Impact of Organizational Climate on its Effectiveness

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Abstract
This study investigates the relationships of the school climate to teachers’ sense of efficacy in Malaysian nursing school/colleges. Altogether 102 responses from all 18 nursing schools had been analyzed. Pearson correlation moment coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data for this research. The findings revealed the significant relationship between school climate and classroom management. The professional teacher behavior was also found significantly related to classroom management. But no significant relationship was found between institutional vulnerability and collegial leadership. There is also no relationship established between achievement press and professional teacher behavior. School climate index was found strongly associated with student engagement. The finding of this study provides important information for the policymakers, principals-teachers who are concerned with the improvement of nursing schools/colleges of Malaysia.

Keywords: Organizational climate, teachers’ efficacy, nursing school, classroom management, student engagement.

INTRODUCTION
Preparing nursing students to meet the challenges of today’s multicultural, global, information-oriented, and exceedingly technological society requires new approaches to nursing education. Especially in the Malaysian Nursing colleges, enhancing student academic performance is a concern for school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the larger community in which the schools exist. Studies show that focusing only on academics is not necessarily the only way to improve academic performance of students (Sherblom, Marshall & Sherblom, 2006). Like many institutions, there are many other factors amongst, in which interactions take place in nursing schools too. Hoy and Wolfolk (1993) notes that the notion of the workplace has been referred to and studied under a variety of label including organizational character, milieu, atmosphere, organizational ideology, field situation, informal organization and more recently climate and culture. All these aspects are referred to internal quality of the schools as experienced by its members. The college climate reflects physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change apart from providing the preconditions necessary for teaching and
learning (Tableman & Herron, 2006). Hence the school climate refers to the sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, working and organizational structures within college that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Several aspects of physical and social environment of schools comprise its climate. Tableman and Herron (2006) have identified the following eight areas comprising to school climate: 1) appearance and physical plant, 2) faculty relations, 3) student interactions, 4) leadership/decision making, 5) disciplined environment, 6) learning environment, 7) attitude and culture, and 8) college -community relations.

The climate is a unique set of internal characteristics that influence the lives of those in a school (Herman & Herman, 1994). Thus, school climate includes the atmosphere of a college encompassing its mission, vision, values, focus and relationships among students, teachers, faculty, staff, parents, and community. One of the six critical success factors of a school mentioned by Herman and Herman (1994) is the importance of having a climate that is caring, open, demanding of high achievements, and respect for all parties. School climate must always be both nurturing and demanding for excellent results. The benefits of a positive climate is that it offers an effective mean of coordination and control as well as a centre of shared purpose and values for the members of the college community (Evans, 1996).

Similar to the school climate, teachers’ sense of efficacy is reported to be directly influenced by the behavior of the principal (Hipp, 1997). A teacher’s efficacy belief is a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning even among those students who may be difficult or not motivated (Bandura, 1997). Teacher’s efficacy has been studied in different ways with two widely acceptable views being focusing on either teacher self-efficacy or teacher collective efficacy. The two concepts are similar in both forms of efficacy that have been documented as having a positive impact on students’ achievement (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). The primary difference in the two is the belief that personal efforts (self-efficacy) impact outcomes versus the belief that efforts of the group as a whole (collective efficacy) impact outcomes. Principals can help to develop a sense of efficacy for individual teachers and for the entire school (Protehroe, 2008). Therefore, in an open organization, such as a college, one of the important questions regarding on the sense of efficacy is how organizational factors such as college climate increase or decrease participants’ efficacy within the organization (Hoque, et al. 2011).

Research in educational psychology suggests that teachers’ quality of performance and commitment to work is related to their level of motivation to influence the students’ learning (Bandura, 1997). In relation to this, commitment at the level of motivation in order to influence a student’s learning is constructed as teacher’s sense of self efficacy. Teachers’ sense of efficacy refers to the extent of which a teacher feels capable to help students to learn, can affect the teacher’s instructional efforts in areas such as choice of activities, level of effort, and persistence with students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

It is believed that the college climate has an impact on the teachers’ motivation, dedication, satisfaction and efficacy and therefore indirectly impacts on students’ behavior and academic performance. Thus, it is important that the college management put in considerable effort to create a conducive working climate for the teachers to improve the nursing school system in Malaysia. To make nursing schools more effective, they should have positive climate that nurture the students and develop them to become a knowledgeable, skillful and of right attitude in order to serve the needs of mankind. These achievements are only possible with a quality nursing education.

Though nursing education is one of the basic fundamental needs for medical sectors, little attention is put to develop the school climate and nurse educators in Malaysia. In this globalization era, societal people are very conscious about their health. To ensure health safety for the twenty
first century, nursing education should be cared properly and thus the short comings can be identified through proper study and investigation. But the research work in the areas of college climate, self efficacy of nurse educators, teachers commitment that are fundamental aspects to impact on student achievement are so scanty.

The review of the literature (Jie-ying, 2011, Bakar et al. 2008) in Malaysian general education indicated that nursing educators’ sense of efficacy has been a very important issue in universities, colleges and schools. Teachers’ efficacy influences their activities, effort and productivity. The school climate to a teacher’s sense of efficacy in Malaysian colleges has been related to students’ outcomes. Teachers’ sense of efficacy and beliefs are also related to their efforts the teachers invest in classroom teaching and the level of aspiration (Rahmah, 2005).

Though enormous studies as mentioned above were found in general education, this kind of investigation is lacking in the nursing schools in Malaysia. There is a great deal of tension amongst the teachers, leaders and students in nursing schools. There is also unwillingness among the teachers to walk the extra miles to help the students in teaching and learning process other than the structured time table during the didactic phase. It is necessary for the school principals to understand whether the school climate impacts the teachers’ sense of efficacy to improve the standards of the students’ achievement and whether this indirectly improves the students’ self-esteem and performance. This investigation of the organizational factor is important because of its practicality and theoretical implications obtained from the results of such investigations.

Based on extensive literature review, it is sorted out that there is an impact in the dimensions of school climate on teachers’ efficacy. But the degree of impact varies in different studies. In some studies, some dimensions of school climate have been found positively related with teachers efficacy whereas the same dimensions have been established no relationship in other studies. This means that the impact of school climate on different dimensions of teachers’ efficacy varies according to local culture, regional influence and adopted methodology. Therefore, efforts have been made to examine the impact of school climate on teachers’ self efficacy in Malaysian context. The researchers have identified some studies done in Malaysia in general academic schools but despite extensive search, no study in this area has been found on nursing schools. But nursing schools are totally different from general academic school and colleges in terms of environment, teachers and students’ nature of job, qualifications and responsibility. This study has been conceptualized based on this gap and following the theoretical framework of Hoy et al.’s (2006) four dimensions of school climate such as institutional vulnerability, collegial leadership, teacher professionalism and achievement press and the three dimensions of teachers efficacy such as instructional strategies, classroom management and student engagement by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). Therefore, this study aims to look at the relationship of school climate in nursing schools to the teachers’ sense of efficacy in Malaysia.

Objectives of the Study
The researchers have formulated the following objectives to achieve the aforementioned aim:

i) To find the impact of nursing school climate (institutional vulnerability, collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior and achievement press) in the selected schools on efficacy in instructional strategies.

ii) To find at the impact of nursing school climate on nurse educator’s efficacy of classroom management

iii) To find the impact of nursing school climate on efficacy in student engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Research design: This research attempts to study the relationship between school climate and teacher’s sense of efficacy. Quantitative approach of data collection is considered appropriate for this study since data is collected using validated and reliable instruments to find the relationship of school climate on teachers’ efficacy. According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006), correlation research involves collecting data to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exists
between two or more quantifiable variables. Hence this study is considered as a correlation predictive research because the exploration of the relationship between the college climate and teachers’ sense of efficacy was the focus of the study.

This study is carried out by administering a questionnaire which was divided into three sections. In section A, the demographic information of the participants such as the age, gender, teaching experience and academic qualification are included. Section B is a modified version of Organizational Climate Index (OCI) instruments which includes 27 items that are related to the four dimensions of college climate. The OCI which was developed by Hoy et al (2002) is adapted to the local context with some modifications but without losing its originality. To measure teachers’ sense of efficacy a 24 item instrument, Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tchannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) is used with few modifications. The items in the instrument are written in English and administering to the participants.

Population / Sampling: There are 18 nursing schools in Malaysia with 500 teachers. These schools are imparting three years of nursing degree. The target population of the questionnaire survey was all the tutors in the colleges. Gay (1996) recommends 10% of the population to be the acceptable sample size for descriptive research if the total population is more than 500. If the total population is around 300-500, he suggests choosing 30% to represent the population perfectly. The researcher is also conscious enough that the number of teachers would vary school to school. The participants to respond the questionnaire are chosen according to the Gay’s recommendation of 30% from the total teachers from every individual school. Teachers who have been serving for less than two years are not obliged to respond the questionnaires, as they are too new to comment on the subject matter. The schools that had 10 to 20 teachers have been allocated at least 3 teachers. Following these criteria, 150 nurse trainers are selected randomly as respondents. Therefore 150 sets of questionnaires are sent to 18 nursing schools all over Malaysia. But a total of 110 responses were returned from 18 schools. The researchers have sent a follow up letter to remind them about the questionnaires. The researchers also contacted over phone with the principals of some schools who were reluctant to respond the questionnaires albeit sending follow up letter. Most of them had excuses of tight schedule of themselves and teachers and a few of them returned the responses at late hour (after analysis). All together 8 teachers’ responses are excluded from subsequent analysis due to incomplete return. The reply response rate is 73.33%, which is highly satisfactory. So finally, 102 responses from 18 schools (68%) were used for the purpose of this study.

About sampling, Gay (1996) says, “for correlational, causal-comparative, and experimental research, some experts consider the magic ‘general guideline’ to be 30. Thus for correlational studies at least 30 subjects are needed to establish the existence or non-existence of a relationship.” From this point of view, the responses (102) are sufficiently justified to represent the population under study.

Instruments: their validity and reliability: The validity of the content has been determined through experts’ opinions whom were specialists in the content area selected for this study. A pilot study is conducted to find the internal consistency reliability of the instrument used in this study, in one of the colleges before conducting the actual study. Chronbach’s alpha test was carried out on all the items in the instrument and also on all the construct variables of the instrument. Cronbach’s alpha is a test reliability technique that requires only a single test administration to provide a unique estimate of the reliability for a given test. According to Gay et al (2006), Cronbach’s alpha estimates the internal consistency by determining how all items on a test relate to all other items and to the total test.

Table 1 gives the Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the construct variables on the instrument. The result of the Cronbach’s alpha test shows very high (above 0.8) internal consistency of reliability
for all items on the instruments. The calculation shows that the Chronbach alpha coefficients for all the variables are reasonably within an acceptable range to be used in this study. According to Nunnally (1978), the lower limit of exceptability Chronbach alpha > .60. Since all the Chronbach coefficients for all construct variables of the instrument are close to 0.8, the instrument is considered as good internal consistency reliability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable in the Instrument</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Climate Index (All items)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Press</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial Leadership</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Vulnerability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional ‘Teacher Behavior</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy (All Items)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy in Classroom Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy in Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy in Student Engagement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Results

**Relationship between school climate and teachers’ sense of efficacy in classroom management:** Table 2 shows that the model as a whole is significant (F=3.518, p .010). The adjusted R² value of .091 supports that 9.1% of the variation in school climate can be explained by the independent variables. The result implies the presence of significant relationship between achievement press (AP) and classroom management (β = .378, p = .000). The professional teacher behavior (β = -.169, p = .000) was also found significantly related to classroom management. The negative value of institutional vulnerability (β = -.162, p = .114) is also found not significantly related to classroom management. However, the collegial leadership is not significant predictor of classroom management (β = .041, p = .705).

**Relationship between school climate and teachers’ efficacy in instructional strategies:** Table 3 shows that the model as a whole is significant (F=3.931, p .005). The adjusted R² value of 1.04 supports that 10.40 % of the variation in school climate can be explained by the independent variables. The result implies the presence of significant relationship between institutional vulnerability (IV) and instructional strategies (β = -.331, p = .001). The collegial leadership (β = .191, p = .054) is also found nearly significantly related to instructional strategies. But the impact of two other predictor variables such as Achievement Press (AP) (β = -.191, p = .064) and Professional Teacher Behavior (PTB) (β = -.211, p = .772) are found not significant.

**School climate and teachers’ efficacy in student engagement:** Table 4 shows that the model as a whole is significant (F=2.483, p .049). The adjusted R² value of .055 supports that 55% of the variation in school climate can be explained by the independent variables, the school climate. The result implies the presence of significant relationship between school climate and student engagement, in particular relationship between the achievement press (β = .220, p = .038) and student engagement and significant relationship between professional teacher behavior (β = -.294, p = .012) and students engagement. However there is no significant relationship between collegial leadership (β = .113, p = .315) and student engagement and institutional vulnerability (β = -.187, p = .074) and student engagement.

The impact of all four dimensions of college climate is tested by using multiple regression analysis and found that college climate as a whole was significant (F=3.518, p .010) predictor of teachers’ sense of efficacy to the classroom management, instructional strategies (F=3.931, p .005) and student engagement (F=2.483, p .049).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstd Co-efficient(B)</th>
<th>Std error</th>
<th>Standardized Beta</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Press</td>
<td>.601</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>3.678</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 3. The relationship between school climate index and instructional strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstd Co-efficient(B)</th>
<th>Std error</th>
<th>Standardized Beta</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Press (AP)</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>1.873</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial Leadership (CL)</td>
<td>-.199</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>-.211</td>
<td>-1.948</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Vulnerability (IV)</td>
<td>-.742</td>
<td>.226</td>
<td>-.331</td>
<td>-3.289</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Teacher Behavior (PTB)</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>-.290</td>
<td>.772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R²: .127
Adjusted R²: .091
F: 3.518
Significant F: .010

Note * p < .05, ** p < .01

Table 4. The relationship between school climate index and student engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstd Co-efficient(B)</th>
<th>Std error</th>
<th>Standardized Beta</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Press</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>2.104</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial Leadership</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Vulnerability</td>
<td>-.463</td>
<td>.257</td>
<td>-1.87</td>
<td>-1.804</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Teacher Behavior</td>
<td>-.348</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>-.294</td>
<td>-2.565</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R²: .093
Adjusted R²: .055
F: 2.483
Significant F: .049

Note * p < .05, ** p < .01

Conclusion and Recommendation

The mean level of teachers’ sense of efficacy obtained for the sample from the Malaysian School of Nursing is high, showing that these teachers hold a high level of individual efficacy belief. However, further research needs to be conducted to look at the function of sources of efficacy by using different samples and also expanding the investigations to other possible factors that are not measured yet in this study. To confirm the reported level of teachers’ level of sense of efficacy, we may look at teachers’ preparedness to teach, their content familiarity and links to their intellectual backgrounds and interests students’ engagement and classroom climate. One important finding is having an open school climate in order to improve the teachers’ level of sense of efficacy. In an open climate, the teachers and principal are able to work collaboratively for a
common purpose towards a common goal. There also will be supportive professional behavior among teachers and they will show a high commitment towards teaching. The level of openness in the Malaysian School of Nursing is found to be at an average level. This calls for further studies to find out the causes for this and ways of improving the school climate in these schools. Another variable that can be investigated in relation to school climate is the principals’ perceptions of school climate and also the principals’ leadership styles and the teachers’ sense of efficacy. Future researchers may also look at the relationships of school climate and teachers’ sense of efficacy at different times of the academic year since there can be differences depending on the time of the academic year (Carleton et al. 2008) and also different phases of the training program.

REFERENCES