



School Culture and School Climate in Public Elementary Schools in the Division of Antipolo City

Maureen I. Lipata

Licensed Professional Teacher

Teacher I, MAED-EM (Student), University of Rizal Systems, Graduate School, Antipolo City, Philippines

Abstract:

The study aims to describe the school climate and school culture in forty-five public elementary schools in Antipolo City, Philippines. The grades range from Kinder to gradesixth. The lists of schools are identified based on the Master list of Public Elementary Schools in the Division of Antipolo City. The schools are grouped into two districts. District I is divided into subgroups namely; I-A, I-B, and I-C while District II is divided into subgroups namely; II-A, II-B, II-C, and II-D. The ED School Climate Survey and the School Culture Triage Survey are the instruments used to gather data on school climate and school culture. The Slovin's Formula, a random sampling technique, is used to calculate the sample size of the population. The purposes of the study are to examine and determine the perception of the school's staff, teachers, and school children to school climate and school culture, to examine the degree of impact of school climate and school culture to the school performance. The results of this study may assist school leaders to develop a free and clear school climate that can lead to a collaborative school culture. School culture can assist schools build and maintain high school children achievement for many years (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015).

Index Terms: school climate, school culture, school performance, school children, school staff and teachers' perceptions

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the ratification of Republic Act 8508 in 1998, making the municipality of Antipolo into a component city of the Rizal province, until such time that the Division of Antipolo City is recognized as a new division, DepEd Antipolo grows rapidly in its number of schools (depedantipolo.com). Alongside the growth in number of schools, the collection of research on school climate and school culture is not evident. Numerous studies and measures are done to improve schools' performance in the division. To include research on school climate and school culture is beneficial since the National School Climate Center notes that empirical research has shown that when school members feel safe, valued, cared for, engaged, and respected, learning measurably increases, and staff satisfaction and retention are enhanced (Truby, 2018). School children spend substantial amount of time in school. Consequently, school children's feelings about their school experience can have a big impact on their daily lives. Students not only need to feel safe at school, but should also feel comfortable, and that they are part of a supportive environment. Persistent positive school climate has been linked to positive student development, learning, academic achievement, effective risk prevention and health promotion, high graduation rates, low dropout rates, and teacher retention stated by Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & HigginsD'Alessandro (as cited in Kane, Hoff, Cathcart, Heifner, Palmon, and Peterson, 2016). Understanding school climate and school culture is important in fostering better school performance. For this reason, a principal as head of the school takes in consideration the perceptions of the staff, teachers and school children about school's culture and climate because these are "areas where school principal can have a more direct impact (Allens, 2016). In R.A 9155, an Act Instituting a Framework of Governance for

Basic Education, Establishing Authority and Accountability, stipulates that the school principal shall function both as an instructional leader and administrative manager to ensure that goals for quality education are met and shall be assisted by an office staff for administrative and fiscal services. In this line, what a principal does has an impact to the climate and culture of the school (Spicer, 2016). Similarly, teachers and staff's perception on school climate and school culture is measured to examine the impact in the school performance. Peer-reviewed educational research has consistently demonstrated that a positive school climate is associated with academic achievement, effective risk prevention efforts and positive youth development (National School Climate Center, no date). Therefore, the aim of the study is to describe what school climate and school culture is. It also seeks to measure the perception of the school children, teacher, staff, and principal on school climate and school culture. It examines the impact of school climate and school culture to the school performance. This study concentrated on the elementary school children, teachers, school staff and principals in public schools in the Division of Antipolo City.

II. RESULTS

The definition of climate and culture has often been used interchangeably for many years. Organizational climate is by far the oldest construct. It was first used in 1939 with a study carried out by Lewin, Lippit, and White and became popular with organizational theorist in the 1960s. The study of culture was introduced in 1970s and became popular in the 1980s according to Denison and Glisson. Now a days, many organizational theorists still use the two constructs interchangeably. A literature review of climate and culture in the late 1990s found there were 30 definitions of climate and 50

definitions of culture as stated by Verbeke, Volgering, & Hessels ((as cited in Horton Jr., 2018). Culture and climate are distinct and separate (Denison, 1996; Glisson, 2007; Schein, 2010; Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macy, 2013). School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on pattern of school children, parents', and school personnels' experiences of school life and norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationship, teaching and learning practices and organizational structure (National School Climate Center, no date). The climate of a school is the visceral, almost palpable sense of safety and belonging that people experience on site. It can be described as warm or cool, safe or unsafe. Though there is no simple, formal definition, scholars seem to argue that the climate is the sum total of attitudes and behavior elicited by the:

- School policies, practices and physical environment
- Staff interactions with peers and school children
- Opportunities for student engagement and leadership
- Beliefs and attitudes school children bring to the school from their families and the community (Community Matters, 2009-2019).

According to National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, school climate is a broad, multifaceted concept that involves many aspects of the student's educational experience. However, school climate is defined, it points amicably to the effect on school children's learning. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society (National School Climate Center, no date). Similarly, a positive school climate is characterized by strong relationships among and between school children and staff. It disciplines using formative (not punitive) consequences. Engagement, recognitions and leadership opportunities for students in a wide variety of activities. National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments further explains that a positive school climate is the product of a school's attention to fostering safety, promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationship, throughout the school community no matter the setting- from the kinder/elementary school to higher education. It is safe to say that a positive school climate is critically related to school success. For example, it can improve attendance rate, achievement rate, retention rate and even graduation rate (NCSSLE, 2019).

School climate is affected by five primary determinants:

1. **Organization** - The vision and leadership of educational leaders and their commitment to using school climate as the guiding principle for planning and decision-making, the policies they enact and the processes for determining and enforcing them, the lines of communication and access to authority, and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
2. **Staff** - The ways school staff relate to each other and to students; their classroom management and discipline practices, and the priority they place on being hall-friendly asset builders who demonstrate care for students' well-being.
3. **Students** - The degree to which students are engaged in leadership opportunities and the ways students relate to

one another and to adults in authority. Seeing and treating students as contributors and not consumers goes a long way in gaining their involvement and their commitment to speak up and resolve conflicts peacefully.

4. **Families** - The values, beliefs, and practices that are instilled and reinforced in children by parents and other relatives, especially regarding how to behave with adults in authority and how to resolve differences with others peers, and also what value is placed on education, tolerance, communication and nonviolence.
5. **Community** - The values, beliefs, and practices that are evident outside the walls of school and home, particularly the value a community places on its children and youth, how its members treat youth when they encounter them in their neighborhoods, and how they invest time and resources to support youth development. (Community Matters, 2019-2019)

Four Types of School Climate

Hoy W.K, Miskel C.G developed a typology of school climate using the concept of opened and closed building principal and teacher behavior. Building principals that are open lead through examples. Building principals that are open demonstrate supportive behaviors; they are able to motivate teachers use constructive criticism and show a genuine concern for the personal and professional welfare of members in their school (high intimacy). Open building principals give their teachers the latitude to perform without close scrutiny (high supportiveness). Open building principals try to shield their teachers with unnecessary work so they can have more time educating students (low restrictiveness). Building principals that are closed are rigid, demanding, and lack genuine concern for other members in their school (low intimacy); they are non-supportive, inflexible, and hinder progress. Open teachers are engaged with other members in school; they are proud of their school, enjoy collaborating with other members of their school, trust students, and are committed to educating students. Closed teachers are not engaged in the learning process (low engagement), they prefer to teachers working in isolation (low collegiality) and lack concern for students. Using the concept of open and closed behaviors, the researchers identified four types of school climates:

(1) Open Climate: Open climates are characterized by cooperation, respect, and a sincere concern for other members in the school. School climates that are open show a high degree of trust, esprit de corps, collaboration, and engagement with all members of school. There is a strong sense of teacher efficacy in schools that are opened. They are actively engaged in teaching students (high engagement). Building principals are supportive and are genuinely concerned for the welfare of the members of their school (high intimacy). They are actively engaged in the learning process (high engagement), they listen to their teachers' ideas and provide praise.

(2) Engaged Climate: Engaged school climates are characterized by ineffective attempts of the building principal to lead teachers and students. Building principals are rigid and authoritarian (high directedness). They are often seen as burdening the teachers with unnecessary busy work (low supportiveness). Teachers, on the other hand, are engaged in the

learning process and collaborate with their colleagues (high collegiality). Teachers not only respect their colleagues but they are friends with one another (high intimacy).

(3) Closed Climates: Closed school climates are the antithesis of open school climates. Closed school climates are characterized by teachers and principals simply going through the motions. Members of the school lack collegiality and concern for other members (low collegiality). Building principal's leadership is rigid and controlling with little to no input from teachers (high directedness). Building principals are unresponsive and unsympathetic teachers' or students' needs (low supportiveness) Similarly to building principals, teachers lack the interest to become friends with or collaborate with their colleagues or their building principal (low collegiality and low intimacy)

(4) Disengaged Climates: **Disengaged school climates are the** antithesis of engaged school climates. Building principals' leadership behavior is strong, supportive, and concerned (high supportiveness). They have a genuine interest and show empathy towards members of their school (high intimacy) and give teachers the latitude to act based on their professional knowledge (low directedness). Teachers, on the other hand, lack collegiality with their colleagues and would prefer to go it alone (low collegiality). They ignore the building principal's support and are unresponsive to the building principal's request (low supportiveness). Teachers are clearly disengaged in the educational process. (Horton Jr. J.A., 2018 p. 19-22). School culture refers to the way teachers and other staff members work together and the set of beliefs, values, and assumptions they share. A positive school climate and school culture promote students' ability to learn (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2017). 'School culture' can be used to encompass all the attitudes, expected behaviors and values that impact how the school operates (D. Fisher, 2012) School culture is one of the most complex, basic essence and important concepts in education: "the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment... These are the heart of school culture, and what makes it so hard to grasp and change" (Stoll, 1998, 9). School culture is "the way we do things around here"—those tangible and intangible norms and values shared by members of a school that help shape the behaviors of teachers and school leaders (Patrick J. Schuermann, James W. Guthrie, Colleen Hoy, 2017) Çakiroğlu, Akkan, & Guven suggested that school culture is defined as the shared values, rules, belief patterns, teaching and learning approaches, behaviors, and relationships among or across the individuals in a school. Culture encompasses a school's norms, unwritten rules, traditions, and expectations (as cited in E. Kane, N. Hoff, A. Cathcart, A. Heifner, S. Palmon, R. Peterson, 2016 p.1). These may influence the way people dress to the way they interact with each other (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Culture is more deeply ingrained in a school, and therefore may only be altered over a longer period through systematic change in a school's climate (Gruenert, 2008). School culture involves many stakeholders—policymakers, principals, teachers, students, and parents—and their behaviors impact the motivations, behaviors, and achievement of students (Schuermann, Guthrie, Hoy, 2011).

Six Types of School Culture

Gruenert and Whitaker define six general types of school culture in their book, **School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It**. These are:

Toxic – Significant numbers of teachers focus on the negative aspects of the school's operations and personnel, using these flaws as justification for poor performance.

Fragmented – Teachers function as individuals with classroom doors staying closed and teachers having their own territory and for the most part liking it that way.

Balkanized – Collaboration occurs only among like-minded staff. Teachers may recruit colleagues forming cliques that compete for position, resources, and territory. Stronger cliques may bully others.

Contrived-Collegial – Leadership may generate contrived collegiality when they enforce collaboration: expecting teachers to meet and discuss student progress and then file a report to prove they did. A contrived element maybe a necessary starting point for change but teacher ownership of collaboration needs to be fostered.

Comfortable- Collaboration – A congenial culture exists, that values cooperation, courtesy, and compliance. Teachers may hesitate to voice disagreement with one another for fear of hurting someone's feelings. "In the comfortable school culture it's more important to get along than to teach effectively"

Collaborative School Culture – Teachers share strong educational values, work together to pursue professional development, and are committed to improve their work (as cited in Melvin, 2015) Furthermore, there are eight (8) core aspects in improving school culture. (1) Positive teacher – student interactions. (2) Students who feel safe, connected, and engaged. (3) Policies promoting social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions, and engagement, plus a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching in order to reengage school children who may veer off-track. (4) Collaborative relationships between the school leader and faculty as well as between faculty members. (5) Clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive behaviors. (6) Parental involvement. (7) Focus on learning and high expectations for student achievement. (8) Decreased teacher turnover and increased teacher satisfaction (Rodwell, no date). School culture is often used interchangeably with school climate; however, "school climate" refers to the individual experiences and feelings that students, teachers, and staff have about the school, while "school culture" typically refers to the long-term physical and social environment, as well as the values or beliefs of the school shared across individuals and time (National School Climate Center, FAQ's About School Climate, n.d.). Another way to differentiate the two terms is by categorizing climate as the "at titude or mood" of the school and the culture as the "personality or values" of the school. Climate is perception-based, while culture is grounded in shared values and beliefs (Gruenert, 2008). In this sense, climate is how people feel in the school, and culture is a deeper sense of how people act in the school.

III. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to describe the school climate and school culture in selected public secondary Priority Schools, Focus Schools, and Reward Schools in New Jersey and New

York. This study used the United States Department of Education's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver definition to identify Priority Schools, Focus Schools, and Reward Schools. The grades ranged from ninth to twelfth grade. The lists of schools were identified from the 2016 New Jersey Department of Education and the New York State Education Department lists of Priority Schools, Focus Schools, and Reward Schools (NJDOE, 2016; NYSED, 2016). The organizational Climate Description Questionnaire – Rutgers Secondary (OCDQ-RS) and the School Culture Survey (SCS) were the instruments used to gather data on school climate and school culture. A total of 627 teachers participated in the study. Due to the low number of teachers participating in the study, the information gleaned from this study may not be as accurate as a study with substantially more teachers participating. The findings in this study suggested that Reward Schools had an open school climate and a collaborative school culture. Teachers from Reward Schools had mean scores above the normative mean of 500 in Supportive Principal Behavior, Engaged Teacher Behavior, and Intimate Teacher Behavior. The ANOVA post hoc test Tukey HSD revealed that Reward Schools had two climate dimensions, Supportive Principal Behavior and Engaged Teacher Behavior, which were statistically different than the mean scores from Priority and Focus Schools at the .001 significance level. Reward Schools had mean scores in four culture dimensions, Collaborative Leadership, Teacher Collaboration, Professional Development, and Learning Partnership, above the normative mean of 500. The ANOVA post hoc test Tukey HSD revealed there were two school culture dimensions, Collective Leadership and Learning Partnership, which were statistically different between Reward Schools and Focus Schools at the .05 significance level. Priority and Focus Schools had engaged school climates. Teachers from Priority and Focus Schools had mean scores above the normative mean in Directive Principal Behavior and Intimate Teacher Behavior. The ANOVA post hoc test Tukey HSD revealed that there was one school climate dimension, Frustrated Teacher Behavior, which was statistically different between Priority Schools and Focus Schools at the .05 significance level. Priority Schools and Focus Schools had mean scores above the normative mean score of 500 in Teacher Collaboration and Collegial Support. Teachers from both schools had a mean score that was slightly below the normative mean in Collaborative Leadership. Both Priority Schools and Focus Schools had mean scores below the normative mean in Professional Development and Unity of Purpose. ANOVA post hoc test Tukey HSD revealed that there was one school culture dimension, Collegial Support, which was statistically different between Priority Schools and Focus Schools. The results of this study may assist school leaders develop an open school climate that can lead to a collaborative school culture. School culture can assist schools build and maintain high student achievement for many years (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015). (Horton Jr., 2018) School climate is a leading factor in explaining student learning and achievement. Less work has explored the impact of both staff and student perceptions of school climate raising interesting questions about whether staff school climate experiences can add “value” to students' achievement. In the current research, multiple sources were integrated into a multilevel model, including staff self-reports, student self-reports, objective school records of academic achievement, and socio-economic demographics.

Achievement was assessed using a national literacy and numeracy tests ($N = 760$ staff and 2,257 students from 17 secondary schools). In addition, guided by the “social identity approach,” school identification is investigated as a possible psychological mechanism to explain the relationship between school climate and achievement. In line with predictions, results show that students' perceptions of school climate significantly explain writing and numeracy achievement and this effect is mediated by students' psychological identification with the school. Furthermore, staff perceptions of school climate explain students' achievement on numeracy, writing and reading tests (while accounting for students' responses). However, staff's school identification did not play a significant role. Implications of these findings for organizational, social, and educational research are discussed (Maxwell, Reynolds, Lee, Subasic, and Bromhead, 2017) This study aimed to investigate the relationship between school culture and teacher leadership. A total of 194 teachers from 22 primary schools were selected as respondents. A set of questionnaires were used as primary data collection and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings show that “teachers' professionalism and goal setting” is the dominant school culture dimensions. Whereas, “exemplify the best” and “being referenced leader” are the widely practiced teacher leadership features. The correlation analysis shows that there is a very strong and significant correlation between school culture and teacher leadership. The findings of this study can be used for in-service training in order to enhance teachers' professionalism. (Yusof, Noor, and Osman, 2016) This paper presents the results of research into the effects of school culture on the teaching and learning process in primary schools. Among the seven areas that are subject to self-evaluation and assessment, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia defined the indicators of quality of teaching and learning process. These indicators are, in addition to indicators of school culture, a starting point for this study. The research was carried out in Serbian primary schools. Multiple regression analysis determines the predictive effect of school culture on the dimensions of the teaching process and learning as well as the elements of the teaching process. Legislation generally does not define the concept of school culture, rather it occurs as a term in scientific theory, but the term 'good school' is not related exclusively to scientific research. It is a generally accepted term for a school with a good organizational culture. The results shown that the culture of the school has a strong and positive impact on teaching and learning in primary schools in Serbia. (Glusac, Nikolic, Tasik, Terek, 2015) Administrators in five highly effective elementary schools were studied. These leaders, through acts of will and insight, had given up iconic and heroic leadership status, so that school leadership might be shared. Leadership has a significant effect on student learning. Principals' influence is often indirect, works through others, and happens best by developing teachers' efficacy in curriculum and instruction, engaging and motivating staff, fostering a shared purpose, creating conditions for effective teaching and learning, fostering program coherence, encouraging organizational learning, and through feedback, direction, and communication. Significant leadership practices include communicating a clear vision and priorities, focusing time and attention on what matters most, enabling teachers to develop pedagogical and content skills and capacity, providing instructional guidance, empowering others to make significant decisions, addressing

supportive structures and resources, developing school improvement plans, providing instructional guidance and coherence, engaging the larger school and district community, acting ethically, and engaging in continuous learning and growth.(Parsons&Beaucham, 2012) In this study, the direct and indirect relations between school culture and the organizational commitment of primary school teachers were analyzed. The subjects of the research consisted of primary school teachers who worked at a district in Istanbul in the academic year 2007-2008. The sampling group was defined by the cluster sampling method. In total 200 teachers participated. Two scales were used to collect data, the organisational commitment scale (OCS) and the school culture scale (SCS). Linear regression and path analysis were used to explain the influence of school culture on organisational commitment, and LISREL 7 was used as a structural equation model. The findings indicated that although there was a positive correlation between school culture and organisational commitment, the direct effect of school culture on organisational commitment was not meaningful (KARADAĞ, BALOĞLU, and ÇAKIR, 2011). Research has confirmed that the behaviors of human beings are influenced by their social environments. The school is the principal social environment of adolescents; thus, the school environment necessarily influences the behaviors of students to some degree. This research project used the interview method to focus on perceptions of school personnel with regard to the elements of school culture that may negatively influence students' behaviors both inside and outside the school environment. The primary influences of school culture on students' behaviors were found to be peers, teachers, administrators, and parent involvement. Governmental regulations, including those resulting from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, were found to be an indirect and sometimes negative influence on the long-term behaviors of students and their ability to function in the world. This study resulted in the discovery that teachers, administrators, and other school personnel perceive that school culture, over time, has become more tolerant of inappropriate and even aggressive acts by some students while, at the same time, the culture successfully supports the implementation of problem-solving techniques and positive behavior supports for most students. The conclusions reached in the study indicate that school culture and its relation to student behaviors must be carefully examined and that, if further research confirms the findings of this study, action should be taken to effect change. Those changes should include the expansion of efforts to provide equitable and respectful treatment and opportunities for students of all socioeconomic backgrounds as well as lobbying for changes in federal and state regulations, such as some provisions of the IDEA, that have promoted a lack of student accountability for behaviors. (Story,2010) The purpose of the study was to investigate whether Exemplary, Recognized and Acceptable schools differ in their school climates, as measured by the 10 dimensions of the Organizational Health Inventory. Significant differences were found on all 10 dimensions of the Organizational Health Inventory, with Exemplary schools out-performing Acceptable schools. No statistical significance was found between Exemplary and Recognized schools. Statistical significance was found, with Recognized schools out-performing Acceptable schools on the Organizational Health dimensions of Goal focus and Adaptation. The findings of this study suggest that students achieve higher scores on standardized tests in schools with

healthy learning environments. (Mac Neil, Prater & Busch, 2009). Take five scenarios. The first two involve improvement attempts from outside of schools; the other three, from inside. First, the external efforts. In the attempt to drive up educational standards, a national government mandates that all schools will use a "tried and tested" approach to teaching writing. This will be introduced through professional development and monitoring practices found effective when introducing changes elsewhere. Second, a Local Education Authority sets up a voluntary school improvement project for its schools in partnership with a university. It draws on an extensive knowledge base on the conditions that support school improvement. In both cases, the "pill" works in some participating schools, but not others (Stoll, 1998) The concept of climate is a recurring theme of the three sections of this article. The inadequacy of climate as a metaphor is addressed in the first section. Teachers do, however, use the term "climate" in an explanatory and predictive way. When evaluators and researchers work with teachers they have a particular responsibility both in provision of data and in the use of concepts which frame the data. These and related issues form the second section. The third and major section portrays a model of culture which acknowledges overt and covert meanings as well as the interaction of the different levels of the model, namely beliefs, values, norms and standards, and finally behavior. The discussion develops a linkage from the culture of the organization to wider societal influences. School climate is placed as the most superficial level of the interactive model of school culture(Maxwell, 1991).

IV. CONCLUSION

Researches support the idea that positive school climate and school culture has many benefits for school systems. The positive benefits affect students, staff, families, and the local community. Benefits range from improved academic achievement, behavior, and relationships. The perceptions of the school children, teachers, staff and principals of school climate and school culture explain the school performance. Appropriate assessment and intervention procedures are key to reducing the gap between research and practice. Although school climate and school culture enhancement are not a simple or quick task, it is a crucial piece of school improvement and can have profound effects on student wellbeing and school success.

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