

APPRAISAL OF PRINCIPALS' PEDAGOGIC FUNCTIONS ON SCHOOL CLIMATE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTH WEST REGION OF CAMEROON

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Abstract

The study examined principals' pedagogic functions on school climate in secondary schools in the South West region of Cameroon. Specifically, the study examined the extent principals do carry out their pedagogic function; assess principals' perception of how execution of their pedagogic function influence school climate; and examine principals' execution of their pedagogic function by school type. The study adopted a concurrent mixed method approach. Questionnaire comprised both closed and open-ended questions and structured interview guide were the instruments used. Data were successfully collected from 427 teachers and 27 principals. The simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.860 for pedagogic function and 0.853 for school climate. Quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science 27.0, and qualitative data thematically. Findings showed that principals' pedagogic function has a positive and significant influence on school climate (coefficient value 0.212), significant at 1% level. Proper execution of pedagogic function was reported to promotes effective teaching learning, smooth running of the school, foster teachers' assiduity, foster staff collaboration, enhance students' study awareness, promote orderliness, and foster good teacher-student relationship while improper execution of pedagogic function was reported to cause students' indiscipline, brings disorder in the school, slow teaching learning, hinder staff collaboration, result to poor academic performance, makes teaching ineffective. Principals irrespective of school do not significantly differ in the execution of pedagogic function but school climate was healthier for principals who adequately carry out their pedagogic function 70.3% than those who do not 48.0%. It was recommended that some training be offer to principals to strengthened to capacity in performing their pedagogic functions due to wanting in the teachers' supervision, collaboration with teachers, and providing opportunities for teachers' professional development.

Keywords:

Principals, Pedagogic Function, School Climate, Secondary Schools.



Résumé

Cette étude a examiné l'influence des fonctions pédagogiques des chefs d'établissement sur le climat scolaire dans les établissements d'enseignement secondaire de la région du Sud-Ouest du Cameroun. Plus précisément, elle visait à : (i) examiner dans quelle mesure les chefs d'établissement exercent leurs fonctions pédagogiques ; (ii) évaluer leur perception de l'influence de l'exécution de ces fonctions sur le climat scolaire ; et (iii) analyser l'exercice de leurs fonctions pédagogiques en fonction du type d'établissement. L'étude a adopté une approche mixte convergente. Les instruments de collecte des données comprenaient un questionnaire composé de questions fermées et ouvertes ainsi qu'un guide d'entretien structuré. Les données ont été recueillies avec succès auprès de 427 enseignants et de 27 chefs d'établissement. Les techniques d'échantillonnage aléatoire simple et d'échantillonnage raisonné ont été utilisées. Le coefficient de fiabilité du questionnaire était de 0,860 pour les fonctions pédagogiques et de 0,853 pour le climat scolaire. Les données quantitatives ont été analysées à l'aide du logiciel Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0, tandis que les données qualitatives ont fait l'objet d'une analyse thématique. Les résultats ont révélé que les fonctions pédagogiques des chefs d'établissement exercent une influence positive et significative sur le climat scolaire (coefficient = 0,212), significative au seuil de 1 %. Une exécution efficace des fonctions pédagogiques favorise un enseignement-apprentissage de qualité, le bon fonctionnement de l'établissement, l'assiduité des enseignants, la collaboration entre les membres du personnel, la sensibilisation des élèves à leurs études, le maintien de l'ordre et de la discipline ainsi que de bonnes relations entre enseignants et élèves. En revanche, une mauvaise exécution de ces fonctions est associée à l'indiscipline des élèves, au désordre dans l'établissement, au ralentissement du processus d'enseignement-apprentissage, à une faible collaboration entre les enseignants, à de faibles performances académiques et à une diminution de l'efficacité de l'enseignement. Les résultats montrent également que les chefs d'établissement, quel que soit le type d'établissement, ne diffèrent pas significativement dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions pédagogiques. Toutefois, le climat scolaire est plus favorable dans les établissements dirigés par des chefs d'établissement qui exercent adéquatement leurs fonctions pédagogiques (70,3 %) que dans ceux où ces fonctions sont insuffisamment exercées (48,0 %). L'étude recommande l'organisation de formations de renforcement des capacités à l'intention des chefs d'établissement afin d'améliorer l'exercice de leurs fonctions pédagogiques, notamment en matière de supervision des enseignants, de collaboration avec le personnel enseignant et de promotion des opportunités de développement professionnel des enseignants.

Mots-clés : *Chefs d'établissement, fonctions pédagogiques, climat scolaire, établissements d'enseignement secondaire.*

Introduction

School climate is a critical aspect of the educational system, as it impacts student learning, behaviour, and academic achievement. The school climate is shaped by various factors, including the leadership style of the principal. Principals play a crucial role in creating a positive school climate that fosters learning, growth, and development (Leithwood et al., 2004). In fact, the nature of school climate do have lots of psychological implications on teachers such as their duration of service in a school, commitment, productivity,

engagement, and satisfaction. Therefore, while school climate depends heavily on school leadership among other factors, it is imperative that every principal properly execute their functions to boost teachers' love for a school.

Therefore, understanding the principal's pedagogic functions and its influence on the overall school environment is crucial for improving educational outcomes (Gentilucci & Muto, 2007) and even teachers' productivity. School climate is defined as the quality and character of school life, which encompasses the values, norms, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures within the school (Cohen et al., 2009). Thus, from the definition that mentioned teaching-learning practices, it entails pedagogy. It is on this note that this study aimed to examine the nature of principals' execution of their pedagogic function and how it influences school climate. Principals, as head of secondary school institution are crucial in the nature of school life. The way they carry out their function such as pedagogy might either foster conviviality among teachers or dissonance. Why many studies have been done in the area of leadership, little is known or documented in our context on how principals' pedagogic functions influence school climate.

Literature Review

The role of the school principal has undergone significant transformation in recent decades. Long ago, principals were more focused on administrative duties and putting order within the school (Hallinger, 2003). But, as school leadership continues to evolve with attention shifted more to teachers as the most important resource in the school, principals are expected to be more holistic and dynamic in carrying out their duties in not solely overall educational outcomes but even the school climate (Leithwood et al., 2004). Research conducted across various educational contexts has highlighted the critical importance of the principal's functions in fostering a positive school climate (Cohen et al., 2009). Consequently, principals are demanded to be visionary leaders, skilled managers, and effective instructional leaders to ensure supportive and enjoyable work climate for all. This call for principals as instructional leaders draws their attention to the pedagogic functions, the primary objective of every school.

In the context of Cameroon, the role of the school principal has equally evolved, with a growing emphasis on the principal's functions and their influence on school climate (Ngoe, 2016). The country's education system has undergone significant reforms in recent years, aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of secondary education (Ngong, 2018). At the national level, the Cameroonian government has recognized the importance of strong school leadership in enhancing school climate and student outcomes.

The Ministry of Secondary Education has implemented policies and initiatives to support principals in their various roles, including professional development programs and resource allocation (Tamukong, 2004). In the South West Region of Cameroon, the school principal's functions and their impact on school climate have been the subject of extensive research and scholarly discourse (Ngong, 2018). This scholarly discourse is surfacing due to observations about teachers' disposition under certain principals. Principals' functions in secondary schools during the colonial and mandate period were not

cumbersome and demanding like the challenges the principals of secondary schools in Cameroon today are facing. Population then was average, reducing the workload for both the administration, teachers and students. During colonisation, Secondary Education was controlled by MINEDUC (Ministry of National Education).

Today, the principals' functions are more complex, due to the increase in the population of learners with diverse needs, teachers' demands, and increase need for more resources. Therefore, improper management of all these, risk having deleterious effects on school climate. The handbook for heads of secondary and high schools (1995/1996) clearly identifies four major functions of a principal, which are pedagogic, administrative, financial and social functions. Mbua (2003) opined that the way secondary school principals perform their functions has an influence on school climate in secondary schools.

Effective principals create a positive climate by fostering a sense of belonging, promoting academic excellence, and nurturing positive student-teacher relationships (Leithwood, et al., 2008). Conversely, ineffective leadership can contribute to a negative and unsupportive school climate. Hallinger and Heck (2011) reported that principals' pedagogic functions have a significant influence on the school climate, as they set the tone for academic excellence, promote effective teaching practices, and create a culture of learning. Therefore, principals who prioritize instructional improvement, provide guidance and support to teachers, and foster a culture of professional learning contribute to a positive school climate (Seashore et al., 2010).

Principals' pedagogic role equally demands their participation in curriculum development and implementation. Principals are expected to actively participate in curriculum decision-making, bring into line instruction with educational standards, promote innovative teaching practices, supervises teachers properly, effectively monitor students' learning in campus, value and prioritize teachers; professional development, respond to the provision of didactic materials for effective teaching. Harris (2013) stated that effective principals who prioritize ongoing professional development for teachers for them to upgrade their pedagogic skills, significantly influences the school climate.

School Climate

The National School Climate Council (2007) defines school climate as norms, values and expectations that support people's feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe. School climate is a product of interpersonal relationships among students, teachers, other staff members, parents as well as administrators. School climate refers to the quality and character of every school based on pattern of school life experiences and reflects on norms, values, practices, goals and objectives, (National school climate council, 2007). Although it may seem difficult to state a concise definition of school climate, most researchers do agree that it is a multidimensional construct that involves physical, social and academic dimension.

Jevtić (2022) opined that the physical dimension comprises appearance of the school building, classrooms, desks, chalkboard, tables, chairs and all furniture. This implies that a school with good aesthetics will sound a bell in the mind of parents and learners that

the environment is conducive for learning. However, this may sometime be misleading because good physical infrastructures only do not reveal the happenings in the school unless one is a member. Despite this limitation, it is crucial for every school to have good physical and attractive facilities because it often acts as a pulling factor.

Regarding the social dimensions, Cohen et al. (2009) identified the quality of interpersonal relationships and interactions within a school community as the social dimensions. Specifically, it is vital that in every school, there is quality interpersonal relationship between and among students, teachers (academic and auxiliary staff), administrators, and other stakeholders. More so, need for equitable and fair treatment of students by teachers and administrators is paramount. The involvement of students, teachers, and parents in decision making in school affairs is equally important. In fact, it should be noted that while physical facilities may attract parents and learners, their stay in the school depends more on the social atmosphere because no individual will love to study in an environment that is frequently characterised by hostility and life threatening.

Considering academic dimensions, Kearney (2020) outlines three which are quality of pedagogy and instruction, teacher expectations for student achievements, and monitoring students' progress and reverting to both students and parents. From this academic dimension, it is lucid that how principals execute their pedagogic function, characterizes the school climate. Poor school climate does have negative repercussions. The feelings cultivated by both the students and teachers about their school underlies individual attitudes, behaviours, group or school norms, and values. When both students, teachers and the administration feel safe and secured about a school, it fosters high-quality relationship, high productivity, and morale amongst them. On the other hand, insecure, threatened, and unsupportive school environment breeds failures, repetitions, dropouts and dismissal poor academic performances, low productivity, and of course educational wastage which the government is struggling to eliminate, in the educational system.

Negative school climate characterized by poor relationships, lack of trust, and a sense of hostility or disengagement is associated with lower student achievement, increased behavioural issues, and poor overall outcomes (Gottfredson et al., 2005). More so, a school climate that is authoritarian can lead to a sense of disempowerment and resentment among students and staff (Owens, 2016). Furthermore, a permissive school climate characterized by a lack of clear boundaries, rules, and accountability, can contribute to a sense of chaos, confusion, and a lack of academic focus (Hoy & Miskel, 2018). Permissive school climate can happen when principals appear complacent with their pedagogic function.

Principals' Pedagogic Function

Principals' pedagogic function has been conceptualized disparately by scholars and is the primary function of every principal that much energy must be directed at. It is that function that principals must be capable of using their administrative, financial, and social functions to ensure their realization of a school pedagogic duties. In the view of Creemers (2021), principals pedagogic function refers to the responsibilities of educators in providing guidance, support, and instruction to learners, with a focus on fostering their cognitive, social, and emotional development. On a generic level,

principals' pedagogic function refers to the responsibilities and actions related to instructional leadership, curriculum development, teaching and learning support, and promoting effective pedagogical practices within the school. From this generic view, principals are expected to provide guidance, resources, and professional development opportunities for teachers, monitor and evaluate instructional programs, and create a school culture that prioritizes high-quality teaching and learning.

The pedagogic function of principals in secondary schools is a critical aspect of their role in shaping the school climate. Principals influence the school climate by promoting effective teaching and learning practices that foster student engagement, achievement, and well-being. Research suggests that principals' pedagogic function plays a significant role in creating a positive school climate conducive to academic success and student development (Robinson et al., 2021). For example, studies by (Alexander & Yitzhak-Monsonego, 2020; Heru et al., 2020; Ahmad & Suyatno 2021; Emilio et al., 2021; Dea et al., 2022) somehow show that pedagogic function of principals does have implication on school climate although some of them did not clearly establish that, a gap that our own study aimed to close.

Despite this gap, effective principals prioritize instructional leadership and actively engage in shaping pedagogical practices within their schools. By setting high academic expectations, supporting teacher professional development, and ensuring curriculum alignment, principals can create a climate that values and supports quality teaching (Leithwood et al., 2008). This focus on instructional leadership has been linked to improved student outcomes and a positive school climate (Blankstein, 2011). The pedagogic function of principals extends beyond instructional leadership to encompass fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in teaching and learning.

Principals who encourage experimentation, reflective practice, and collaboration among teachers contribute to a positive climate of professional growth and development (Hattie, 2015). Such a climate enhances both teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Principals' pedagogic function also involves promoting a supportive learning environment that addresses the diverse needs of students. By implementing inclusive instructional practices, differentiated instruction, and strategies to support students' social-emotional well-being, principals contribute to a positive school climate that values diversity and fosters inclusivity (Hargreaves & Fink, (2019). Principals who prioritize these practices are more likely to create a climate where students feel safe, supported, and engaged in their learning (Thapa et al., 2013).

However, there are challenges associated with principals' pedagogic function and its impact on school climate. Principals may face constraints such as limited resources, time constraints, and external pressures that impede their ability to fully implement effective pedagogical practices (Townsend & Adams, 2020). Additionally, the effectiveness of principals' pedagogic function can be influenced by the existing school culture, teacher beliefs, and the support they receive from district-level administration (Hallinger, 2011).

The success of principals' pedagogic function in shaping school climate also relies on their ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with teachers. Principals who promote open lines of communication, provide constructive feedback, and foster collaborative

decision-making contribute to a positive school climate characterized by trust and shared ownership (Barnett et al., 2017). Conversely, a lack of effective communication and collaboration can hinder the implementation of pedagogical practices and negatively impact the school climate. Furthermore, principals' pedagogic function can be influenced by external factors such as policy mandates and accountability measures. The emphasis on standardized testing and accountability can sometimes create pressures that shift the focus away from holistic pedagogical approaches and towards a narrow set of outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2017). This can potentially undermine principals' efforts to create a positive school climate that prioritizes the diverse needs and development of students.

The pedagogic function of principals in relation to school climate in secondary schools is a complex and multifaceted concept. Effective instructional leadership, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, promoting a supportive learning environment, and facilitating communication and collaboration with teachers are all crucial aspects of this function. However, challenges such as resource constraints, time limitations, and external pressures can impact principals' ability to fully realize their pedagogic function and its influence on school climate. To ensure the positive impact of principals' pedagogic function, it is important to provide them with adequate support, resources, and a favorable policy context that values holistic pedagogical approaches and student well-being.

Theoretically, Organizational Climate Theory by Schneider (1975) emphasizes the importance of organizational climate and Schneider's (1975) posited that organizational climate is a multifaceted construct that encompasses employees' perceptions of their work environment, including the prevailing values, norms, and practices. In this study, the theory was used to explain how practices like pedagogic function of school head influence work climate. Schools are formal organizations and the use of the theory seems relevant because its dimensions that constitute organizational climate are same as those of school. The main philosophies of the organizational climate theory are that organizational climate is a multi-dimensional construct that includes various aspects of the work environment such as leadership, communication, reward systems, decision-making, and other practices.

It is argued that when these dimensions are aligned and supportive, individuals are more likely to experience positive organizational climate. Therefore, the organizational climate theory highlights the importance of congruence between individual and organizational values. That is, when individuals perceive that their values align with those of the organization, they are more likely to experience positive organizational climate and engagement in their work. But the alignment of the idiosyncratic and normative needs depends more on the how the organizational head carry out his/her functions. To support this, Schneider opined that leadership behaviours do have great influence on organizational climate.

That be the case, we could see that principals as head of secondary schools play a critical role in shaping school climate through their leadership style, communication practices, and decision-making processes adopted in the execution of their functions like that of pedagogic. The organizational climate theory emphasizes the importance of employee

participation in decision-making processes. When employees feel that they have a voice in decision-making, they are more likely to experience positive organizational climate and engagement in their work. It is imperative that principals from time-to-time allow teachers' opinions head on pedagogic decisions in their school so that decisions on curricular does not miss out critical matters that affect the daily teaching-learning processes.

Furthermore, the organizational climate theory highlights the importance of feedback in shaping organizational climate. For instance, the way principals revert to teachers after supervision of instruction, an aspect of pedagogic function matters a lot. A harsh or poor reverting to teachers can be detrimental to the school climate. Thus, when principals are giving feedback to teachers on their pedagogic practices, it must be specific, timely, and supportive can help individuals understand their role in the organization and improve their performance. Feedback that is critical or judgmental can undermine organizational climate and lead to disengagement and turnover.

Another principle of the theory is that organizational climate is a dynamic construct that can change over time. Effective principals must be proactive in monitoring and shaping school climate to ensure that it remains positive and supportive based on how they exercise their functions. Schneider recognized that climate is not an objective entity but rather a social construction shaped by individual experiences and interpretations. It draws to the attention that organizational climate influence employee attitudes and behaviours, satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Therefore, drawing on the assumptions of Schnieder theory, school principals must astutely carry out their pedagogic functions in a way that it does not hurt teachers' feeling and work engagement. In fact, the performance of their pedagogic function should arouse or supportive to the school climate.

Statement of Problem

The ultimate objective of the school system is to improve teaching and learning for the full attainment of the educational goals of the individual and the educational system in general. Stakeholders of the school system in their respective functions are expected to usher in an enabling school climate for this goal to be reached. Strong determinants of school climate remain the functions of school head which play a major role in establishing an atmosphere of camaraderie, safety, satisfaction, hope, collegiality, team spirit, professional development, morals, quality, and identity. Principals of Secondary Schools, in their management of human, material and financial resources, have the potential to guarantee warm, supportive and conducive school climates that can lead to students' success.

However, today it is commonplace to find school environments plagued with the surge in violence, strife, staff disgruntlement, lack of collaboration among personnel, mass student failure and a decline in moral values. This situation can likely be attributed to the management skills and functions of Principals. According to Hoy and Tarter (1991), Students' learning is less likely to improve in such a tense threatening or un-conducive climate. There is therefore the need to strive to take our schools away from such unhealthy and unsupportive school climates by casting an interrogative look at the

management capabilities of school Principals. It is to this effect that this research seeks to find out whether principals' pedagogic functions influence school climate in secondary schools in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Research Objectives

Generally, the study aimed to examine principals' pedagogic functions on school climate in secondary schools in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Specifically, the study is guided by the following objectives

- 1) To examine the extent principals do carry out their pedagogic function.
- 2) To assess principals' perception of how execution of their pedagogic function influence school climate.
- 3) To examine principals' execution of their pedagogic function by school type.

Research Questions

The general questions is: what extend does principals' pedagogic function influence school climate?

The specific research questions are:

- 1) To what extent do principals' carry out their pedagogic function?
- 2) How does principals' execution of their pedagogic function influence school climate?
- 3) Do principals from public and private schools differ in the execution of their pedagogic function?

Hypotheses

Ha1: Principals' execution of pedagogic function does not significantly influence school climate.

Ha2: Principals from public and private schools do not significantly differ in the execution of their pedagogic functions.

Ha3: Principals who carry out pedagogic function adequately do not significantly experience healthier school climate than principals who do not adequately carry out pedagogic function.

Methodology

Research Design: The study utilizes a mixed research design, particularly, the the concurrent design which allowed for the simultaneous collection of quantitative data from many participants and qualitative data from few individuals. With the use of quantitative and qualitative data, the weaknesses of each approach were complemented and enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.

Population of the Study: This comprised 8,746 teachers and 1,217 principals from secondary schools in the South West Region of Cameroon. Teachers, being internal stakeholders of the school, possessed significant knowledge about the school's operations. Therefore, choosing them in the study is vital as they share their experiences on principals' pedagogic function and school climate.

Target Population: This was limited to teachers and principals from public, confessional, and lay private secondary schools in the Fako Division, Meme Division, and Kupe Muanenguba Division. That is three out of the seven sub-divisions made up the target population.

Accessible Population: This consisted of teachers and principals from 31 secondary schools located in eight sub-divisions out of 12 within the Fako, Meme, and Kupe Muanenguba divisions. In the 31 schools, there were 1561 teachers and 31 principals.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques: The sample size for teachers was 432 and principals was 29. The sample size for teachers was estimated at design effect of 1.3, prevalence of 50%, and 95% confidence interval. Participants were sampled using purposive sampling for schools and simple random sampling for individuals.

Instrumentation: Questionnaire and interview guide was utilised for data collection. The questionnaire had a total of 20 close ended items rated using a four-point Likert Scale and the interview guide had two open ended questions.

Validity and Reliability: The study ascertained the measurement validity which stood at 0.93 and the reliability of the questionnaire was 0.860 for pedagogic function and 0.853 for school climate.

Data Collection and Analysis: Data were collected using the traditional face-to-face approach. Out of the 432-questionnaire dispatch, 427 was returned and 27 principals were successfully interviewed. Therefore, findings were presented from 427 teachers' opinion and 27 principals. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches or techniques were used. In the analysis of the quantitative data, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 27) was used. Both descriptive (Percentages, Mean, and Standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Linear regression test and Chi-Square test) were utilised. The Linear regression test was used to ascertain how variation in pedagogic function influences school climate while Chi-Square test of association was used to depict if pedagogic function and school climate vary significantly by school type. All inferential statistics were presented at 95% confidence interval. As for the qualitative data, the thematic analysis approach was used.

FINDINGS

Table 1: Appraisal of School Climate

Items	Collapsed SA/A	D/SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Teachers in the school effectively communicate high expectations for student achievement.	312 (73.1%)	115 (26.9%)	2.99	.758
There is a sense of respect and mutual support among students and staff in the school.	308 (72.1%)	119 (27.9%)	3.01	.808
Relationship among staff is always healthy.	303 (71.0%)	124 (29.0%)	2.89	.733
There is frequent conflict between teachers and students.**	301 (70.5%)	126 (29.5%)	2.93	.757
Students feel safe and secure in the school.	298 (69.8%)	129 (30.2%)	2.93	.774
Ample opportunities for student involvement in extracurricular activities.	290 (67.9%)	137 (32.1%)	2.90	.789
Respect for diversity is high in the school.	288 (67.4%)	139 (32.6%)	2.89	.782
There is always open and transparent communication in the school	290 (67.9%)	137 (32.1%)	2.85	.736
Teachers in the school are always supportive and caring towards one another.	283 (66.3%)	144 (33.7%)	2.90	.784
The school fosters a positive and inclusive learning environment for all students.	281 (65.8%)	146 (34.2%)	2.85	.771
Overall MRS/Mean	2779 (65.1%)	1491 (34.9%)	2.91	.769

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree. Std. Dev; Standard Deviation; MRS =Multiple Response Set /Total Response; **Item with reversed coding during calculation of MRS

In aggregate, 65.1% of teachers reported healthy school climate while 34.9% reported poor school climate and the overall mean of 2.91 below 3.0 on 4 implies that school climate is moderate and not very good or excellent. Consequently, more improvement is needed. This is because an unhealthy school climate is a murder of teachers' commitment, productivity, engagement, students' productivity, and school image to the public. In fact, out of the 10 items, 4 even had means below the overall mean of 2.91, conveying a need for more and urgent improvement. These areas were maintaining healthy relationship among staff, respect for diversity in the school, open and transparent communication, and inclusive learning opportunities.

Elaborately, while 73.1% (312) of teachers accepted effective communication of high expectation to students, 26.9% (115) denied. More so, 72.1% (308) of teachers reported sense of respect and mutual support while 27.9% (119) did not. Similarly, while 71.0% (303) of teachers reported healthy relationship among staff, 70.5% (301) reported frequent conflict between teachers and students. Similarly, 69.8% (298) agreed to safety and security while 30.2% (129) did not. Furthermore, 67.9% (290) of teachers reported ample students' opportunities for extracurricular activities and open communication in the school while 32.1% (137) denied. Finally, while 65.8% (281) of teachers confirmed positive and inclusive learning environment for all learners, 34.2% (146) denied.

Research Question One: To what extent do principals' carry out their pedagogic function?

Table 2: *Appraisal of Principals' Execution of Pedagogic Function*

Items	Collapsed		Mean	Std. Dev
	SA/A	D/SD		
The principal always encourages innovative teaching methods.	411 (96.3%)	16 (3.7%)	3.50	.587
The principal always recognizes and celebrates the achievements of both students and teachers.	352 (82.4%)	75 (17.6%)	3.08	.677
The principal provides regular feedback to teachers regarding their instructional practices.	350 (82.0%)	77 (18.0%)	3.07	.656
The principal always promotes a sense of shared responsibility among staff.	346 (81.0%)	81 (19.0%)	3.06	.663
The principal always promotes inclusive learning environment for students.	341 (79.9%)	86 (20.1%)	3.12	.712
The principal frequently provides constructive guidance to teachers on instruction.	311 (72.8%)	116 (27.2%)	3.05	.770
The principal always provides opportunities for continuous professional development	304 (71.2%)	123 (28.8%)	2.93	.731
The principal always collaborates with teachers to develop and implement effective instructional strategies.	288 (67.4%)	139 (32.6%)	2.91	.750
The principal always supports the teachers in meeting the school expectations.	286 (67.0%)	141 (33.0%)	3.04	.842
Teachers are always properly supervised by the principal.	283 (66.3%)	144 (33.7%)	2.93	.784
Overall MRS/Mean	3272 (76.6%)	998 (23.4%)	3.07	.717

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree. Std. Dev; Standard Deviation; MRS =Multiple Response Set /Total Response

In aggregate, 76.6% of teachers reported proper execution of pedagogic function by principal while 23.4% did not and the overall mean of 3.07 above 3.0 on 4 implies that principals' pedagogic function is good, but not very good since the mean value is not up to 3.5 thus some improvement is needed. However, out of the 10 items, 3 had mean even below of the overall mean 3.07. They were frequent supervision of teachers, principals regularly collaborating with teachers, and regularly providing opportunities for teachers' professional development. This shows principals greatly need to improve in these three aspects of their pedagogic function than others.

Explicitly, while 96.1% (411) of teachers confirmed frequent encouragement of innovative teaching methods, 82.4% (352) reported frequent recognition and celebration achievements, 82.0% (350) reported regular feedback to teachers on instructional practices, and 81.0% (346) agreed to the promotion of shared responsibility among staff, few disagreed.

On the other hand, while 79.9% (341) of teachers confirmed promotion of inclusive learning space for students 20.1% (86) denied. Similarly, while 72.8% (311) of teachers confirmed constructive guidance to teachers, 27.2% (116) denied. More so, while 71.2% (304) of teachers agreed that opportunities for professional development are provided,

28.8% (123) disagreed. Finally, while 66.3% (283) of teachers accepted proper supervision, 33.7% (144) denied.

Research Question Two: How does principals' execution of their pedagogic function influence school climate?

Table 3: *Principals' Opinion how Proper and Improper Execution of Pedagogic Function Influence School Climate*

Questions	Themes	Quotations	
Proper execution of pedagogic function	Effective teaching and learning	"This will ensure that teaching learning process be effective." (Respondent H)	
		"Proper execution will encourage work done." (Respondent J)	
		"Proper execution of pedagogic functions lead to effective teaching and learning" (Respondent I)	
	Smooth school operation	school	"It leads to effective teaching and learning and a smooth atmosphere cordially to support good results" (Respondent M)
			"Proper execution of the pedagogic function of a principal reawakens the effectiveness in the teaching learning process leading to good results." (Respondent N)
			"Proper execution of the pedagogic function encourages teaching learning" (Respondent P)
			"It leads to proper teaching and learning and enabling environment" (Respondent S)
	Teachers' assiduity	school	"It leads to smooth running of the school and positive school climate." (Respondent A)
			"It leads to the smooth running of the school." (Respondent D)
			"It leads to positive school climate like smooth functioning of the school." (Respondent F)
Staff collaboration	Teachers' assiduity	"The proper execution of pedagogic function awakens all departments and promotes smooth functioning." (Respondent L)	
		"The control of teachers' assiduity by recording their presence in class." (Respondent C)	
Improper execution of pedagogic function	Enhance awareness	"School climate will be defined by teachers' assiduity, punctuality, regularity, syllabus coverage, motivation of learners." (Respondent A)	
		"Proper execution of the pedagogic function helps to foster collaboration among staff" (Respondent V)	
	Orderliness	Foster teacher-student relationship	"Proper pedagogic function creates a supportive environment in the school" (Respondent W)
			"It creates a positive relationship between teachers and the learners which encourages the learners to engaged in studies" (Respondent T)
Disorder	Students' indiscipline	"Proper execution of the pedagogic function creates an awareness in students to study, permit students to have focus and also create a conducive environment for academic excellence" (Respondent G)	
		"It brings order and calmness on campus." (Respondent E)	
		"The non-punishment of students in school when they react poor." (Respondent C)	
		"Students' deviant behaviours in the academic milieu and indiscipline would influence the school climate negatively." (Respondent A)	
		"There will be high chances of indiscipline from students" (Respondent T)	
Disorder	Disorder	"It gives room to disorder and makes administration difficult." (Respondent E)	
		"Improper execution of pedagogic function can lead to chaos in the school especially amongst teaching staff leading to a negative school climate" (Respondent I)	
		"This cause chaos and disorder in the school especially among teacher." (Respondent M)	
		"It leads to chaos and poor learning environment as teachers are not motivated to work" (Respondent P)	

Questions	Themes	Quotations
	Slows teaching learning/work	<p>“When execution of pedagogic function is poor, it slows teachers work.” (Respondent E).</p> <p>“It slows teaching learning process.” (Respondent F)</p> <p>“The school timetable will not be effectively covered.” (Respondent G)</p> <p>“The teaching learning processes are bound to be slow.” (Respondent H)</p> <p>“Work will be left undone because there is not body to follow-up.” (Respondent J)</p> <p>“It slows down work of employees” (Respondent S)</p>
	Hinder collaboration	<p>staff “Improper execution of pedagogic function kills spirit of collaboration and work participation by subordinates.” (Respondent L)</p> <p>“Improve execution of pedagogic function slows down teaching learning process and kill collaboration between the teaching and administrative staff.” (Respondent N)</p> <p>“It slows collaboration of the various services and department in the school.” (Respondent B)</p>
	Poor academic performance	<p>“Improper execution of pedagogic function will create an environment that students might not be focus, thus leading to poor academic results.” (Respondent G)</p> <p>“It will lead to poor academic performance” (Respondent T)</p>
	Ineffective teaching	<p>“Teaching learning process will be ineffective.” (Respondent F.)</p>

Furthermore, based on principals’ opinion on proper execution of pedagogic function, many said it promotes effecting teaching learning as depicted in the statements “*Proper execution of the pedagogic function of a principal reawakens the effectiveness in the teaching learning process leading to good results.*” (Respondent N), “*Proper execution of the pedagogic function encourages teaching learning*” (Respondent P).

Again, a good number of them reported that it promotes smooth running of the school as explain “*It leads to the smooth running of the school.*” (Respondent D), “*It leads to positive school climate like smooth functioning of the school.*” (Respondent F). Furthermore, some principals added that it promotes teachers’ assiduity as explain “*School climate will be defined by teachers’ assiduity, punctuality, regularity, syllabus coverage, motivation of learners.*” (Respondent A). Finally, some principals added that it fosters staff collaboration, healthy teacher-student relationship, enhance students’ awareness to study, and brings about orderliness in the school as depicted in some statements “*Proper execution of the pedagogic function helps to foster collaboration among staff*” (Respondent V), “*It creates a positive relationship between teachers and the learners which encourages the learners to engaged in studies*” (Respondent T)

On the other hand, improper execution of pedagogic function was mostly reported to cause students’ indiscipline and disorder which are counterproductive to positive school climate as narrated “*Students’ deviant behaviours in the academic milieu and indiscipline would influence the school climate negatively.*” (Respondent A), “*Improper execution of pedagogic function can lead to chaos in the school especially amongst teaching staff leading to a negative school climate*” (Respondent I).

Furthermore, a good number of principals added that it slows teaching learning / work of the school as narrated “*When execution of pedagogic function is poor, it slows teachers work.*” (Respondent E). More so, poor academic performance was equally reported as another issue associated with improper execution of pedagogic function as narrated

“Improper execution of pedagogic function will create an environment that students might not be focus, thus leading to poor academic results.” (Respondent G)

In addition, it was reported to hinder staff collaboration as explain *“Improper execution of pedagogic function kills spirit of collaboration and work participation by subordinates.”* (Respondent L). Finally, it was reported to render teaching learning ineffective as explain *“Teaching learning process will be ineffective.”* (Respondent F.)

In summary, proper execution of pedagogic function was reported by the principals to promotes effective teaching learning, smooth running of the school, teachers’ assiduity, foster staff collaboration, enhance students’ study awareness, promote orderliness, and foster good teacher-student relationship while improper execution of pedagogic function was reported to cause students’ indiscipline, brings disorder in the school, slow teaching learning, hinder staff collaboration, result to poor academic performance, makes teaching ineffective.

Research Question Three: Do principals from public and private schools differ in the execution of their pedagogic function?

Table 4: *Teachers’ Appraisal of Principals’ Execution of Pedagogic Function by School Type*

Demographic data			Principals’ execution of pedagogic function		Total	Test of association
			Proper	Not proper		
School type	Public	n	191	57	248	X ² =1.096 p-value=0.894
		%	77.0%	23.0%		
	Confessional	n	57	18	75	
		%	76.0%	24.0%		
	Lay Private	n	80	24	104	
		%	76.9%	23.1%		

Comparatively, principals do not significantly differ in execution of pedagogic function by school type ($X^2=1.096$, p-value $0.894 > 0.05$). Elaborately, 77.0% of teachers from public schools, 76.0% from confessional schools, and 76.9% from lay private schools of almost equal proportion reported their principal to properly carry out pedagogic function while 23.0% from public schools, 24.0% from confessional schools, and 23.1% from lay private schools reported improper execution of pedagogic functions. Thus, principals’ execution of pedagogic function trend was generally same across three school type (p-value $0.894 > 0.05$) and three school type need same momentum of improvement. And the hypothesis that states principals from public and private schools do not significantly differ in the execution of their pedagogic functions was accepted.

Table 5: *Linear Regression Predicting a Unit of Influence of Principals’ Pedagogic Function on School Climate*

Statistical parameters	Vales
Constant (Std. Error)	12.730 (1.820)
Coefficient value	.212
Std. Error	.094
Model Summary	
R	.212
R-Square	.045
Std. Error of the Estimate	3.355

ANOVA ^a	
F-test	20.075
p-value	.000
n	427

Dependent Variable: School climate

Predictors: (Constant), Principals' pedagogic function

Statistically, findings showed that principals' pedagogic function has a positive and significant influence on school climate (coefficient value 0.212), significant at 1% level and the variability explain was equally significant (F-test 20.075, p-value < 0.001). This implies for every unit of improvement in principals' execution of pedagogic function, school climate will improve or influence moderately by 0.212. Thus, the hypothesis that states principals' execution of pedagogic function does not significantly influence school climate was rejected.

Table 6: *Cross Tabulation Comparing Variation in School Climate by Execution of Pedagogic Function*

		School climate		Total	Somers' d test
		Healthy	Unhealthy		
Pedagogic function	Properly executed	230 (70.3%)	97 (29.7%)	327	S=.493 p-value 0.000
	Not properly executed	48 (48.0%)	52 (52.0%)	100	
Total		278	149	427	

Statistically, findings showed that there is a significant variation between pedagogic functions and school climate (Somers' d test = 0.493, p-value 0.000 < 0.05) whereby, more of principals 70.3% who adequately carried out their pedagogic function experience healthy school climate more than principals who do not adequately carry out pedagogic function, with just 48.0% of them found to experience healthy school climate. The positive value of the Somers' d test (S=0.469) implies that school climate turns healthier with properly execution of pedagogic function.

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

First, findings showed that school climate was generally moderate with a significant proportion of teachers reported unhealthy school climate. On this, a need for significant improvement cannot be over-emphasize. On a specific note, key areas that demanded more improvement in school climate were maintaining healthy relationship among staff, respect for diversity in the school, open and transparent communication, and inclusive learning opportunities. Unhealthy school climate is a murder of teachers' commitment, productivity, engagement, students' productivity, and school image to the public. For example, on the 14th of January, 2020 a teacher was stabbed to death by student in a public school in the political capital of the nation.

Frequent conflicts between teachers and students have a negative effect on school climate. Aside that, we have had cases of students been murdered by mates in school premises and many injured by mates. All these convey a poor image about the school climate in some of our secondary schools which turn to negatively impact the pedagogy

processes. Secondly, despite, the unhealthy school climate in some of our secondary schools, principals' execution of pedagogic function appears to have some significant influence. In other words, our findings predicted that if principals adequately carry out their pedagogic function for effective teaching and learning, school climate is more likely to be favourable.

For instance, proper execution of pedagogic function was reported by the principals to promotes effective teaching learning, smooth running of the school, teachers' assiduity, foster staff collaboration, enhance students' study awareness, promote orderliness, and foster good teacher-student relationship while improper execution of pedagogic function was reported to cause students' indiscipline, brings disorder in the school, slow teaching learning, hinder staff collaboration, result to poor academic performance, makes teaching ineffective. More so, in support of this, principals who adequately carry out their pedagogic function experience healthy school climate than their counterpart. With these evidence, we called on every principal to prioritize their pedagogic function. As reiterated by Robinson et al (2021), the pedagogic function of principals in secondary schools is a critical aspect of their role in shaping the school climate. Principals influence the school climate by promoting effective teaching and learning practices that foster student engagement, achievement, and well-being.

Our findings tied with that of Robinson et al (2021), researched and concluded that principals' pedagogic function plays a significant role in creating a positive school climate conducive to academic success and student development. Therefore, it obvious that principals who neglect their pedagogic function, are indirectly hurting their school climate. Barnett and Quenzel (2017) opined that the success of principals' pedagogic function in shaping school climate also relies on their ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with teachers. It is reported that principals who promote open lines of communication, provide constructive feedback, and foster collaborative decision-making contribute to a positive school climate characterized by trust and shared ownership.

As outlined by the organizational climate by Schneider's (1975), organizational climate like the school is a multifaceted construct that encompasses employees' perceptions of their work environment, including the prevailing values, norms, and practices. Practices like pedagogic function of school head influence work climate. The main philosophies of the organizational climate theory are that organizational climate is a multi-dimensional construct that includes various aspects of the work environment such as leadership, communication, reward systems, decision-making, and other practices. Therefore, when these dimensions are aligned and supportive, individuals are more likely to experience positive organizational climate. Principals must carry out their pedagogic function in congruence with individual and organizational values because when individuals perceive that their values align with those of the organization, they are more likely to experience positive organizational climate and engagement in their work. But the alignment of the idiosyncratic and normative needs depends more on the how the organizational head carry out his/her functions.

In conclusion, principals' pedagogic function was revealed to have a significant influence on school climate and this corroborate with previous studies from some researchers like

Robinson et al. While an in-depth analysis showed that more principals who experience healthy school climate are those who adequately carry their pedagogic function, the implications are that principals who are complacent of this function will experience poor climate in many instances. It imperative to know that effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a school when school climate is unhealthy. On this note, principals who do not yield more attention to their pedagogic function should adjust in their leadership roles.

Recommendations

1. Based on this finding, it is recommended that policy makers in the Ministry of Secondary Education could organize regular seminars especially at the start of the academic year to remind principals about their pedagogic functions and how significantly the functions influence school climate.
2. More so, to the principals, it was recommended that they should be more conscious about their pedagogic function because it is their key task in the school.

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