Psychological Variables and Classroom Emotional Climate of Public Primary School Teachers in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine psychological variables and classroom emotional climate among primary school teachers in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, three null hypotheses were generated to direct the study. Literature review was done according to the variables under study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. Due to the manageable size of the population of the study, the researcher made use of the entire population (census) of two hundred (200) teaches and four hundred (400) learners. Two instruments were used for data collection; the Classroom Emotional Climate of Teachers (CECT) and the Teacher Psychological Variables (TPV). The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts in measurement and evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Calabar. The reliability estimate of the instrument was established through the Cronbach alpha reliability method. The reliability coefficient rages from .76 to .85. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was the statistical analysis technique adopted to test the hypotheses under study. All hypotheses were subjected to testing at .05 level of significance. The results of the analysis revealed that, teachers' motivation, emotion and teachers' anxiety significantly influence classroom emotional climate. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that , the government in charge of primary level of education should endeavor to improve on teachers' welfare, promotion and retraining as these could improve their classroom emotional climate, and enhance the learner's performance and academic achievement.

Key word: Psychological Variables, Classroom emotional climate, Public Primary schools, Teachers.

Introduction

In the school system, teaching and learning are mostly carried out in the classroom by the teachers. The classroom therefore should serves as a sanctuary for learning. Just like the theatre is to the medical doctors, is the classroom to the teachers. However, as useful as the classroom is to teaching and learning, effective teaching and learning depends more on the classroom emotional climate. Otherwise, irrespective of how beautiful, spacious, ventilated and comfortable learners feel, if the classroom emotional climate is poor, the lesson cannot be delivered effectively which goes a long way to affect the objective achievement of the teacher. Isangedighi (2011) opines that classroom was designed to be where the learners feel comfortable, excited, emotionally stable and in harmony with themselves and the teachers.

Sadly, most teachers do not seem to bother about the relevance of the classroom emotional climate for effective instructional lesson delivery and so, treat the issue with triviality. According to Ebenegbu (2017), it is not enough to prepare a good lesson plan until, it is effectively delivered with the stated objectives achieved. This can only be done if the classroom emotional climate is stable. A class is a group of learners confined in a particular location. It could be under a shade, tree, square, river-side, uncompleted building or a building (Owan & Ekpe, 2018) To Geddes and Grosset (2010), a class is a set of learners taught together. Whereas, a classroom is a particular room in a building where learners are confined to be taught by a teacher in school (Nwachukwu in Abang, 2023).

Classroom emotional climate majorly has to do with how learners and teachers feel within the classroom environment. For a better understanding of classroom emotional climate, Isangedighi (2011) raised the following questions as a guide- Do learners and teachers feel secured or threatened in the class, do they feel happy or sad, do they feel moody or excited, are they worried or stable, are they tensed or normal, what is their level of anxiety while in class? Answers to these questions determine the emotional climate of that particular class. If it is to the negative, it means the classroom emotional climate is not ideal and cannot enhance learners' concentration, focus and achievement. Whereas, the ideal classroom climate is one which places learners and teachers on a balanced or stable emotion, such a climate can trigger concentration and focus, and could guarantee success and achievement in class.

Though learners formed part of the classroom emotional climate but teachers being mangers of the classroom, have more to do in matters of classroom emotional climate. According to Isangedighi (2007), Iheanacho et al (2023), the teacher is in a better position to create a

conducive or positive classroom climate than learners while Denga & Denga (2007) believe that teachers emotion in class can go a long way to affect learners positively or negatively. They observe furthermore that, when the teacher is tense, sad, angry, moody, recalcitrance, despotic and tyrannical in the classroom, this can affect the classroom emotion negatively as learners will be threatened, fearful, confused and lost concentration and focus. This study becomes very necessary in order to address the classroom emotional climate with particular concern for teachers. A visit to the Public Primary Schools in Boki Local Government will witness a negative classroom emotional climate created by the teacher.

The teachers' inability to create a positive emotional climate in the classroom has always resulted to students lost of interest, focus and concentration in school activities, examinational malpractice, absenteeism, fighting among themselves and many others. This has actually become a worrisome issue among education stakeholders. Inspite of the efforts by the stakeholders to address this ugly trend and few researchers who have written on related variables to see how this can bring about change in classroom emotional climate of teachers in Public Primary Schools in Boki Local Government Area, no significant improvement has been recorded. It is on this premise that this present research tends to investigate if teachers psychological variables could be responsible

Theoretical grounds and literature review
The Self Determination Theory of Motivation by Ryan and Deci (1985) is quite apt in this study due to its emphacy on behavior and reward. The theorists believe that behaviours are motivated by reward from external sources. The theory posits that motivation is a drive to behave in certain ways based on external sources and its results in external rewards. The theory actually aligned with Skinner(1971) experimental rats (during operant conditioning theory) that had their behavior repeated on the realization that a successful performance fetched some positive external rewards. This means that performance is enhanced when there is adequate motivation and this will further influence the organism to do more.

However, it is a different scenario in the case of teachers, as their efforts have not been attracting encouragement by means of motivation or rewards, rather, they are being demotivated. They are paid meagre and delayed salaries, irregular promotions, poor retirement benefits and others. This goes a long way to affect their emotion, anxiety personality and so on, which is otherwise affecting classroom emotional climate negatively. At the end, the learners bare the brunt.

The teachers' psychological variables have to do with those factors that can positively or negatively influence teacher's behavior in the management of the class situation. Some of

these major psychological factors the researcher will be discussing on are motivation, emotion and anxiety.

Motivation as one of the psychological variables is described as a psychological feature that arouses an organism to action towards a desired goal (Iheanacho, 2016, Abang 2023, Abang & Amalu 2018). Whereas, Ukpong (2020) and Isangedighi (2007) posit that motivation as a determinant of behavior refers to that factor which increases or reduces the vigor of an individual activity. Ukpong (2020) further more explains that it is the internal condition that arouses, sustains and direct behavior in response to situations or objects in the environment. Motivation whether intrinsic (arouses within the individual) or extrinsic (influence by the environment) is geared towards goal achievement. It is motivation that drives one to commitment and dedication and lack of it can also bring about indifference behavior. It is normal that when one is motivated positively, he/she portrays positive behavior and negative behavior when he/she is negatively motivated. Seemingly, the poor classroom emotional climate by most teachers could be as a result of teachers being negatively motivated by way of poor remuneration, allowances, promotion and other welfare issues.

Anxiety is another teacher psychological variable. It is an unpleasant emotion characterized by fear and worry or a feeling of fear and uncertainty about something unknown (Abang, 2010). Isangedighi (2007) and Ahmed (2015) describe anxiety as an emotion characterized by feeling of tension and worried thoughts. Whereas, Keny and Mbo (2018) explain anxiety as intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about every situation. Anxiety generally has to do with worries about known and unknown issues which the researcher considers to be one of the characteristics of an average teacher in Cross River State in particular and Nigeria in general. Nigerian teachers are faced with varied problems which have caused them persistent worries (Abang & Amalu, 2018). They are worried about poor remuneration which cannot afford them to pay for their bills, rents, children fees and to meet up with other social responsibilities and poor working environment. This frustration of teachers especially classroom teachers who have additional responsibilities, could be enough for them to develop non-challant behavior in the management of classroom emotional climate of classes assigned to them.

Emotion as another teacher psychological variable has to do with feelings-positive or negative. The concept of emotion can be explained as outward expression of inner feelings which are aroused by the individual behavior or that of another person (Iheancho et al 2023), (Umo et al 2019). Emotions are considered negative when their agitations or motivations within the organisms is associated with unpleasant experiences (Essien, 2012). It is natural that when individuals are exposed to unpleasant situations, they display the following: fear,

anger, anxiety, sadness, bitterness and so on. Whereas, positive emotions can trigger pleasant experiences which can motivate or arouse the organism into meaningful reactions within the environment. Positive emotion can trigger reactions like joy, happiness, love, excitement, delight and others (Abang, 2023). From the foregoing therefore, the place of emotion in classroom emotional climate by the teacher needs not be over emphasized. It therefore means that, when a teacher is exposed to negative emotions, he will be rendered ineffective in the management of classroom emotional climate and effective if exposed to positive emotions. Teachers in Cross River State in particular are exposed to negative emotions of delayed promotion, non implementation of promotion arrears, incomplete salaries most times and other incentives. This is capable of discouraging them from showing concern in the management of classroom emotional climate.

Empirically, Dibang (2010) investigated on Classroom emotional climate Variables and Primary School Management Effectiveness in Calabar South Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. The researchers adopted Ex-post facto research design. Census technique was employed by selecting the entire population of 525 academic staff (21 head teachers, 21 deputy heads and 483 teachers). The Classroom emotional climate Variables and School Effectiveness Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while the null hypothesis were tested at .05 level of significance using Pearson Moment Correlation and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The finding of the study revealed that public primary school system effectiveness in the area of study was generally low due to the poor classroom emotional climate, it was recommended that teachers be retrained in the management of classroom emotional climate and coordination to enable them acquire new techniques in the management of classroom emotional climate.

While the researchers of the present work are support of the retraining of teachers for effective classroom emotional climate, the school management should also pay attention to teachers' welfare and motivation for effective classroom emotional climate. This is because even if teachers are being trained, where there is no motivation and an enhanced welfare of staff, effective management of classroom emotional climate cannot be assured.

Another study on exploring links between early childhood educators' psychological characteristics and classroom emotional climate self-efficacy beliefs was carried out by Bullock, et al (2015). The study explored the predictive relationship among early childhood educators' years of teaching experience, personality traits, and classroom emotional climate self-efficacy beliefs. Participants were drawn from 395 Early Childhood Educators (ECE) from pre-school and childcare centres located primarily in Ontario, Canada. The researchers

used interview and simple percentage in determining the result. The result showed positive relationship between years of teaching experience and classroom emotional climate self-efficacy as well as early childhood educators personality traits predicted their classroom emotional climate.

It is true that the result of the above research showed positive relationship between teaching experience and classroom emotional climate. However, it is the opinion of the current researchers that only teaching experience would not have been enough to influence a positive relationship, perhaps other variables like the motivation and welfare must have been enhanced.

In another development, Essien (2012), investigated on teachers' attitude and classroom emotional climate among primary school teachers in Itu Local Government Area of Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria. He sampled 280 public primary teachers (140 males and 140 females) and employed a descriptive research design. Teachers Attitude and Classroom emotional climate Questionnaire (TACM) was the instrument used for data collection. The researcher analyzed his work by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). His finding revealed that teacher's attitude in the study area negatively influenced classroom emotional climate.

The above finding is indeed not surprisingly because it is common for anyone to develop negative attitude when things are not going smoothly. These teachers would have developed this negative attitude because things may not have been going right in the system like their remuneration, incentives, welfare and other conditions of service.

From the foregoing, it has been observed that the classroom emotional climate is indispensably paramount tool for learners' concentration and achievement that is why concerted efforts have been made by researchers and other stakeholders to enhance effective classroom emotional climate. However, irrespective of the efforts so far made, not much enough has been achieved in classroom emotional climate. This is so because the classroom emotional climate in the area of study still remain a mirage. It is on this premise that this present work intends to address the issue of classroom emotional climate by attending to some teachers' psychological variables (motivation, anxiety and emotion).

Statement of the problem
Learners in school spend a greater part of their time in the classroom. This becomes necessary for the classroom emotional climate to be condusive. The classroom emotional climate was designed to be a setting where learners and teachers feel comfortable, excited, emotionally stable and in harmony with themselves within the classroom environment. Unfortunately, the

classroom emotional climates of our public primary schools in Boki Local Government Area, are not stable or balanced, and this is adversely affecting the learners' concentration and focus as well as the teachers' objective achievement.

Classroom emotional climate has to do majorly with how learners and teachers feel within the classroom environment. Ideally, the classroom environment is where learners and teachers feel secure, excited and free to air their views with a high level of self-concept, with teachers demonstrating empathy, altruism, and with a high level of emotional intelligence with the learners. Sadly, the classroom emotional climate in the study area is quite unconducive as teachers appear to be despotic, tyrannical, abusive, inconsiderable, aggressive and commanding. These teachers' negative characteristics could adversely affect the emotional climate of the classroom.

Negative emotional classroom climate is marked by low concentration and focus, poor academic achievement, examination malpractice, cultism, loitering, absenteeism, gansterism, just to mention but a few by learners. This ugly development is gaining grounds especially in our public primary schools and no serious steps or measures are being taken to address the matter as well as research works being scanty in the investigation of classroom emotional climate.

This study therefore seeks to determine if the prevalence of negative classroom emotional climate of teachers in public primary schools in Boki Local Government Area could be achieved by attending to their teachers psychological variables. The question is, could teachers' psychological variables be responsible for the classroom negative emotional climate?

Research questions:
1. To what extent does teachers' motivation influence classroom emotional climate?
2. To what extent does teachers' emotion influence classroom emotional climate?
3. How does teachers' anxiety influence classroom emotional climate?

Research hypotheses
1. Teachers' motivation does not significantly influence classroom emotional climate.
2. Teachers' emotion does not significantly influence classroom emotional climate.
3. Teachers' anxiety does not significantly influence classroom emotional climate.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was survey research design. The research area for this study was Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised two hundred (200) teachers from primary four to six (4-6) and four hundred (400) learners from primary four to six (4-6). The researcher made use of the entire population (universe) for both teachers and learners for the study due to the manageable size of the population. The instrument used for data collection were titled, "Teachers' Psychological Variables (TPV) and Classroom Emotional Climate of Teachers (CECT) Questionnaire. The TPV instrument was for teachers to respond to their psychological variable while the CECT was for learners to rate their teachers emotion while in class.

Each of the instruments consisted of two sections - A and B. Demographic data and the respondents class form section A of CECT while the section A of PTV consisted of the demographic information and the class taught by the teacher. Section B of the CECT instrument with 14 items, elicited information from learners on the behavior or attitude of their teachers in class which can determine the classroom emotional climate in statements like: "Most times our teacher does not bother about whatever we do in class." " You can go out and come in anytime you feel like, in our class." Respondents can now indicate their level of agreement or disagreements in a 4 point linkert scale of strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree. Whereas, the section B of PTV featured 9 items, measuring the teachers' psychological variables of motivation, emotion and anxiety. Teachers were expected to react or response to their level of agreement or disagreement on the variables. For example, " Most times I display non-challant attitude with learners in class when I think of my poor renumeration." " Most times I behave harshly with learners in class because of my delayed promotions." "I get worried when I see how retired teachers are being treated, that I pay less attention to what learners do in class."

The reliability index was tested using subjects outside the population. A reliability coefficient of .75 to .85 was established. Data collected was analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Presentation of result

In this section each hypothesis is re-stated, and the result of data analysis carried out to test its acceptance or rejection as presented below. Each hypothesis of the study was tested at .05 level of significance.

Ho₁

There is no significant influence of teachers' motivation on classroom emotional climate. The independent variable in this hypothesis is teachers' motivation which is categorized into three (low, moderate and high); while the dependent variable is classroom emotional climate. To test this hypothesis, classroom emotional climate from teachers' motivation (low, moderate and high) were compared using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of teachers' motivation on classroom emotional climate (N=589)

Teachers' motivation	N	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Low- 1	79	34.4684	2.51577		
moderate- 2	317	35.6593	3.31625		
High – 3	204	36.7304	1.69056		
Total	600	35.8667	2.85116		
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	320.286	2	160.143	21.017*	.000
Within group	4549.048	597	7.620		
Total	4869.333	599			

* Significant at $p < .05$ level, df= 2, 597.

The result on Table 1 revealed that the F-value of 21.017 at p=.000. Since the p (.000) is less than p (.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This result therefore implied that, teachers' motivation significantly influenced classroom emotional climate. Since teachers' motivation had a significant influence on classroom emotional climate, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

The result of the analysis in Table 2 showed that teachers' whose motivation was low were significantly different in their classroom emotional climate from those whose motivation was either moderate or high. Also teachers' whose motivation was moderate were significantly different from those who were high in their classroom emotional climate.

Table 2: Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Teachers' motivation on classroom emotional climate
LSD

(I) Teachers' motivation	(J) Teachers' motivation	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	-1.19095(*)	.34712	.001
	High	-2.26204(*)	.36579	.000
moderate	Low	1.19095(*)	.34712	.001
	High	-1.07109(*)	.24777	.000
High	Low	2.26204(*)	.36579	.000
	Moderate	1.07109(*)	.24777	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Ho₂

There is no significant influence of teachers' emotion on classroom emotional climate. The independent variable in this hypothesis is teachers' emotion which is categorized into three (low, moderate and high); while the dependent variable is classroom emotional climate. To test this hypothesis, classroom emotional climate from teachers' emotion (low, moderate and high) were compared using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of teachers' emotion on classroom emotional climate (N=589)

Teachers' emotion	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Low- 1	200	35.4000	2.73448
moderate- 2	320	35.6250	3.00209
High – 3	80	38.0000	1.00631
Total	600	35.8667	2.85116

Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	426.333	2	213.167	28.643*	.000
Within group	4443.000	597	7.442		
Total	4869.333	599			

* Significant at p <.05 level, df= 2, 597.

The result on Table 3 revealed that the F-value of 28.643 at p=.000. Since the p (.000) is less than p (.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This result therefore implied that, teachers' emotion significantly influenced classroom emotional climate. Since teachers' emotion had a significant influence on classroom emotional climate, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Teachers' emotion on classroom emotional climate
LSD

(I) Teachers' emotion	(J) Teachers' emotion	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	-.22500	.24590	.361
	High	-2.60000(*)	.36089	.000
moderate	Low	.22500	.24590	.361
	High	-2.37500(*)	.34101	.000
High	Low	2.60000(*)	.36089	.000
	Moderate	2.37500(*)	.34101	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The result of the analysis in Table 4 showed that teachers' whose emotion was low were significantly different in their classroom emotional climate from those whose emotion was either moderate or high. Also teachers' whose emotion was moderate were significantly different from those who were high in their classroom emotional climate.

Ho3
There is no significant influence of teachers' anxiety on classroom emotional climate. The independent variable in this hypothesis is teachers' anxiety which is categorized into three (low, moderate and high); while the dependent variable is classroom emotional climate. To test this hypothesis, classroom emotional climate from teachers' anxiety (low, moderate and high) were compared using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of teachers' anxiety on classroom emotional climate (N=589)

Teachers' anxiety	N	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Low- 1	80	34.5000	2.51577		
moderate- 2	320	35.6250	3.31946		
High - 3	200	36.8000	1.60402		
Total	600	35.8667	2.85116		
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	342.333	2	171.167	22.573*	.000
Within group	4527.000	597	7.583		
Total	4869.333	599			

* Significant at p <.05 level, df= 2, 586.

The result on Table 5 revealed that the F-value of 22.573 at p=.000. Since the p (.000) is less than p (.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This result therefore implied that, teachers' anxiety significantly influenced classroom emotional climate. Since teachers' anxiety had a significant influence on classroom emotional climate, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Teachers' anxiety on classroom emotional climate LSD

(I) Teachers' anxiety	(J) Teachers' anxiety	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	-1.12500(*)	.34421	.001
	High	-2.30000(*)	.36428	.000
moderate	Low	1.12500(*)	.34421	.001
	High	-1.17500(*)	.24822	.000
High	Low	2.30000(*)	.36428	.000
	Moderate	1.17500(*)	.24822	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The result of the analysis in Table 6 showed that teachers' whose anxiety was low were significantly different in their classroom emotional climate from those whose anxiety was either moderate or high. Also teachers' whose anxiety was moderate were significantly different from those who were high in their classroom emotional climate.

Discussion of findings

The result of the study revealed that teachers' motivation, teachers' emotion does and teachers' anxiety significantly influence classroom emotional climate. The findings is in line with the view of Keny and Mbo (2018) who explain anxiety as intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about every situation. Anxiety generally has to do with worries about known and unknown issues which the researcher considers to be one of the characteristics of an average teacher in Cross River State in particular and Nigeria in general. Nigerian teachers are faced with varied problems which have caused them persistent worries. They are worried about poor remuneration which cannot afford them to pay for their bills, rents, children fees and to meet up with other social responsibilities and poor working environment. This frustration of teachers especially classroom teachers who have additional responsibilities, is enough for them to develop non-challant behavior in the management of classroom assigned to them.

Isangedighi (2011), Umo, et al (2019) also stated that emotions are considered negative when their agitations or motivations within the organisms is associated with unpleasant experiences. It is natural that when individuals are exposed to unpleasant situations, they display the following: fear, anger, anxiety, sadness, bitterness and so on. Whereas, positive emotions can trigger pleasant experiences which can motivate or arouse the organism into meaningful reactions within the environment, positive emotion can trigger reactions like joy, happiness, love, excitement, delight and others. From the foregoing therefore, the place of emotion in classroom emotional climate by the teacher needs not be over emphasized. It therefore means that, when a teacher is exposed to negative emotions, he will be rendered ineffective in classroom emotional climate and effective if exposed to positive emotions.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

From the findings of the study it was concluded that teachers' motivation, teachers' emotion and teachers' anxiety significantly influence classroom emotional climate. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government in charge of primary level of education should endeavor to improve on teachers' welfare, promotion and retraining as these could improve their classroom emotional climate.

2. They should be a special allowance for class teachers in order to motivate them develop interest in the classes they are in charge.

3. Teachers should seek advice from therapists/psychologists on how to calm or control their emotion especially while in class.

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