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Attributes of School Climate and School Type: Public Secondary Schools versus Private Secondary Schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper explores the attributes of school climate in public and private secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study aims to determine the extent to which key differences and similarities in school climate attributes exist between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. Comparative case study approach was used for the study. In order to achieve the objective of this study, school facility characteristics, high expectation, home-school cooperation and principal's supervision were measured. The population of the study comprised all the teachers in public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. Stratified Random Sampling technique was employed to sample 240 respondents for the study. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection. The data were analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS. Findings of the study revealed that significant difference exist among public and private secondary schools in terms of such variables as school facility characteristics, high expectation, home-school cooperation and principal's supervision. The study concluded that attributes that influence learning outcome significantly differ among public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state, Nigeria. Finally, the study recommended that strategies should be developed by the Ministry of Education, Bauchi state to improve school climate in public secondary schools in order to enhance learning outcome.

Keywords: Climate Attributes, School Facility, High Expectation, Home-School Cooperation, Supervision, School Type

Introduction

This research aimed to determine whether there is a significant difference in climate factors considered to influence learning outcomes between public secondary schools and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the extent to which some focused climate attributes exist among public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state were investigated. In regard to this focus, the following variables that have significant influence on academic achievement were measured: school facility characteristics, high academic expectations, home-school relationship, and principals' supervision. Teachers from selected public and private secondary schools in Bauchi South Senatorial District in Bauchi state were sampled for the study. Participants were selected through Stratified and Random sampling techniques. The respondents were required to express the degree to which a specific climate attribute exist in their schools. For the purpose of this study, public secondary schools refer to the secondary schools established and run by Bauchi state government, whereas private secondary schools refer to all non-government secondary schools in Bauchi state. Finally, the study seeks to establish that difference of education outcomes in public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state is related to the quality of climate factors existing among these schools

Previous researches on climate attributes and learning outcomes stress the view that school climate can play a significant role in providing a conducive learning atmosphere (Gangi, 2010; Summons, P., Hillman, J., Mortimore, P., 1995). Supporting this view, McEvoy, (2002) revealed that school climate factors accounted for 63% of the variation in mean school achievement between low and high achieving schools. Furthermore, several empirical studies support the conclusion that a positive and supportive school climate factors can significantly influence the degree of school effectiveness (Clifford, Menon, Condon, & Hornung, 2012; Haggerty, Elgin, & Woodley, 2010 Condon, & Hornung). Empirical evidence in several literatures have highlighted school facility characteristics, high expectation, student-staff cohesion, safe and orderly environment, home-school cooperation and supervision as climate factors that tend determine learning outcomes. Researchers argue that causes of difference between public and private secondary schools are varied (Dronkers, & Robert, 200 3; Teshome, 2017).

However, many researchers agree that the above identified climate attributes can shape learning experience in schools. (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; V. E. Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999; Osterman, 2000; Wentzel, 1997). Therefore, this study is hinged on these attributes to determine if significant difference exist between climate factors in public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state.

Various definitions by different authors have been cited in this review. For instance, The National school Climate Council (2007) defines school climate as 'the quality and character of school life.' Jeny (2017) opines that school climate is a mixture of beliefs, values and behaviors of students, teaching staff, leaders and parents, level of independence, leadership styles and job satisfaction. It is implies that there is a link between school climate attributes and education outcomes, (Hoy and Sabo, 1998 & Freiberg and Stein, 1999). Accordingly, some scholars opine that the features of the school environment that are experienced by such stakeholders as the teachers, administrators and students are climate factors, (Wang & Degol, 2016).

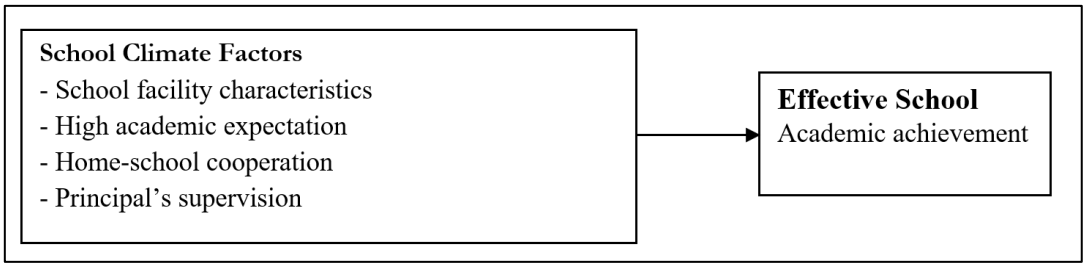
The argument therefore suggest that there is no one commonly accepted list of the essential climate attributes that colour and shape the school effectiveness. However, empirical evidence in several literatures have highlighted school facility characteristics, high expectation, student-staff cohesion, safe and orderly environment, home-school cooperation and principals' supervision as some climate factors that tend determine learning outcomes. Researchers argue that causes of difference in learning outcomes amongst school types (i.e. public and private secondary schools) are varied (Dronkers, & Robert, 200 3; Teshome, 2017). Notwithstanding, many researchers agree that the climate attributes identified in this study can shape learning experience in schools. (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; V. E. Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999; Osterman, 2000; Wentzel, 1997). Kostyo et.al. (2018) observed that measuring school climate contributes to school improvement. The scholars further point out that information gathered from climate surveys can be utilized to diagnose and improve the conditions of the school in all areas

The conceptual framework portrays four dimensions of climate factors that many researchers associate with effective schools (Cornell & Shears, 2006, Gregory et.al. 2010, Klein, Cornel, and Konold, 2012). The diagramme below presents in summary some of the school climate factors that commonly affect learning outcomes. The study

is conceptualized on the premise that positive school climate influence school learning achievement. The conceptual framework is guided by the school climate factors as the independent variable, while effective school is the dependent variable

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent variables **Dependent variable**



Source: Researcher, (2023)

Statement of the Problem

It is widely acknowledged that the provision of quality education in Nigerian school is one of the greatest challenges facing Nigeria in the twenty- first century. Recent years have witnessed the emphasis by policy makers on how schools can be improved. Meanwhile, Secondary schools draw the attention of stakeholders because of their different metric pass rate. Some schools produce excellent results-every student passed with exemption, while in other schools many students would write the standardized examinations (Such as WAEC, NECO, NABTEB, etc.) and fail. For instance, 2023 WAEC and NECO examination result indicated that some schools performed very badly, with pass rate ranging from 0% to 20% while there are those who performed very well - ranging from 60% to 80% pass rate. Available records revealed that academic achievement has been consistently higher in private school than public schools. Clearly, this suggest a need to understand how the environment or the climate of schools with different success rates differ as well as how teachers and student experience differ in those different schools. Furthermore, research findings indicates that school climate factors accounted for 63% of the variation in mean school achievement between low and high achieving schools. Obtaining insight to such issues may help in finding ways of improving academic performance, hence the researcher's initiative to embark on this study. The aim of this study therefore, was to investigate the extent to which attributes of school climate differ between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. It is expected that findings of this study will be useful to education managers and policy makers in the improvement of education system.

The objectives of this study:

i. To assess whether significant difference exists in school facility characteristics between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
ii. To determine if significant difference exists in high academic expectation between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
iii. To investigate if significant difference exist in home-school relationship between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
iv. To examine whether significant difference exist in principal's supervision between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state

The Null and Alternative Hypothesis for this Study:

i. $H_{o:}$ There is no significant difference in school facility characteristics between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state**.**
   $H_{a:}$ There is a significant difference in school facility characteristics between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
ii. H_o There is no significant difference in high academic expectations between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state**.**
   H_a There is a significant difference in high expectations between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
iii. $H_{o:}$ There is no significant difference in home-school relationship between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state**.**
   $H_{a:}$ There is a significant difference in home-school relationship between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state
iv. $H_{o:}$ There is no significant difference in principal's supervision between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state**.**
   $H_{a:}$ There is a significant difference in principal's supervision between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state

Methodology

The study aims to investigate the extent to which differences in some climate factors considered to influence learning outcomes exist among public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. The study employed quantitative method. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Bauchi South Senatorial District comprising Alkaleri, Bauchi, Tafawabalewa and Toro Local Government Areas of Bauchi state. The target populations of the study comprised all the teachers in public and private secondary schools in the study locale. The participants, 240 teachers in this study comprised 125 teachers from public secondary schools and 115 private schools teachers. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used to

select the samples. Structured questionnaires were employed as the data collection instruments for the study. The questionnaires were structured on a 4-point scale response pattern of 'Strongly Agree (SA = 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). The reliability of the instrument was tested by Cronbach alpha and found to be 0.83 reliability coefficient. The quantitative data collected were analyzed using mean ratings to calculate responses to research questions and T-test to test the hypothesis of the study at 0.05 significance level.

Analysis and Discussion

Objective 1: To assess whether statistically significant difference exist in School Facility Characteristics between Public and Private Secondary Schools of Bauchi State, Nigeria

Table 1: Mean Response on School Facility Characteristics

S/N	School Facility Feature	Private sec. School		Public sec. School	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Qualitative Classrooms	3.07	.90	2.22	.30
2	Well-Equipped Library	2.51	.74	2.34	.50
3	Adequate Sports Facilities	3.11	.68	2.21	.90
4	Facilities Well-Equipped Laboratory	3.21	.9	2.41	.61
Mean of Means		2.98	3.22	2.30	2.71

Table 1 provides a comparison of various school facility features between private and public secondary schools. The data includes mean scores and standard deviations. The mean response for qualitative classrooms in private secondary schools is 3.07 with a standard deviation of 0.90; whereas the mean response for qualitative classrooms in public secondary schools is 2.22 with a standard deviation of 0.30.These results suggest that private secondary schools are perceived to have higher quality classrooms compared to public secondary schools. With regard to the libraries, the mean response for well-equipped libraries in private secondary schools is 2.51 with a standard deviation of 0.74. On the other hand, the mean response for well-equipped libraries in public secondary schools is 2.34 with a standard deviation of 0.50. Given these results, private secondary schools seem to have slightly better-equipped libraries than public schools. Regarding sports facilities, the mean response for adequate sports facilities in private secondary schools is 3.11 with a standard deviation of 0.68 while that of public secondary schools is 2.21 with a standard deviation of 0.90. With these finding, private

secondary schools are perceived to have significantly better sports facilities compared to public secondary schools. Finally, the mean response for well-equipped laboratory facilities in private secondary schools is 3.21 with a standard deviation of 0.90 and public secondary schools is 2.41 with a standard deviation of 0.61. The overall comparison indicates that private secondary schools have generally better facilities across the board compared to public secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis: There is no Statistically Significant Difference in School Facility Characteristics between Public and Private Secondary Schools in Bauchi State.

Table 2: Comparison of Mean Ratings on School Facility Characteristics

Group	Sample size	Mean	SD	df.	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Public sec. School	125	2.30	2.71	0.68	2.56	1.97	Reject the null hypothesis
Private Sec. School	115	2.98	3.22				

To assess whether there is a statistically significant difference in School Facility Characteristics between public and private secondary schools, a t-test was conducted to determine if the differences in mean responses between public and private secondary schools are statistically significant. The results indicate that the difference is indeed statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level (*t-Cal* = 2.56, *t-Crit* = 1.97). Since (2.56) is greater than (1.97), we reject the null hypothesis.

Objective 2: To Determine if Statistically Significant Difference exist in High Academic Expectation between Public and Private secondary Schools of Bauchi State, Nigeria

Table 3: Mean Rating on Academic Expectations between Public and Private Sec. Schools

S/N	High Academic Expectation	Private Sec. Sch.		Public sec. Sch.	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Teachers have high expectations for Students	3.90	.92	2.52	.24
2	Students are encouraged to achieve academic potential	3.51	.87	2.54	.40
3	The School Sets High Standards Academic Performance	3.72	.88	2.50	.90
4	Teachers Provide Regular Feedback to Students	3.21	.90	2.44	.60
Mean of Means		3.59	3.6	2.50	2.14

Table 3 compares the mean responses regarding high academic expectations between private and public secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The comparison is made based on mean values and standard deviations for responses from both private and public secondary schools. On the issue of teachers having high expectations for students, the results show private Schools: Mean = 3.90, SD = 0.92 and Public Schools: Mean = 2.52, SD = 0.24; shows private schools have significantly higher expectations for students compared to public schools. The ratings Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.87 and Mean = 2.54, SD = 0.40 for private and public Schools respectively indicates that private schools are more encouraging for students to reach their academic potential. The results also suggest that private schools set higher academic standards compared to public schools by the ratings, private schools Mean = 3.72, SD = 0.8 and public Schools Mean = 2.50, SD = 0.90. Regarding the extent to which Teachers provide regular feedback to students, table 3 shows private Schools Mean = 3.21, SD = 0.90 and public Schools Mean = 2.44, SD = 0.60. This result indicates that teachers in private schools provide more regular feedback to students. Mean of Means, portrays private schools Mean = 3.59, SD = 3.60 and public schools Mean = 2.50, SD = 2.14. This indicates on the overall, private schools have higher mean responses and standard deviations, proving greater variability in responses but consistently higher expectations compared to public schools.

Test of Hypothesis: There is no Statistically Significant Difference in High Academic Expectations between Public and Private Secondary Schools in Bauchi State.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean Ratings on High Academic Expectations

Group		Sample size	Mean	SD	df.	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Public School	**sec.**	125	2.50	2.14	182	-2.82	1.973	Reject null hypothesis
Private School	**Sec.**	115	3.59	3.60				

The table 4 presents the results of a two-sample t-test conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means of public and private secondary schools in terms of High Academic Expectations. Since the absolute value of the calculated t-value (2.82) is greater than the critical t-value (1.973), we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a statistically significant difference in high academic expectations between public and private secondary schools at the 0.05 significance level. The decision to "Reject null hypothesis" is based on the fact that the absolute value of the calculated t-value (2.82) is greater than the critical t-value

(1.973). This means that the observed difference in means is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Objective 3: To Determine if Statistically Significant Difference exist in Home-School Relationship between Public and Private Secondary Schools of Bauchi State, Nigeria

Table 5: Ratings on Home-School Relationship between Public and Private Sec. Schools

S/N	Home-School Relationship	Private sec. School		Public sec. School	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Parents are actively involved in School Activities	3.72	.92	1.20	.14
2	School Talks with Parents about Student Progress	3.60	.91	2.00	.40
3	Parents Feel Welcome to Visit the School	3.54	.88	2.50	.60
4	School Organizes Events to Meet/Engage Parents	3.44	.80	2.01	.40
Mean of Means		3.58	3.50	1.93	1.54

The table 5 compares the mean responses regarding the home-school relationship between private and public secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The data is organized based on several factors related to parental involvement and communication with schools. On the assertion that parents are actively involved in school activities, analysis shows private schools Mean = 3.72, SD = 0.92 while public Schools Mean = 1.20, SD = 0.14, indicating that parents in private schools are significantly more involved in school activities compared to those in public schools. Regarding the extent to which school talks with parents about student progress, the results show ratings of private schools Mean = 3.60, SD = 0.91and public schools Mean = 2.00, SD = 0.40. This analysis suggests that private schools communicate more frequently with parents about students' progress compared to public schools. Concerning visits to the schools, the ratings of private schools Mean = 3.54, SD = 0.88 and public schools Mean = 2.50, SD = 0.60 indicates that parents feel more welcome to visit private schools than public schools. Given the ratings of private Schools Mean = 3.44, SD = 0.80 and public schools Mean = 2.01, SD = 0.40 on extent to which School organizes events to meet/engage parents, the analysis indicates that private schools organize more events to meet and engage parents compared to public schools. On the overall (Mean of Means), private schools have higher mean responses and standard deviations, indicating a more positive home-school relationship compared to public schools

Test of Hypothesis: There is no Statistically Significant Difference in Home-school Relationship between Public and Private Secondary Schools in Bauchi State.

Table 6: Comparison of Mean Ratings on Home-school Relationship

Group		Sample size	Mean	SD	df.	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Public School	**sec.**	125	1.93	1.54	238	-4.65	±1.96	Reject null hypothesis
Private School	**Sec.**	115	3.58	3.50				

The table 6 presents the results of a two-sample t-test conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means of public and private secondary schools in terms of Home-school Relationship. Since the absolute value of the calculated t-value (4.65) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96), we reject the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference in the home-school relationship between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi State.

Objective 4: To determine if statistically significant difference exist in Principal's Supervision between Public and Private Secondary Schools of Bauchi State, Nigeria

Table 7: Mean Response on Principal's Supervision between Public and Private Sec. Schools

S/N	Principal's Supervision He/She…	Private sec. School		Public sec. School	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Observes Class Teaching Regularly	3.42	.72	1.10	.12
2	Provides Constructive Feedback to Teachers	3.33	.81	2.02	.30
3	Ensures Implements School Policies Effectively	3.41	.78	1.50	.50
4	Promotes Positive School Climate	3.40	.77	1.01	.35
Mean of Means		3.39	3.08	1.41	0.55

The table 7 provides a comparison of principal's supervision between private and public secondary schools in Bauchi state, Nigeria, by evaluating different aspects of their supervisory roles. The inquiry that principals observe class teaching regularly is rated thus: private secondary schools: Mean = 3.42, SD = 0.72 and public secondary schools Mean = 1.10, SD = 0.12. The mean score for private schools is significantly higher than that for public schools, indicating that principals in private schools are more consistent in observing class teaching. On the issue of constructive feedback to teachers, the table shows private Secondary Schools: Mean = 3.33, SD = 0.81 and

public secondary schools: Mean = 2.02, SD = 0.30. The higher mean and larger standard deviation in private schools indicate a more variable but generally higher frequency of feedback. Furthermore, on the extent which principal ensures implementation of school policies effectively, the analysis depicts private secondary schools Mean = 3.41, SD = 0.78 and public secondary schools Mean = 1.50, SD = 0.50. The larger standard deviation in public schools points to greater inconsistency in policy implementation. Therefore, principals in private schools are perceived to ensure the effective implementation of school policies more than their public school counterparts. Regarding promotion of positive school climate by principals, the results reveals the ratings of private secondary schools Mean = 3.40, SD = 0.77 and private secondary schools Mean = 1.01, SD = 0.35. The lower standard deviation in public schools suggests a uniformity in the perception of a less positive school climate. This analysis confirms that promotion of a positive school climate is much more prevalent in private schools.

Test of Hypothesis: There is no Statistically Significant Difference in Principal's Supervision between Public and Private Secondary Schools in Bauchi State.

Table 8: Analysis on Principal's Supervision in Public and Private Secondary Schools

Group	Sample size	Mean	SD	df.	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Public sec. School	125	1.41	0.55	238	6.795	±1.970	Reject the null hypothesis
Private Sec. School	115	3.39	3.08				

The table 8 compares the difference in principal's supervision between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. Private secondary schools exhibit higher mean scores for principal supervision, suggesting that they may have more effective or more perceived supervision compared to their public counterparts. The t-calculated value (6.795) is far beyond the t-critical value (±1.970). Since the absolute value of the t-calculated is greater than the t-critical value, we reject the null hypothesis. Rejecting the null hypothesis means that there is a statistically significant difference in the principal's supervision between public and private secondary schools in Bauchi state. This significant difference favours private secondary schools, indicating a higher level of perceived principal supervision in private schools compared to public ones.

Conclusion

In line with the findings of this study, the overall comparison indicates that private secondary schools have generally better facilities across the board compared to public

secondary schools in Bauchi State. The research also indicates that private secondary schools in Bauchi State generally have higher academic expectations for their students compared to public secondary schools. Private schools also tend to encourage students more, set higher academic standards, and provide more regular feedback. Furthermore, study findings reveals that private secondary schools in Bauchi state generally have a better home-school relationship compared to public secondary schools. It was discovered as well that private schools tend to have more active parental involvement, better communication with parents about student progress, a more welcoming environment for parents, and more organized events to engage with parents. Findings by this study further highlights that private schools principals are generally more proactive and involved in supervisory roles than those in public schools. Finally, this study confirms that promotion of a positive school climate is much more prevalent in private schools.

In summary, this research provides robust statistical evidence that private secondary schools in Bauchi state have, on average, better school facility characteristics, home-school relationship, high academic expectations for students and principal's supervision than public secondary schools, warranting urgent attention from Ministry of Education Bauchi state, educators and policy makers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing the supervisory shortcomings in public schools could be a critical step towards enhancing the overall quality of education in Bauchi state. It is recommended that Ministry of Education Bauchi state might need to review and strengthen policies and support systems for public school principals to improve their supervisory roles, this necessary to bridge the gap with their private school counterparts. And, consequently, the educational outcomes in public school will be enhanced. The study also highly recommends that stakeholders, such as policymakers and educational administrators in Bauchi state, should consider the disparity in school facility characteristics between public and private secondary schools. Efforts to improve the facilities in public schools may be necessary to bridge the discovered gaps. Public school principals should be educated by Ministry of Education Bauchi state through professional development programmes focused on school climate improvement strategies to bridge the gap with their private school counterparts.

Suggestion for Further Research

While this study analysis establishes a significant difference in means, further research could explore the underlying factors contributing to these differences. Probably, qualitative studies and additional quantitative analyses could provide deeper insights into specific facility characteristics, home-school relationship, high academic

expectations and principal's supervision that differ between public and private secondary schools.

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