



ISSN: 2230-9926

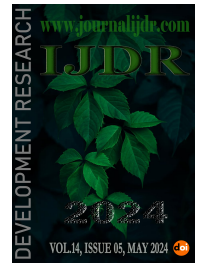
Available online at <http://www.journalijdr.com>

IJDR

International Journal of Development Research

Vol. 14, Issue, 05, pp. 65780-65784, May, 2024

<https://doi.org/10.37118/ijdr.28238.05.2024>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

ETHICAL ORGANIZATION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE

*¹Martial Thierry MBIAKOP, ¹Kenneth YUOMEYSE and ²Ngong Laika Roland

¹University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon

²University of Douala, Cameroon

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 05th February, 2024

Received in revised form

16th March, 2024

Accepted 20th April, 2024

Published online 30th May, 2024

Key Words:

Ethics, Organization, Morality,
School Climate, Psychosocial.

*Corresponding author:

Martial Thierry MBIAKOP,

ABSTRACT

This research work is concerned with the question of how to manage the social climate amongst students in the light of upsurge in deviant behavior in the school environment. According to the texts governing the organization and functioning of secondary education, the school must promote ethical values. While for most parents, school is a place of refuge for their children, this heavenly image of the school is increasingly watered down by numerous incidents. Violence is gradually finding a favorable breeding ground in Cameroon's schools and colleges. The purposive sampling technique was used to determine our sample size and the data collected using questionnaire administered to 166 students in secondary schools. The data was then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The Pearson Chi-square test confirmed all the hypotheses. From the results, we concluded that school administration include a range of behaviors' that can be judged as ethical or unethical. According to Evers & Lakomski (1991), ethics should be seen as an important component of administrative theories. And in this perspective, the quality of the psychosocial climate that results from it, is strongly dependent on it. It should be noted that there is a significant link between the organizational climate of an institution and ethical behavior. Consequently, a code of ethics can help to improve the social environment of an institution.

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Citation: Martial Thierry MBIAKOP, Kenneth YUOMEYSE and Ngong Laika Roland, 2024. "Ethical organization and psychosocial climate". International Journal of Development Research, 14, (05), 65780-65784.

INTRODUCTION

Without wishing to blacken the picture, we believe that with certain behaviors observed here and there today, we can already open an obituary booklet for what we would so fittingly call "Professional Conscience". A great deal of work has been done in recent years on understanding and developing climate in organizations. The concept of climate was originally developed to provide plausible explanations of the psychological environment in which individuals operate (Dickson et al., 2001). We have observed an increase in violence in our schools. They range from simple banal acts to serious attacks on the physical or moral integrity of others. Some teachers go about their classes as they please, without any authorization; they stay in the streets or in their homes and go about their private business. And when they decide to go to service, they still go late. Punctuality, attendance and regularity are no longer the order of the day. Few teachers care about these elementary principles, which our compatriot Pliya (1973) mentioned in his book entitled "La Secrétaireparticulière". Yet, it is this professional conscience that should help the teacher to accomplish his or her mission well, especially since it is the light that idealizes the task and the inner motor that helps to accomplish it better. This is why law n° 2003-17 of 11 November 2003 on the Orientation of National Education in the Republic of Benin, rectified by law 2005-33 of 6 October 2005, specifies: "Teachers must carry out their mission with professional conscience and efficiency" (article 67). In its paragraphs 2 and 3, it proposes sanctions:

"The most deserving are rewarded by the state and elevated in the various national orders. Teachers who prove to be deficient in the performance of their duties and those guilty of immoral acts shall be sanctioned in accordance with the texts in force".

Theoretical finding: A great deal of work has been done in recent years on understanding and developing climate in organizations. The concept of climate was originally developed to provide plausible explanations of the psychological environment in which individuals operate (Dickson et al., 2001). In what follows, we will discuss climate at the organizational level and then link it to ethics.

Empirical finding: We have observed an increase violence in our schools. They range from simple banal acts to serious attacks on the physical or moral integrity of others. Initially, the violence observed in schools is generally school bullying or a succession of repeated minor daily acts of violence, most often physical or verbal. In most cases, this violence remains unknown, either because of the victim's silence or because of the institution's inability to put a stop to it. In another case, the violence thrives because it is ignored by the victim, but remains in a latent state where the most insane impulses proliferate in the perpetrator. For reasons of method, the causes of violence in schools will be examined according to their origins. For professional conscience is rooted in a deep sense of the nobility of the role of the informed educator who must, with courage, regularly carry out the multiple tasks required by the exercise of his mission, which requires him to love children, as Bertrand (1983) wishes:

Anyone who loves children - that is the true vocation - and has, in addition, a taste for thoughtful action, will not fail to enjoy teaching. It is because our profession, if practiced, does not demean man; on the contrary, it constantly obliges him to make efforts to reach a higher degree of educational power, it purifies him, exalts him. It succeeds much more often than one might think in making the humble schoolmaster a true artist of his kind, that is to say, a kneader of souls, a creator of characters and individualities" (Bertrand, 1983, p. 157).

To analyze this problem, we used the theories of transformational leadership and moral development of Kohlberg, which indicate that every individual is the result of the interactions of his environment. This led us to ask the following question: The psychosocial climate amongst the students of Francois-Vogt College depends on the organizational ethics in place. Our objective is to verify whether the psychosocial climate among students at the Vogt secondary school depends on the organizational ethics in place. Based on this objective, we formulated a general hypothesis as follows: "The social climate amongst the students of the François Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the organizational ethics in place.

METHODOLOGY

In addition, we used purposive sampling to determine our sample size and the data were collected by means of a questionnaire, addressed to 166 students from Francois-Xavier Vogt secondary school.

Study site: The Francois-Xavier Vogt secondary school is located in Mvolye, Yaounde, Mfoundi division, Centre region. It is a private Catholic school of the Archdiocese of Yaoundé. It welcomes students of all religious denominations who wish to be intellectually formed and educated in the school of Christian morality. Each year, many students receive a complete quality education that will enable them to exercise responsibilities in society as adults.

Type of study: This study is part of a descriptive and inferential approach, as it allows for the measurement of the degree of significance that would exist between organizational ethics and psychosocial climate.

Study Population: Mucelli (1986) defines the population as the set of people who are the subject of the survey and who constitute a community. This can be a nation, a city, a professional body, or even a group dispersed over a territory. In 1991, Mayer and Ouellet (cited by Dépelteau, 2000) defined the population as "the set of all individuals who have specific characteristics related to the objectives of the study". The present research will focus on all students in Cameroon. They represent the large part of the population and are faced with several dangers.

Accessible population: The concept of population is quite broad. Several researchers have defined it in their scientific analyses, emphasizing one or other contour. All of them, however, agree that it refers to individuals or things under investigation. Mucelli (1986), defines the population as the set of people investigated and constituting a community. This can be a nation, a city, a professional body, or even a group dispersed over a territory. In 1991, Mayer and Ouellet (cited by Dépelteau, 2000: 213) defined the population as "the set of all individuals who have specific characteristics related to the objectives of the study". The present research will focus on students from all classes.

Sampling technique: We used purposive sampling. This is a technique that consists of asking a set of questions in order to gather a maximum amount of information in a minimum amount of time.

Sample: Our sample will be constituted and it is quite logical that we set in motion the formula of Javeau and Amin opcit; from which we could draw a sample. Thanks to the stratified proportional sampling that we have just described, we constituted a sample 166.

Data collection instruments: According to Gauthier (1984: 319), a questionnaire is "an instrument for formatting information based on the observation of responses to a set of questions asked of a sample of a population".

Table 1. Distribution of accessible population

Establishment	Class	Gender	Effective	Total	
Collège Francois-Xavier Vogt	6 ^{ème}	Boys	49	100	
		Girls	51		
	5 ^{ème}	Boys	50	101	
		Girls	51		
	4 ^{ème}	Boys	50	101	
		Girls	51		
	3 ^{ème}	Boys	52	101	
		Girls	49		
	2 nd	Boys	50	102	
		Girls	52		
	1ere	Boys	52	101	
		Girls	49		
	Tle	Boys	Boys	57	711
			Girls	64	
Total of boys					
		Total of girls	302		

The definition proposed by Quivy and Campenhout (1995) seems to be the most complete. For them: "A questionnaire survey consists of asking a set of respondents, most often representative of a population, a series of questions relating to their social situation, their attitude towards human and social opinions or issues, their expectations, their level of knowledge or awareness of an event or problem, or any other matter of interest to researchers.

The questionnaire: The instrument was developed through the modalities of the study variables. It consists of four parts: the first part includes the identification of the respondents, consisting of 8 questions. The second part deals with ethical values and consists of 4 questions. The third part is based on 4 questions on ethical practices. The last part consists of 4 questions on ethical behavior. For our study, we drew up a questionnaire which was then amended by our supervisor. After this amendment, we carried out a trial survey with 25 students, 4 per class. After the collection, we noticed that some questions had not been answered by all. Those who had not answered any of them told us that they did not understand them. In addition, some questions were confusing. These remarks enabled us to adjust the wording of certain items. The survey was carried out from 2 to 11 June 2022, with an average of 10 questionnaires per day. The statement presenting the questionnaire to the young people is presented at the beginning of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is read after a brief introduction by us and the principles of politeness. Most of the time, the questionnaire was filled in directly after the contact was made, which facilitated verbal communication between us and our respondents.

Difficulties encountered: Due to Covid 19 and the published barrier measures, we had a lot of difficulties in passing our questionnaires. In order to avoid ethical problems and given that our respondents were minors, we explained the rationale for our survey. We explained the rationale of our study to their parents, in order to obtain their permission to administer the questionnaire to their children.

Method of data analysis: Following the data analysis, the data collected was presented, analyzed and interpreted taking into account the categories surveyed and the tools used. We used quantitative analysis. The responses to the closed-ended questions were entered into a computer and then processed and analysed using a statistical package called Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 17 (SPSS 12.0). Chi-square is the statistical tool that was used in this study to determine the dependency between Education for All and sustainable development.

RESULTS

Verification of the research hypotheses: To conclude this chapter, we attempt to answer the three specific research questions as well as the main question. In order to proceed with the verification of our research hypotheses and subsequently our general hypothesis, we have, with the help of the SPSS 12.0.1 software package, determined different values including those of the Chi-square of independence (2) and the Phi (Ø). After determining these different values for each research hypothesis, the 2 was read with a significance level of 0.05. This means that each value of the 2 was read with a significance level of 0.05. This means that each value of 2 was compared to its critical value ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, for any value of asymptotic significance greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis of independence between the two crossover variables was rejected and the research hypothesis accepted. In the case where the value of 2 was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of independence between the two cross variables was accepted and the research hypothesis rejected. Finally, since we are dealing with two dichotomous variables, the Phi allows us to evaluate the degree of dependence between our different variables. Thus, for any asymptotic significance value equal to 0, there is no relationship between the crossed variables. The relationship is weak if the value of Phi is between 0 and 0.20; insignificant if it is between 0.20 and 0.40; medium if it is between 0.40 and 0.60; strong if it is between 0.60 and 0.80; significant if it is between 0.80 and 1 and perfect if it is equal to 1.

Verification of the first research hypothesis: The research hypothesis (R.H. 1): "The psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical values in place. The alternative hypothesis (Ha): "The psychosocial climate among the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical values in place. The null hypothesis (Ho): "The psychosocial climate among the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school does not depend significantly on the ethical values in place.

Table 2. Contingency for the first research hypothesis

Ethical values	Psychosocial climate		
	Good	bad	Total
The modalities of the VI 1	114	52	166

Table 3. Test for the first research hypothesis

	Value	Degree of freedom	Asymptotic significance two-sided
Of Pearson	6,770	1	0,004
Number of valid cases	166		

a 0 cell (i.e. 0.0%) has a value less than 5. The minimum expected value is 44.95

Table 4. Symmetry measure for the first research hypothesis

	Value	Asymptotic significance
Phi	0,163	0,004
Number of valid cases	166	

Décision: According to Table 17, the calculated Chi-square is equal to calculated is equal to 6.750. And the read Chi-square is 3.732. $2lu=3.732 < 2cal = 6.750$. The same table tells us that the two-sided asymptotic significance for the first hypothesis, which amounts to 0.003, is below its critical value $\alpha = 0.05$. This asymptotic significance therefore leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (Ha). This means that the variable "psychosocial climate" and "ethical values" have a mutual influence.

Significance level: The table shows us that the Phi has a value of 0.171 (17.1%), which is in the range of 0 to 20; this leads us to say

that there is a weakly significant link between the "psychosocial climate" and "ethical values". This means that the first research hypothesis (HR1), which assumes that "the psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt secondary school is significantly dependent on the ethical values implemented".

Verification of the second hypothesis

The research hypothesis (R.H. 2): "The psychosocial climate amongst the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices in place.

The alternative hypothesis (Ha): "The psychosocial climate amongst the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices in place.

The null hypothesis (Ho): The psychosocial climate amongst the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school does not depend significantly on the ethical practices in place.

Table 5. Contingency for the second research hypothesis

Ethical practices	Psychosocial climate		
	Good	Bad	Total
Modalities of VI 2	128	38	166

Table 6. Test for the two research hypothesis

	Value	Degree of freedom	Asymptotic significance two-sided
de Pearson	4,825	1	0,028
Number of valid cases	166		

a 0 cells (i.e. 0.0%) have a value less than 5. The minimum expected value is 42.93

Table 7. Symmetry measure for the first research hypothesis

	Value	Asymptotic significance
Phi	0,129	0,028
Number of valid cases	166	

Décision: According to the table, the calculated Chi-2 is 4.825. And the Chi-2 reading is 3.732. $2lu=3.732 < 2cal = 4.825$. The same Table 24 tells us that the two-sided asymptotic significance for the second hypothesis, which amounts to 0.028, is below its critical value $\alpha = 0.05$. This asymptotic significance therefore leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (Ha). This means that the variable "The psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices in place".

Level of significance: The table shows that the Phi has a value of 0.129, i.e. (139%), and is in the range of 0 and 20, which leads us to say that "The psychosocial climate among the pupils of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices put in place". This means that the first research hypothesis (HR2), which assumes that the psychosocial climate among the pupils of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices in place, is accepted.

Verification of the third research hypothesis: The research hypothesis (R.H. 3) "The psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt junior high school depends significantly on the ethical behaviours implemented" is accepted.

The alternative hypothesis (aH): "The psychosocial climate among the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical behaviours implemented.

The null hypothesis (oH): The psychosocial climate among the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school does not depend significantly on the ethical behaviour implemented.

Table 8. Contingency for the third research hypothesis

Ethical behaviors	psychosocial Climat		
	Good	Bad	Total
Modalities of VI 3	109	57	166

Table 9. Test for the third research hypothesis

	Value	Degree of freedom	Asymptotic significance two-sided
Of Pearson	5,856	1	0,018
Number of valid cases	166		

has 0 cells (i.e. 0.0%) has a value of less than 5. The minimum expected value is 44.32

Table 10. Symmetry measure for the third research hypothesis

	Value	Asymptotic significance
Phi	0,148	0,019
Nombre de casvalides	166	

Decision: According to table23, the calculated Chi-2 is 5.837. And the Chi-2 reading is 3.73e. $2lu=3.73e < 2cal = 5.836$. The same table tells us that the two-sided asymptotic significance for the first hypothesis, which amounts to 0.019, is lower than its critical value $\alpha = 0.05$. This asymptotic significance therefore leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (o H) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (aH). This means that the variable "Organizational ethics" and "Psychosocial climate" are dependent.

Significance level: The table shows us that the Phi has a value of 0.147, i.e. (14.7%), it is in the range of 0 and 20; this leads us to say that there is a weakly significant relationship between "organizational ethics" and "Psychosocial climate". This means that the third research hypothesis (R.H. 3), which assumes that "The psychosocial climate amongst students at François-Xavier Vogt College depends significantly on the ethical behaviors implemented."

Verification of the general hypothesis: After testing all our secondary hypotheses, we conclude that the general hypothesis according to which "The psychosocial climate amongst the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school is significantly dependent on the ethics in place" is confirmed.

Interpretation of the results: We will discuss not only the research hypotheses, but also the results observed previously.

Interpretation of the research hypotheses: Given that the general hypothesis postulates that the psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethics implemented, showing that the organizational ethics implemented is a major pillar for strengthening interpersonal relations and establishing a good psychosocial climate in the school environment, the discussion of the hypotheses will highlight the relevance of these in relation to the population studied. Its modalities, i.e. ethical values, ethical practices and ethical behaviors, were used to formulate specific research hypotheses.

Interpretation of the first research hypothesis: It is stated as follows: "The psychosocial climate among the students of François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical values in place. The leaders of an organization have an undeniable influence on its values and organizational climate, they are the ones who develop the policies and practices and they must be aware of the impact of their behavior and decisions on the climate and social relationships within their structures (Drucker, 1981; Mercier, 1997; Dickson et al., 2001; Grojean et al., 2004) Indeed, Grojean, Resick, Dickson & Smith (2004) have identified some mechanisms that allow leaders to influence the ethical climate in their organizations. According to them, this influence is exerted when leaders: use value-based leadership, set an example for other employees, make it clear that the organization expects ethical behavior from its employees,

encourage ethical behavior, recognize and reward behavior that upholds organizational values, and are aware of individual differences in subordinates.

Interpretation of the second research hypothesis: This second hypothesis, which is the logical continuation of the first, is formulated as follows: "The psychosocial climate among students at François-Xavier Vogt secondary school depends significantly on the ethical practices in place. The behavior of leaders is a key element that will condition the organizational climate. They have to set an example for their subordinates and their behavior gives the latter concrete and precise indications on how to behave in a multitude of situations, including those where they are confronted with ethical problems. Leaders are a role model for subordinates in relation to ethically correct behavior and in relation to solving ethical problems (Dickson et al., 2001; Grojean et al., 2004). Management in an organization can also demonstrate their commitment to ethical considerations through the implementation of a reward/sanction system.

Interpretation of the third research hypothesis: The research hypothesis in question here is formulated as follows: "The psychosocial climate among the students of the François-Xavier Vogt secondary school is significantly dependent on the ethical behavior's implemented". The influence of leaders has been emphasised many times in the management literature, their actions constituting a reference for the behavior of the members of the school. The exemplarity of leaders or "embodied ethics" (Dherse and Minguet, 1998) thus emerges at the heart of the ethical approach. Barnard (1938) was one of the first to draw attention to the moral dimension of the responsibility of leaders. For him, managers are not only responsible for the financial success of their organization, but they also have the responsibility to instil moral values and ethical principles in their subordinates. The main role of leaders is therefore to create the morale factor by creating moral codes among the members of the organization, so that the general interest of the organization is put before the personal interests of its members.

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