



School Culture as Influencer of Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper examined school culture as influencer of students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria. The paper reviewed the concepts of school culture and academic achievement. The paper revealed that a positive school culture would positively impact students' academic achievement, while a negative culture would adversely affect the performances and well-being of school members. The paper revealed that the cultures of inclusiveness, consistency and adaptability would foster a positive learning environment ideal for academic excellence. The paper proffered ways to demonstrate a positive and supportive school culture which include celebrating teachers and students' accomplishments, involving teachers in decision making, prioritizing traditions and routines, ensuring professional development for teachers, provision of adequate school facilities, and promote a positive interpersonal relationship. It was concluded that inclusive, consistent and adaptive school cultures be adopted in secondary schools to enhance the school climate and improve students' academic achievement. The paper suggested that Principals should encourage positive practices such as discipline, punctuality, and celebrating teachers and students' accomplishments. In addition, school management should involve teachers in decision making processes of the school.

Keywords: School Culture, Influencer, Academic Achievement, Students, Teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

Just as individuals possess unique characteristics and behaviours, so do schools acquire unique characteristics in the course of their existence. These characteristics are what constitutes the 'school culture'. School culture can be defined as the customs and practices shared among school members that impact on how they behave in the school environment. School culture is therefore

an essential component of the school climate that impacts every aspect of the school, specifically, students' academic achievement and the overall well-being of members.

Students' academic achievement has been a course for concern among parents, teachers, school administrators, and other educational stakeholders. Several factors within and outside the school organization has been proffered to affect students' academic achievement. These ranges from parental background, loss of interest, student- teacher ratio, difficulty in understanding, poor learning infrastructure, stress, etc. However, the prevailing culture of a school play a crucial role in instilling the right principles, values and morals in the child that impact their overall development. In this wise, school culture is what shapes students' behaviour to act in a particular way which could be negative or positive. For instance, a positive school culture that prioritizes academic excellence ensures teachers' professional growth. In addition, it ensures accountability for students' education, and provides a supportive and nurturing environment conducive for members (Education world, 2016). These practices would ensure a positive and healthy learning environment ideal for everyone to thrive and achieve goals.

The prevailing culture of some secondary schools in Nigeria does not support effective teaching. In fact, schools have failed to consciously adhere to certain practices that would positively impact students' academic achievement. For instance, there are no efforts to engage teachers in professional development for effective instructional delivery. There is lack of trust among teachers and management. Students and teachers are not celebrated or recognized for outstanding performance. Teachers are not involved in decision making process of the school. In some cases, safety of the school is not prioritized. Parents are not updated on their children's development.

Similarly, parents are not consulted to contribute towards the growth of the school. These practices have created a school culture that has affected students' morale, academic achievement and attendance rate. Therefore, to overcome these menace, the school culture should encourage and recognize hard work from both students and teachers. In this case, rewards should be provided to boost their morale. Teachers should continuously undergo professional training to enhance their job performance. Students' work such as art works, trophies and awards won should be displayed to celebrate their achievement. This would inspire other students to thrive in their academic endeavors. Teachers should be allowed to participate in decision making process of the school. This way, students' interest can be adequately represented. Security of lives and properties in the school should be prioritized by school administrators. This would ensure members are emotionally and physically safe in the school environment. Additionally, cooperation among teachers in solving educational and individual problems should be encouraged by school administrators. Therefore, with a positive school culture, the school environment would be ideal for academic excellence as classroom instructions alone may not adequately address students' educational and individual needs.

It is against this backdrop this paper seeks to examine the influence of school culture on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

School Culture

For a better understanding of the concept of 'school culture', it is imperative to understand the term, 'culture'. Culture is however, a broad term. It can be defined as the beliefs, practices

(traditions) and social behaviours of a specific group of people. In fact, it has been generally described as the way of life of a people. Sabanci et al. (2017) as cited in Mamdooha et al. (2022) opined that culture is a deeply ingrained idea that permeates our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours, and shapes how we perceive the world. Therefore, culture can be seen in the way we behave as individuals and as a group, since our behaviour is a reflection of our cultural experiences and values. In another dimension, Schein (2004) as cited in Mamdooha et al. (2002) defined culture as having three levels, namely; artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. Artefacts refer to those physical objects or structures made by man that has historical implications. These include art works, attires (clothes), tools, monuments, and other physical attributes that can be attributed to a group from time past. Espoused values refer to the norms, values, aspirations, goals, strategies, and principles which are set out to guide the behaviours of members of a group (Schein, 2004, as cited in Mamdooha et al., 2022). The underlying assumptions involve those beliefs and values that are not popular among the people.

The underlying assumptions according to the authors explain the significance and meanings of objects, direct feelings and reactions, and provide guidance on how to behave in different situations. From the aforesaid, artifacts, espoused values and underlying assumptions are the constituents of culture that shape and guide our behaviours and worldviews.

From the given definitions of 'culture', school culture can be defined as the shared values, behaviours, and customs that impact on how members behave in a school environment. Alexandria (2023) defined school culture as the way things are done during the educational processes. According to the author, it involves a variety of elements such as attire (school uniforms), diet, norms, expectations, values and a plethora of other things. The author added that school culture covers the interactions between members of the school community. Similarly, Dogan (2017) defined school culture as the collective set of norms, values, and beliefs that shape the attitudes, emotions, and behaviours of administrators, teachers, and students in the school environment. In this wise, school culture was referred to the unique way members behave towards the achievement of school goals and objectives.

Grunert (2005) as cited in Mamdooha et al. (2022) defined school culture as the guiding principles, presumptions and expectations that are evident in the way a school operates. School culture in this case, refers to those doctrines, laws and aspirations that guide and shape the behaviours of members in the course of their duties. Ozdemir (2012) as cited in Adem and Hurriyet (2021) defined school culture as the collection of values, beliefs, and practices peculiar to the school. Therefore, to appreciate the culture of a school, traditions, ceremonies, symbols, rites, norms, and stories shared amongst students and staff may be examined (Hoy & Miskel 2013 as cited in Adem and Hurriyet, 2021). In this wise, the celebrations, formalities, lifestyle, legends, symbols like the school uniforms, badges, flags and banners, school songs, school colours, etc. constitute the school culture that shapes and guides members' behaviour.

From the definitions examined, it can be deduced that values adopted by schools, interactions between members, and parents play a key role in the formation of school culture. In other words, students, parents, educators, school administrators, teachers and non-teaching staff, all contribute to the development of the school culture. Nevertheless, the host community where the school resides, government policies and programmes, and the principles on which the school was founded, all impact the formation of the school culture (Dogan, 2017). However, it is the responsibility of school administrators to ensure a healthy culture by promoting policies and values that encourage a healthy school climate.

The prevailing culture of a school could be positive or negative. A positive school culture encourages trust among staff. In this vein, teachers and students are inspired to thrive in all their endeavours. In a positive school culture, teachers' and students' achievements are usually celebrated, teachers collaborate to solve common problems, and the school encourages teachers' training for improved job performance. Therefore, it behoves on school administrators to foster a positive school culture by establishing a common vision for the school. In addition, collaboration, participation, and effective communication among staff and management should be encouraged by school administrators. Thus, a positive school culture is shaped by the attitudes, behaviours, values, and morals of staff, students, instructors, and administrators (Team Varthana, 2023). This suggests that creating a positive school culture is a conscious effort by relevant educational stakeholders to shape and guide members' behaviour toward the achievement of school goals and objectives.

Conversely, a negative school culture does not support collaboration among staff. Members in this case lack a clear sense of direction. In some cases, staff members have a poor working relationship. Safety of the school environment is not prioritized. In the view of Bloetner (2023), negativity, mistrust, poor spirits, fear of reprisals, and a lack of teamwork are traits of a poisonous school culture. The author added that such a school culture can have a negative impact on the functioning of the school and the learning results of the students by impeding productivity, stifling innovation, and raising turnover rates. A negative school culture fosters a demanding atmosphere that could cause staff fatigue and have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of students. Therefore, in this school environment, relationships among teachers are usually in disharmony. In fact, teachers do not believe in students' ability to thrive in their endeavours. There is usually a widespread lack of optimism among members in the school environment. Negative school culture is however common among schools that have failed to consciously improve their culture. In this wise, school administrators should strive to improve their school culture to enhance the productivity of members.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement or academic performance can be referred to the extent to which a student has attained their educational goals and objectives set out for them within a period of time. Academic achievement therefore can be measured through examinations, assignments, and continuous assessments. Barowski and Carter (2023) defined academic achievement as the quantity of academic materials a student learns in a given length of time. This includes any method by which a student has succeeded in meeting short or long-term learning objectives in a classroom. Thus, the purpose of testing and assessments is often to determine a student's level of academic success. Academic achievement according to the aforementioned authors refers to the totality of knowledge and skills gained by students in a course of an academic session. Bhatnagar as cited in Hemwati and Ritu (2014) defined the academic achievement of students as a component of their whole behaviour. It is the result of the students' unique interactions with their surroundings, namely; the classroom, the teachers, and their peers. Academic achievement was defined by Good as cited Hemwati & Ritu (2014) as the knowledge or competence acquired in academic topics, as indicated by test results or teacher-assigned grades. Academic achievement in the context of this paper comprises the knowledge, skills, and values acquired by students in the course of their schooling.

School Culture and Students' Academic Achievement

School culture has been defined as the shared customs, traditions, and rules that guide and impact on how people behave in a school environment. In this case, the culture of a school can impact the school either positively or negatively. This suggests that the school culture is a vital component of the school climate that impacts members' behaviour towards goal achievement. To buttress this point, Karadag et al. (2014) as cited in Mamdooha et al. (2022) stated that a school's personality is shaped by its collective norms, values, beliefs, and traditions which have an impact on how administrators, teachers, and students behave. From the aforesaid, the culture of a school can motivate members to thrive in their endeavours as a result of the prevailing values and principles that guide their behaviour. Thus, for the school to succeed in achieving its goals, management and other relevant stakeholders should ensure the right values and principles are maintained among staff and students. Some of these practices can be seen in celebrating students' and teachers' accomplishments, fair disciplinary action against erring students, routine inspection of students' notebooks and assignments, promoting reading culture through reading clubs, including teachers in the decision making, engaging teachers in professional development programme, organising sports activities for students and staff, encouraging cooperative relationship among staff, shared freedom among teachers to take risks and be innovative in the course of their duties, etc. These and other norms practiced among members would promote a positive school climate where students would be motivated to thrive in all their endeavours.

Education plays a key role in the overall development of a child. Education in this context transcends classroom instructions. It involves those practices and traditions shared among members that positively impact their behaviours. As Salman (2023) stated, the achievement of students at a school is significantly shaped by its culture. The author further added that school culture is not only about achieving academic success, it is also about fostering an atmosphere where teachers and students both feel respected, understood, and inspired to learn. The school culture therefore plays a key role in the overall development of the child in the course of their school experiences.

In the past, school administrators have failed to deliberately create a school culture that fosters academic excellence. Little or no attention was given to the values and practices that ensures teachers are motivated and students inspired to learn. The focus of school administrators according to Salman (2023) was basically on academic performance, ignoring the emotional and social needs of students. However, as studies started emphasizing the importance of comprehensive education, schools have started to see the benefits of a positive school culture. However, in recent times, fostering a pleasant school culture is becoming more important and popular. School administrators are realizing the importance of providing an environment that supports social and emotional growth among students in addition to their academic achievement (Salman, 2023). This suggests that classrooms instructions may be insufficient for a child's overall development as practiced in the past. However, with a holistic education, where students are obliged to imbibe the right principles and values, their development would be more comprehensive, thus, impacting positively on their academic achievement. Edutopia as cited in Salman (2023) stated that positive school cultures increases students learning and morale. Therefore, to sustain a positive school culture, school administrators should exhibit the ideal characteristics they wish to see in the school. Administrators should promote respect, trust and collaboration in the course of their interactions with members, because the values that guides a school is significantly influenced by the actions of school administrators.

The culture of a school should enhance teachers' well-being. Teachers' are key to the success of the school. In fact, their roles in students' academic and overall development cannot be over emphasized. However, they cannot perform optimally when their well-being is compromised. According to Hawthorne (2023), well-being is the state of feeling happy and healthy. It includes all aspects of our health, such as mental, physical and emotional well-being. Thus, we are more likely to be driven, involved, and productive when our well-being is good. Furthermore, the author stated that resilience is linked to well-being which makes it easier for workers to deal with difficulties when they arise. This suggests that the physical and mental state of teachers can significantly impact their job performance and students' achievement. Buttressing this point, Bransteter (2021) stated that school culture will affect teachers' well-being, retention rate, morale, sense of accomplishment, willingness to engage in professional development activities, and classroom management. This suggests that school culture can have a positive or negative impact on teachers' job performance.

As Amaro (2024) observed, teachers who are over worked, pressured, and burned out as a result of a negative school culture are less likely to be resilient, adaptable, and tolerant. According to the author, these teachers often struggle to stay motivated to put in their best. Conversely, contented teachers are productive. They contribute to a positive school culture, and foster more fruitful connections with students, parents, and staff. This suggests that a positive school culture where teachers' well-being is given adequate attention would enhance their job performance for improved students' academic achievement.

Teachers' well-being however transcends the physical or emotion state of teachers. Robert and Kim (2019) observed that teachers' well-being transcends being ill, stressed or feeling happy. It is about teachers' thriving continuously in all their endeavours. Therefore, in addition to enhancing teachers' mental and physical health, the school culture should support teachers to fulfill their dreams and aspirations in the course of their duties. In other words, the school culture should encourage teachers to become the best version of themselves. By so doing, the prevailing school culture should encourage teachers' growth and development. In this wise, professional training programme should be organised periodically to enhance teachers' job performance. Policies that promote teachers' autonomy should be encouraged. In this vein, teachers should be encouraged to participate in decision-making. They should be encouraged to be innovative and explore without being questioned. In addition, school administrators should ensure teachers are fairly compensated and rewarded for their efforts. This would create a positive school climate for teachers to effectively carry out their duties towards the realisation of educational goals.

Inclusive Culture as Influencer of Students' Academic Achievement

Creating an inclusive school culture can be beneficial to students' academic achievement. Cambridge Dictionary (n.d) defined inclusiveness as the quality of including many different types of people and treating them fairly and equally. Inclusiveness in education means ensuring all students irrespective of parental background, ability, gender or diversity are accepted and provided with the same education given to other students. In fact, inclusiveness in education supports the accommodation of persons with disabilities and special needs into the educational system. Therefore, these persons should be treated equally and provided with the same kind of education given to other students. Team XQ (2024) defined inclusive school as guaranteeing equal access to educational services for learners from all backgrounds, irrespective of their socio-

economic status, race, financial condition or ethnicity. Therefore, to ensure students' success, the school culture should encourage inclusiveness among students. In this wise, students irrespective of their abilities should be welcomed and granted a befitting education in a general classroom with the necessary attention and support needed for them to thrive.

Inclusive education is key to ensure an effective teaching-learning process. School administrators and teachers should ensure equal educational opportunities are given to all students to enhance their schooling experience. This way, students regardless of their abilities would be motivated to thrive in their endeavours. Buttressing this point, Lemmon (2023) argued that with appropriate accommodations and support, students with disabilities can actively engage in learning, enhancing their understanding of the subject matter and fostering academic growth. According to the author, inclusive education would allow students with disabilities to access the same curriculum as their peers, often leading to higher academic achievements. Similarly, Team Varthana (2023) observed that students who are part of an inclusive school culture are more empowered to own up to their mistakes, and learn from them. Students in this environment would display high standards for themselves and persevere through difficulties, which would eventually improve their academic achievement. Encouraging inclusiveness in the classroom is therefore necessary for students' success because it would create an atmosphere where all students, irrespective of their talents or learning requirements may improve their skills and achieve more.

From the aforesaid, it can be deduced that the essence of having an inclusive school culture cannot be overemphasized. It is however key to the success of the school. Besides enhancing students' academic achievement, an inclusive school can inspire students to become the best version of themselves. Team Varthana (2023) stated that an inclusive school culture would encourage students' engagement, and spur them into taking initiative. This would strengthen the bonds between students and the school community. It would further contribute to their sense of belonging. Consequently, students would be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular and academic activities more actively. Similarly, Lemmon (2023) stated that students from a variety of backgrounds and abilities connect and work together in an inclusive environment, strengthening their social and communication skills. These abilities are essential for assisting students in navigating a variety of social settings and creating enduring bonds with their peers, both within and outside the school environment. This would ensure students regardless of their demographic differences, challenges or abilities are loved and motivated to thrive in all their endeavours. It therefore behoves on school administrators and teachers to ensure a positive school culture by encouraging inclusiveness among students.

Consistency Culture as Influencer of Students' Academic Achievement

Consistency in school behaviour is essential in creating an effective learning environment. Merriam-Webster (n.d) defined consistency as showing steady conformity to character, profession, belief or custom. Similarly, Dhas (2023) stated that consistency necessitates upholding a reliable and constant attitude towards responsibilities, duties and behaviour. In this wise, 'consistency' in behaviour is free from alteration or contradiction. It is characterized by regularity, continuity and uniformity in our behaviours or in carrying out our duties. Consistency in organisational culture can be defined as the alignment and observance of common values, beliefs, and principles inside the organisation. It is the extent to which workers always behave in a way that aligns with the expectations and cultural norms of the organisation. Establishing

stability and identity within an organisation requires a consistent organisational culture. Consistency therefore encourages a single and harmonious workplace where staff members comprehend and exemplify the organisation's principles and objectives (Typeset, 2024). This suggests that 'consistency' is crucial for maintaining continuity in any endeavour when the best practices are adhered to.

In any organisation like the school, being consistent is a prerequisite for organisational success. It necessitates upholding a reliable and constant attitude toward responsibilities, commitments, and behaviours. Consistency, despite its somewhat ordinary appearance, has several benefits that can greatly boost output and performance (Dhas, 2023). This suggests that adherence to best practices would foster a positive school culture where everyone knows the rules and expected behaviour. In this case, order would be maintained, and students would feel safe to thrive in such a structured environment. Buttressing this point, Fulton (2019) stated that maintaining a constant and unwavering adherence to the routines, regulations, procedures, and punishment set by the school is essential for maintaining consistency and behaviour control in the classroom. In this case, all students are held to the same standards. They receive the same incentives or positive reinforcement when those standards are reached. Conversely, they (students) face the same sanctions when these standards are not met. This suggests that consistency in teachers' behaviour towards students will create an engaging environment where teachers' behaviour can be predicted. Consequently, classroom rules would be kept, and students would feel safe and accepted in the course of their duties. Brock et al. (2018) opined that children develop the confidence to explore their surroundings in ways that enhance growth across various domains when they are surrounded by warm, supportive, nurturing adults whose behaviours, actions, and emotions are generally constant (consistent). This indicates that students would be motivated to explore their educational surroundings and thrive in their endeavours with teachers who are consistent in providing the needed support and guidance.

Effective classroom management may not be attainable without consistency. To ensure effective classroom and behavioural management, teachers are obliged to be consistent and steadfast as they make rules and set standards to guide students' behaviour. For example, regular inspection of students' notebooks and assignments, punishment for late coming, giving classwork and assignment after every lesson, making out time for students to engaged in sports and social activities of their choice, sanctions for deviant behaviour, and punishment for disruptive and disturbing students during classes etc. These practices when consistently applied would foster a positive and structured school climate as classroom rules and values would be known by all. Consequently, students would be able to predict the sanctions when rules are flouted. Conversely they can predict the form of reinforcement when they reach a milestone. This would create an effective learning environment where students control their behaviour and strive to reach the expected standard. PowerSchool (2022) posited that when students grasps the purpose and dynamics of classroom, they may contribute to learning more successfully. Thus, students can better regulate their conduct if they are made aware of the expectations and given consistent feedback for their activities. In addition, teachers' ability to be consistent in their dealings with students would foster respect from students. In this vein, students would be well behaved since everyone knows the rule and expected behaviour.

Consistency in school behaviour would foster teachers' effectiveness. This is because consistency requires maintaining a regular, reliable and result oriented approach to duties. Dhas (2023) suggested that enhanced effectiveness is among the principal benefits of regularity. When people stick to a regular schedule, it is relatively easy for them to prioritize tasks, manage their

time well and meet deadlines. Furthermore, the Dhas (2023) stated that consistency fosters dependability and reliability. This way, rules or methods of teaching that has proven to be effective and result oriented can be adopted as a result of their workability. This can improve teachers job performance and their relationship with students. In another dimension, Dhas (2023) observed that by generating excellent work, employees can enhance their professional reputation by building trust with both superiors and subordinates. As a result of teachers' effectiveness, they would gain the trust from school management and students. This would ensure students' commitment and a desire to become the best version of themselves.

The culture of consistency among secondary schools is crucial for creating a supportive school environment. A supportive school is essential for fostering an accommodating learning environment, ideal for academic excellence. It would ensure teachers are concern about students' welfare and success. Consequently, they (teachers) work in harmony to ensure students success. In this vein, students are loved, appreciated and motivated to thrive in all their endeavours. They would be encouraged to participate in classroom and social activities, thus fostering a positive learning environment. Similarly, Hassan and Kumail (2023) argued that students' emotional health is greatly enhanced by a stable (consistent) learning environment. This is so because when students are aware that their teachers and school administrators are dependable, and will attend to their needs, they would feel safe to express themselves by asking questions and seek for assistance when needed. This would foster a sense of confidence among students, leading to active participation and positive attitude towards learning. This suggests that consistency in school behaviour would foster creativity among students and inspire them to explore their educational surroundings.

Consistency in school behaviour is crucial for enhancing long-term retention among students. In fact, regular administration of classroom content would foster students understanding of what is intended for them to learn. In this vein, repetition of these contents overtime would be instilled in students' memory, ensuring they become part of them. In a similar vein, Hassan and Kumail (2023) stated that when educational materials are regularly reinforced, it has a higher chance of being kept. Thus, ideas that are gradually introduced and given opportunity for assessment and application strengthen the body of knowledge. Furthermore, the authors opined that for students to succeed on tests and in real-world applications, it is essential that they not only grasp what they have studied, but also remember and recall it. This is accomplished by repetition and constant exposure to the materials. This way, students can apply or reproduce what was taught because they understood and retained the information given to them.

From the array of literature in support of consistency in school behaviour (consistency culture), it suggests that consistency is essential for school success. However, overemphasizing or placing too much emphasis on consistency without alternating behaviours and practices can be detrimental to school success. Buttressing this point, Dhas (2023) argued that overemphasizing uniformity may have certain drawbacks. The author added that rigid adherence to routines can stifle creativity and innovation, limiting the possibility for advancement. Too much regularity eventually leads to complacency because the people would become resistant to change and unable to rise to new challenges. In this wise, practices should be alternated and improved on. Change should be made when necessary. For instance, alternating between different teaching method or changing a rule when it has proven to be ineffective or not result oriented. In essence, the school should encourage students to be creative and innovative in their quest to be consistent

in the implementation of rules and principles. In so doing, students would be versatile and innovative in the course of their duties.

Adaptability Culture as Influencer of Students' Academic Achievement

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher is quoted as saying 'change is the only thing constant in life'. This proposes that change whether negative or positive is inevitable in our lives as humans. However, to manage change, adaptability skill is required to effectively adjust to the changes in our environment. According to Frank (2023), adaptability entails having an open mind, being receptive to new things, and having some degree of mental, behavioural, and physical flexibility. Justine (n.d) defined adaptability as the ability to adjust your behaviour and responses to the ever changing environment around you. Furthermore, it is the ability to make appropriate behavioural, affective, or cognitive adjustments in the presence of novel or uncertain circumstances (Vauden-Bos, 2007 as cited in Justine, n.d). From the aforesaid definitions, adaptability is the quality of adjusting to changes or new conditions. It is the ability to accept changes and manage the change to one's advantage. In the context of the school, adaptability is the ability of a school to accept changes from the environment and adjust their programmes and activities to positively respond to these changes. It involves the urge to learn and openness to experiment new things in the educational sector. In this wise, approaching change with determination and fairness will foster a positive learning environment than approaching change with an intolerant or biased behaviour.

The culture of adaptability is a component of the school culture that has affected students' achievement. In fact, the ability of the school to thrive in today's changing world depends on its ability to adapt to change because change is inevitable in our lives. Buttressing this point, adaptability theory observed that an organisation will more likely survive, develop, and flourish if its norms and beliefs help it better receive, interpret and translate information from the environment into the internal organisation for behavioural changes (Denison, 2000, as cited in Ghanney et al., 2017). This suggests that the school would thrive in its endeavours if it is able to adjust to the inevitable changes from the environment. To achieve this, the school is expected to adapt to the shift in technology, social, political, cultural, and economic systems of the society to enable members fit in and continue its advancement (Ghanney et al., 2017). In this wise, for the school to continue its quest in achieving its goals, it is expected to accept and manage the said changes in the best possible way. For instance, change from the use of chalkboard to electronic whiteboard is an improved and more effective way to interact with learners. This way, teachers can create an effective learning environment where students can stay engaged in the course of their lessons.

Furthermore, adaptability skills will enable the school curriculum capture the ever changing needs of the society. In this wise, schools would reflect the expectations of the society through subjects and programmes. This would ensure subjects taught are shaped towards meeting societal needs and requirements. For instance, business studies, civic education, basic computer skills, creative art, practical agricultural classes, leadership classes, etc. Inclusion of these subjects into the school curriculum would ensure students receive the right education that will make them functional and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society. In this vein, students would be interested to learn these skills because they are practical and would enable them function effectively in the society.

To further ensure students success, adaptability skill should be promoted in the classroom. In this wise, resilience should be taught to students. Resilience is the ability to

withstand or recover quickly from misfortune or other unpleasantnesses. Teaching resilience has proven to positively affect students' ability to bounce back from challenging or unpleasant situations. It allows students to approach challenges and setbacks as medium to grow and learn, and not as unconquerable obstacles (Ariel, 2023). This would ensure students are not deterred to study hard when they fail to meet their goals. Resilience skill would create a learning atmosphere where students are encouraged to thrive no matter the circumstances. Darvell (2023) detected that the benefits of teaching resilience to students includes improved academic performance, improved social skills, and improved students' well-being. Furthermore, it can assist students manage stress, withstand challenges, and make good decisions in the course of their endeavours. Darvell (2023) stated that students will constantly rely on their resilience and come up with innovative ways to go forward and get better if something goes wrong such as falling behind in their course work or not getting into the school they hoped for. Therefore, students would benefit from resilience and sort for creative ways to improve and succeed. In essence, adaptability would foster creativity, confidence and courage for students to thrive in their endeavours despite the challenges encountered in the process. In so doing, the learning environment would be safe for students to explore new ideas.

Students can be made to be more adaptable when they are taught to face their fears. This way, students can face challenges without fear of failure. Darvell (2023) stated that it is crucial to keep in mind, and instill in learners from an early age that failure and subsequent learning are keys to success. This can be taught through acknowledging work, fostering a sense of community among peers, asking questions, taking risks, and self-reflection. Furthermore, the author stated that students will be more driven to learn and come up with creative answers to changes in an uncertain future if they are not afraid of failure. Through creating a school environment ideal for students to take risks and ask questions, students can be creative and confident in facing any situation in the school. Conversely, when students are not confident to make mistakes or ask questions, they become less enthusiastic to take risks and explore. This would retard students' development as a result of their inability to adjust. Darvell (2023) observed that inability to adequately adapt to changing situations would affect students' opportunity to learn and develop. Teachers should assist students in seeing failure as a normal part of the learning process rather than seeing it as a reflection of their own inadequacies. According to the author, students develop into more flexible and creative thinkers when they are more open to accept failure. Consequently, it would lead a favorable outcome for every member of the school.

In essence, the culture of adaptability among school members is crucial for school growth. From the aforesaid, it is responsible for preparing students for change, building resilience, and dispelling fear of failure among students. With these abilities, students can successfully evolve to adult, and thrive in dealing with challenging and unexpected situations. In the same vein, students can be more successful in all their educational endeavours.

Ways to Demonstrate a Positive and Supportive School Culture

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that school culture has a significant impact on learners. Therefore, school leaders and relevant stakeholders should ensure the school adopts positive practices that can foster academic excellence. Some ways to demonstrate a supportive and positive school culture would be discussed as follows:

Celebrating Teachers and Students' Accomplishments

Consistent recognition for good performances helps teachers and students feel supported, valued and motivated to perform better. As Hodges (2017) observed, teachers who receive regular recognition and praise are more productive and involved with school activities. They are more likely to spend more time teaching (working) in the school, and are more likely to receive greater parent and students' satisfaction ratings. In this case, the principal should endeavour to regularly recognize teachers who did exceedingly well in performing their duties, and students who came out best in their exams. This can be done through recognizing teachers' effort before the entire school or rewarding them with gifts and other valuables for exceptional performance. In the same vein, exceptional students should be recognized and celebrated for an outstanding performance. In this vein, their works should be displayed or their names published to show off their achievements and inspire other students to emulate. Buttressing this point, Smith (2021) stated that when students' achievements are celebrated in the classroom, it has a major effect on their motivation, learning, memory, and other cognitive processes. The Smith stated that when students receive positive feedback for behaviour, they would be motivated to repeat the behaviour. In this wise, the culture of celebrating teachers' and students' accomplishment should be encouraged to foster a positive feeling amongst members, because employees respond positively to an environment that values and rewards hard work and excellence.

Involve Teachers in Decision-Making

Teachers job performance play a key role in students learning outcomes. Therefore, teachers' well-being should be given adequate attention to ensure they thrive in their endeavours. In this wise, school management should encourage teachers to engage in administrative duties outside the classroom. These include; suggesting choice of textbooks, curriculum review, learning appraisal, contributing to the drafting of school and examination timetable, student placement, personnel recruitment, and staff training. As a result of teachers' involvement, decisions reached by management would be accepted and easily implemented because such decisions would represent and serve the concerns of teachers who are responsible for its implementation. In the vein, teachers' involvement in decision making would ensure students' needs and interest are well represented. Newman and Anass (2012) stated that encouraging teachers to contribute in decision-making would have a far-reaching and impactful ownership of the school, its vision, and values. This implies that teachers' when allowed to contribute to key decisions would ensure they would take full responsibility in ensuring policies made are effectively executed, and targeted goals are achieved. In fact, teachers' involvement in decision making would positively affect school performance. It would lead to improved student learning outcomes, improved teachers' well-being, enhanced school climate, and a more interesting teaching profession (Luisana, 2023). As such, school management should encourage teachers' involvement in decision-making. This way, teachers can remain motivated to carry out their duties. In the same vein, the school environment will foster trust between teachers and management. Newman and Anass (2012) further observed that the trust between teachers and management would lead to development of more comprehensive relationship between management and teachers. This would result in harmony, trust, higher job performance and excitement in the school environment. Therefore, school management should ensure teachers are adequately involved in

the decision-making processes of the school to enhance the school climate and improve teachers' job performance.

Ensure Professional Development for Teachers

Professional development is a programme that sought to enhance the skills and knowledge needed by teachers to deliver the most productive and outstanding teaching to students. Raudys (2018) defined teacher development programme as a course that provides teachers with the skills and contemporary pedagogical tools they need to manage and instruct students in a way that ensures all students are engaged and gaining from the experience. Dogan (2017) observed that teacher-training and professional development is a non-stop process that enhances the skills needed by teachers to effectively deliver the most acceptable and best form of teaching to their students. Teacher-training therefore seek to address those challenges teachers may be struggling with in the school environment and classroom. It gives teachers ideas on how to resolve the day-to-day issues and problems encountered in the course of their duties. Through staff training, teachers can be updated on how to adapt to social change, like the use of latest technology in solving educational problems. In this wise, teachers can be trained on leadership, classroom management, teamwork, educational planning, innovation, communication, commitment, adaptability and use of prevailing technology. Acquisition of these skills and knowledge would ensure effective teaching and learning. Therefore, supporting teachers this way will foster a positive school climate for teachers and students to thrive in all their endeavours.

Provision of Adequate School Facilities

The school cannot achieve its goals without the availability and proper utilization of school facilities. School facilities refer to the physical infrastructure and resources that aid the operations of a school. These include; classrooms, libraries, offices, laboratory, electricity (power), playground, water supply, stationeries, and other equipment in the school environment. It is therefore imperative that schools have these facilities, and in good conditions to aid teaching and learning. For instance, where there are inadequate classrooms for students to learn in, students may be left to learn in overcrowded or dilapidated classrooms, thus, hindering effective teaching and learning process. Similarly, absence of staffroom(s) for teachers to work in would negatively affect their perception of the school. These situations would lead to a toxic school climate where teachers and learners are dissatisfied. Conversely, when school facilities are accessible and properly harnessed, they will positively affect learning, and make teaching more meaningful (Alimi et al., 2012). In this wise, principals and other educational stakeholders should ensure the availability, and proper utilization of school facilities to aid teaching and learning, and to promote a healthy school climate.

Promote Positive Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal relationship is defined as communication that occurs between two people. It is imperative that members of the school (principal, staff and students) have a good interpersonal relationship among one another to foster love and teamwork. In fact, people thrive in environments where they feel accepted and loved. In this wise, the school climate should encourage cordial relationships among members to ensure members are comfortable and

transparent in carrying out their duties. In so doing, teachers should acknowledge and value diversity in students' abilities across all domains. Therefore, academic shortcomings shouldn't be used to characterize a student. Students' strengths should be identified and supported. The home language of all students should be valued and respected. Teachers should encourage the use of polite expressions such as "please", "thank you", and "sorry" (Team Varthana, 2023). These practices would create a healthy learning environment where all students are given the opportunity and support to develop and thrive in their academic endeavours. In the same vein, improved relationship among teachers and the principal would foster cooperation and teamwork between management and staff. In this wise, building a strong teacher-teacher, teacher-principal, and students-teacher relationship, would foster a healthy relationship for members to thrive. Thus, the principal's leadership style and the school culture should encourage and support healthy relationships amongst members to improve the school climate.

Promote a Courageous and Safe Learning Environment

Ensuring safety in schools provides everyone with an environment that is supportive and conducive for learning. Therefore, the school should guarantee the protection of lives and properties of its members. In this wise, members including students can carry out their duties without fear of danger. The school should ensure its perimeter is fenced, with a security guard stationed at the gate. This way, intruders and unwanted visitors would be deterred from gaining access to the school, and member can be protected from danger coming from outside the school environment. The school should be able to provide a night guard to watch over school facilities. Access to emergency response team in the form of police or health care providers in case of an emergency should be provided to save lives in an emergency situation. School authorities should constantly inspect school infrastructures to ensure a safe learning environment. Students who are members of cult groups should be disciplined or suspended from the school to ensure safety of school members. In fact, sanctions on deviant behaviour among students would promote positive behaviour and ensure members feel safe in the school environment. In the absence of a school health centre, school authorities should ensure the availability of first aid in the school. In this case, staff and students should be equipped with first aid skills and knowledge to further enhance the safety of the lives. As David (2021) stated, schools need security so that students can be safe from unforeseen threat, and teachers can be able to carry out their duties effectively. The author added that if the basic needs of students are not met, they become uncomfortable at school, which could lead to stopping their attendance or keeping them on edge all day. Therefore, to promote a healthy school climate for improve teachers' job performance, provision of adequate security within and outside the school should be prioritized by all stakeholders to enable staff and students achieve their educational goals.

Encourage Active Parental Involvement

The most significant influence on students' learning, and the main supporters of their education are their parents. Therefore, students' success can also be attributed to the level of parental involvement in their education. As Cooper (2021) observed, students who benefit from positive parental involvement have a higher academic achievement, irrespective of socio-economic, religious, racial, or ethnic background. According to the author, these students are likely going to complete their homework, and have a higher self-worth as it concerns all areas of life. In

addition, they would exhibit better social behaviour, less tendency of dropping out of school, and they would be more comfortable moving from one cultural environment to another. In fact, parents play the most important role in the upbringing of a child. In this wise, active involvement of parents in the activities of their children would foster positive feelings between the school and parents. Raudys (2018) opined that involving parents in the school culture would entail giving them opportunities for feedback on classroom and extra-curricular activities. Parents should be asked to state their aspirations and concerns as it concerns their children's education. The author further stated that, the school should organise programmes where teachers and parents can interface and discuss about the welfare of their children as it concerns their homework, skills, and general performances. Therefore, the tradition of involving parents in students' education would improve their attendance rate and enhance their academic performance.

Other ways through which parents can stay connected with the school is through the use of social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram. Other ways include home visits, Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) meetings, through phone calls, and text messages. Meaningful involvement of parents and guardians in the activities of the school would help to support and encourage teachers' effort towards training the child. This would improve the school climate and facilitate teaching and learning process.

Prioritize Traditions and Routines

School traditions and routines such as conducting morning assemblies play a crucial role in fostering a positive school culture. Morning assembly is an essential school tradition because it brings together management staff, students, and teachers to commune and pray for a positive day. Guddah (2023) observed that morning assemblies in schools play a key role in setting the tone for the day, as it encourages a sense of community, instills discipline, and encourage students' overall development. In this wise, routines like assemblies can serve as a medium where students can learn ethics and moral values. Morning assemblies set the tone for students and staff to converge as a community and start the day on a positive note. Students become more motivated and enthusiastic as a result, and it also helps to create an environment that is favorable for learning (Guddah, 2023). Therefore, through activities like prayers, inspirational talks, reading, cultural performances, and singing the national anthem, morning assemblies inspire students to commence the day with a cheerful attitude and a desire to learn and thrive in all their endeavours. In addition, morning assemblies foster a sense of unity and belonging among students. It contributes significantly to the overall development of students. Therefore, by inculcating discipline, values, and a sense of community among students, the tradition of observing morning assemblies would prepare students for the challenges of the day. This would create a positive school climate where students are nurtured to thrive in their academics and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society.

In addition to prioritizing school routines, other activities and school events such as sports, reading, music, art exhibition, debate, etc. can enhance the school culture, and contribute positively to students' well-being. In other words, extra-curricular activities play a key role in the overall development of students. Ahuja (2021) stated that extra-curricular activities supports individual's personal development and enhancement of self-confidence. The author added that extra-curricular activities would enable students explore the outside world. It would expose students to more career options. It enhances social skills; it fosters team work and unity among students. Engaging students in extra-curricular activities would improve academic performance

of students, and assist in maintaining a balance between studying and social life. These suggest that engaging in extra-curricular activities improves every aspect of students' life. This includes their mental and physical health, social life, time management skill, and overall development. Therefore, to foster a positive and supportive school culture, routines and positive traditions should be upheld to enable students balance between academic work and social life.

CONCLUSION

School culture represents the unique way a school carries out its activities in the course of teaching and learning. A positive culture plays a key role in the holistic development of student. It fosters academic achievement, social and mental well-being, and a feeling of acceptance among students. To ensure a supportive and positive school culture, the paper concluded that creating an inclusive, a consistent, and adaptability cultures would enhance the school climate ideal for academic excellence. Furthermore, the paper proffered ways to improve the school culture such as celebrating teachers and students' success, involving teachers in decision making, ensuring professional development for teachers, provision of adequate school facilities, and prioritizing traditions and routines, etc. These strategies as examined by this paper are necessary to ensure students thrive in all their endeavours.

Suggestions

Based on the paper, the following suggestions were made:

- Principals should encourage positive practices such as discipline, punctuality, and celebrating outstanding teachers and students. These would create a positive learning environment for students to thrive in their endeavours.
- School management should endeavor to involve teachers in decision making. This would ensure teachers are motivated, committed, and satisfied with their work. It would further lead to improved students learning outcome.
- School management and other educational stakeholders should ensure the provision of basic educational facilities. This would ensure a safe and conducive learning environment ideal for students to thrive.
- Principals and teachers should promote an inclusive learning environment that supports education for all. This would ensure all learners irrespective of their parental background, or learning abilities are motivated and given equal opportunity to thrive in their academics.
- Principals should ensure morning assemblies are regularly conducted, and it include programmes that contribute to students' overall development. This would ensure students are motivated to learn as start their day cheerfully.
- Principals and teachers should ensure parents are regularly updated on their children's development. This would ensure parents know their children's needs to enable them contribute positively to their education.
- Principals and teachers should ensure students' participation in extra-curricular activities of the school. Events such as sports, debate, reading, art exhibition, dance, music, etc. should be organised to enable students balance between academic and social life, and explore other career options.

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