of belonging	.236*	1.000	.220	-.577
	Human relations	.176*	.220	1.000	-.289
	Leader credibility	-.415*	-.577	-.289	1.000

* Significant at $P < .05$

Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis on Organizational Climate and Achievement in Economics

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.419	.176	.174	1.7593

Table 3: ANOVA of Regression on the Organizational Climate Variables

Source of variance	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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: Relative Effects of Organizational Climate Variables on Achievement

Source of variance	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	Rank	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(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 $p < .05$