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Employee Perceptions of Organizational Climate Factors in a Private School System

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Abstract

This research was undertaken to assess employee perceptual positivity of selected current and expected organizational climate factors in a private school system. A survey adapted and modified from the Charles F. Kettering Ltd. School Climate Profile was developed consisting of 11 climate factors and 55 positive statements followed by an open-ended comment section. Completed, valid responses were received from employees (*N* = 215) across four different schools. A One-Way ANOVA and a *t*-test were used to determine perceptions. Overall employee perceptual expectations of climate factors were very high in every climate factor (mean = 3.79 on a 4.00 scale), while the overall perceptions of current climate factors were high to moderate (mean = 3.08). The highest perceptions of current climate factors were attributed to respect (3.26) and communication (3.26), while the lowest factors were trust (2.85) and morale (2.90). Open-ended findings generally supported statistical findings. Spirituality and caring were perceived to be among the strongest organizational climate aspects in these schools. Resources ranked as one of the weakest aspects across all schools. Morale was not perceived to be a strong aspect in any of the schools, and was perceived to be among the weakest aspects at most schools.

Keywords: *Organizational culture, organizational climate factors, perceptual positivity*

Introduction

Researchers have defined culture and climate in different ways. One common theme in studies has been the underlying notion that climate is an apparent function or expression of organizational culture at any given moment. The use of the organizational culture concept has become more prevalent over the past 30 years and frequently is confused as being identical to organizational climate (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). They are similar in so far as both are concerned with the general workplace atmosphere, social interactions, and employee behavior within an organization. According to Griffin and Moorhead (2014, p. 516), organizational culture "usually refers to the historical context within which a situation occurs and the impact of this context on the behaviors of employees." It is the vehicle whereby “people in the organization learn and communicate what is acceptable and unacceptable in an organization—its values and norms." Organizational climate does not, however, include concerns about “values and norms” but is rather concerned with the “current atmosphere” in an organization. Organizational climate has a perceptual research base that focuses on personal perceptions and can be defined as "recurring patterns of behavior, attitudes, and feelings that characterize life in the organization; and refers to current situations in an organization and the linkages among work groups, employees, and work performance" (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014, p. 516).

Another difference between organizational climate and culture is that the study of organizational climate is founded on psychology, while organizational culture is founded on anthropology and sociology. Administrators can, therefore, more readily influence organizational climate and employee behavior (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). Furthermore, these authors stated that it is more difficult to change an organization’s culture because it has been constructed gradually over the duration of the organization’s existence and is grounded on its philosophy, beliefs, and traditions.

Stringer has pointed out how climate and culture are different. “Culture emphasizes the unspoken assumptions that underlie an organization, whereas climate focuses on the more accessible perceptions of the organization, especially how they arouse motivation and, thus, impact performance” (Stringer, 2002, p. 14). When trying to distinguish between the concepts of organizational culture and organizational climate, Payne considered that they are very different from

each other. He agreed, however, that many definitions "are easily substitutable for each other" because "they share the common ground of trying to describe and explain the relationships that exist among groups of people who share some sort of common situation/experience" (Payne, 2000, p. 166). Peterson and Spencer (1990, p. 7) have provided further clarity on the difference between culture and climate by defining climate as "the current common patterns of important dimensions of organizational life or its members' perceptions and attitudes towards those dimensions." Furthermore, they saw climate as being "more concerned with current perceptions and attitudes, whereas culture is more concerned with deeply held meanings, beliefs, and values (p. 12)."

Stolp and Smith (1995, p. 22) defined school culture as "historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and myths understood, maybe in varying degrees, by members of the school community." Likewise, Stringer divided culture into five components, namely values, beliefs, myths, traditions, and norms (Stringer, 2002). Organizational climate, on the other hand, should be understood within the greater context of an organizational culture. While these terms are not mutually exclusive, some writers often fail to differentiate clearly between them. Climate has been used to define the "subtle spirit" of a school (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 21). Organizational climate "describes people's shared perceptions" and "expectations" of an organization; whereas culture includes "not only how people feel about their organization, but the assumptions, values, and beliefs that give the organization its identity and specify its standards of behavior" (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 25).

Payne (2000, p. 166) described cultural research as "more accurate and more specific than climate research" but more difficult to "generalize from." Climate research is "more generalizable, but it is less accurate and less specific," and may "provide a useful description of a single organization and an even more useful comparison with other organizations."

According to Stringer (2002, p. 10), "Organizational climate exists objectively in the organization, but it can only be described and measured indirectly through the perceptions of the members of the organization." Organizational climate, therefore, may be understood as people's perceptions of current organizational culture. Furthermore:

> Culture is a product of the history of relationships in a school, whereas climate is defined by how people perceive those relationships in the present. (This is not to suggest people's perceptions readily change from day to day; in fact, school climate, like culture, is relatively stable). (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 27)

Organizational climate emanates from the organization's physical appearance, employees, clientele and many other experienced "cultural artifacts" (Schein, 2000). Schein's solution to the culture-climate debate is to "define climate as a cultural artifact resulting from espoused values and shared tacit assumptions." Moreover, he elaborated that,

> To understand climate fully, one must dig deeper and examine values and assumptions. In other words, to understand what goes on in an organization and why it happens in the way it does, one needs several concepts. Climate and culture, if each is carefully defined, then become two critical building blocks for organizational description and analysis. (Schein, 2000, p. xxiv)

Finally, organizational climate, according to Robbins and Judge (2013, p. 516), denotes "the shared perceptions organizational members have about their organization and work environment." This climate is generally experienced individually or collectively at an emotional level and includes such things as team spirit and feelings about priorities and success. It has also been related to workplace habits, "job satisfaction, involvement, commitment, and motivation," as well as to "higher customer satisfaction and financial performance" (Robbins & Judge, 2013, p. 516). They further elaborated that there are many interacting dimensions of climate that can lead to positive or negative experiences and behavior (p. 517).

In light of the aforementioned, it was a goal of this research to provide a description of the climate of individual organizations, while also being able to make useful comparisons between them. In this study, the author has attempted to understand employee perceptions of these "interacting

dimensions of climate," and has adopted the operational definitions of a number of terms as indicated below.

- *Organizational Culture* refers to the enduring and historically transmitted philosophy and mission ascribed to by an organization that includes its norms, values, beliefs, and traditions.
- *Organizational Climate* refers to employees currently shared perceptions of their experience working in the organization at any given time that includes impressions, attitudes, feelings, and expectations of the wider organizational culture.
- *Climate Factors* refers to individual aspects or categories of organizational culture identified and presented in such a way as to accurately elicit employee perceptions, thereby providing an overview of the current organizational climate. Such factors may be perceived positively or negatively.
- *Degree of Perceptual Positivity* refers to low-positive perception, slightly-low positive perception, slightly-high positive perception, and high-positive perception; it is determined by the cut-off point ranges on a four-point Likert Scale (*Almost Never*, *Occasionally*, *Frequently*, *Almost Always*) in the organizational climate survey.
- *Thailand Adventist Mission* (TAM) refers to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in Thailand that oversees the schools under its jurisdiction. These schools are part of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist School system, which is one of the largest parochial educational systems in the world.

Climate Dimensions (Factors)

While it is a challenge to determine the essential factors or dimensions that impact employee's motivation and performance, common sense determines that these factors would include most aspects of the work environment. Stringer (2002, p. 10) identified specific measurable and manageable behaviors that "can best be described and measured in terms of six distinct dimensions: structure, standards, responsibility, recognition, support, and commitment." Peterson and Spencer (1990, p. 8) further elaborated on the commonly examined aspects of climate as follows: "Unlike culture, the content of which cannot be easily specified, the options with climate are extensive, so it is important to identify the content of the climate one is examining."

A wide variety of aspects pertaining to organizational life can be addressed in climate studies because, as Stringer (2002, p. 14) has stated, "Although climate is a largely subjective phenomenon, we know how to measure it accurately. We also know how climates are created. Of all the factors that determine climate, the most important are the practices of the leaders of the organization." Research suggests that there is almost no limit to the number of climate aspects that can be studied. Peterson and Spencer (1990) have pointed out that such studies, depending on the purpose of the research, can be either comprehensive or focused on specific organizational dimensions. The focus of this research was on specific organizational factors.

Organizational climate instruments have been developed to indicate levels of shared employee commitment for the purpose of assisting administrators to better understand prevailing employee attitudinal perceptions. According to Ashkanasy et al. (2000, p. 8), the term organizational climate is used

> To describe configurations of attitudes and perceptions by organization members that, in combination, reflect a substantial part of the context of which they are a part and within which they work. It is usually conceived of as being structurally realist, deductive, and based on survey methods.

It must be remembered that while the "results of the survey can provide a broad characterization of school climate, no one model or instrument will accurately characterize all elements of a school's culture or climate" (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 48). It is important that any administrator endeavor to analyze an organization from as many perspectives as possible in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the organization.

This purpose of this study was to help educational administrators understand their organizational climate by providing valuable information on employee perceptions within the context of the greater organizational culture. In this study the perceptions of three groups of employees were examined, namely administrators, teachers, and staff, regarding select organizational climate factors in an effort to assess how they aligned with organizational culture. The study also sought to identify significant differences between employee perceptions of current climate factors ("what is") and their perceptions of what these factors ideally should be like ("what should be").

Hypotheses Constructed and Premise Used

The following were the working hypotheses and major premise for this research study.

- Hypothesis 1: Employees across all four TAM schools have a high-positive ($H_{1.1}$) current (what is) and/or ($H_{1.2}$) expected (what should be) perception of select school climate factors.
- Hypothesis 2: Employees within each of the four TAM schools have a high-positive ($H_{2.1}$) current (what is) and/or ($H_{2.2}$) expected (what should be) perception of select school climate factors.
- Hypothesis 3: Employees across all four TAM schools who differ according to their ($H_{3.1}$) role, ($H_{3.2}$) gender, ($H_{3.3}$) length of service, and/or ($H_{3.4}$) religion exhibit differences in their current (what is) and expected (what should be) perceptions of school climate factors.
- Hypothesis 4: Employees across all four TAM schools exhibit differences in their current (what is) and expected (what should be) perception of school climate factors.
- Major Premise: The above working hypothesis H_1 and H_2 will be supported if it can be established that school employees have a high-positive perception of the select climate factors in this study. Hypothesis H_3 and H_4 will be supported if it can be established that employees exhibit differences in organizational climate factor perceptions of 'what is' and 'what should be'.

Methodology, Instrumentation, and Data Collection

This study describes the perceptions that exist in an organization, but not why they exist. In order to achieve the research objectives, a School Climate Profile Survey provided data on the perceptions of 11 climate factors. Data analysis yielded valuable information for the research questions posed. Attitudinal perceptions arise from subjective individual employee (administrator, staff, and teacher) experiences within the organizational environment. It was assumed that an analysis of selected climate factors in this survey would provide the following useful information for school administrators.

1. Descriptive information on how current employee climate perceptions ("what is" responses) were aligned with organizational culture across and within employee role groups. This information is valuable because it may reveal potential inconsistencies of alignment.
2. Descriptive information on how current climate perceptions were aligned with expected perceptions ("what ought to be" responses) across and within employee role groups. This information is valuable because it may reveal potential misunderstanding of alignment.

The conceptual framework for this study was derived from "The Charles Kettering Ltd. School Climate Profile" (Johnson & Johnson, 1992), and the instrument used was adapted to the unique educational context of the institutions under study. Many of the particular climate factors chosen for this study are found in this Climate Profile; however, individual statements within each factor were changed or modified to reflect the unique conditions of the schools under study. The Charles F. Kettering Ltd. School Climate Profile has been used widely over the past 25 years (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 48). Another important aspect of the instrument used was the ability to make a comparison between perceptions of the current situation and expectations of what it should be, as pointed out by Peterson and Spencer (1990). "The comparison of actual and ideal views reflecting the differences between perceived reality and expectation is often the most informative contrast."

The survey population in this study refers to current actively serving administrators, teachers, and staff at four TAM schools. A total of 400 individuals were working in the year 2019. The questionnaires were distributed over the four schools to all available employees. A total of 250 respondent

participants returned their questionnaires. However, there were 35 incomplete (invalid) sets of questionnaires. As a result, a usable sample of 215 questionnaires was available for the study.

The sample size for respondents randomly selected from the population was calculated, based on Yamane's formula of respondents (Yamane, 1967), and gave a suggested number of 200 respondents selected from the population of about 400 employees.

The organizational climate factors selected for this study were the following: A. Cohesiveness, B. Morale, C. Growth, D. Trust, E. Respect, F. Caring, G. Spirituality, H. Resources, I. Conflicts, J. Communication, and K. Problems. The selection of climate factors was based on the factors identified in the aforementioned climate profile, on the uniqueness of the institutions under study, personal interest, and factors most applicable to the schools being surveyed. One of the climate factors unique to the institutions under study was "Spirituality." Historical forces and the external environment (Stinger, 2002, p. 13) are potential climate dimensions that were not addressed in this study.

For the purposes of the study, a questionnaire was used as the research instrument. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of the demographic information of the respondents. The second part consisted of statements pertaining to the organizational climate of the school. Respondents were asked to select a scale number that best described their perception of the statements regarding "what the current situation at the respondents' school was like" and "what the situation at the respondent's school should be." The respondents were asked to rate their perceptions to the questions based on a four-point Likert scale (Lozano et al., 2008). Within the rubric of organizational climate, "interview approaches, fixed-response instruments, and survey techniques are well-understood and commonly used methodologies" (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). In the third part, respondents were asked to provide open-ended comments about the strongest and weakness aspects of the organizational climate at their institution. The content of the instrument was validated judgmentally by giving it to three local experts in order to ascertain its suitability to the local situation. Back translation (translation both ways) was done to ensure the accuracy of the statements in the instrument.

Positivity of perception was determined if all climate factors statements reflected positive characteristics. The degree of perceptual positivity was determined by the extent to which the employees ranked their Likert Scale response categories (*Almost Never:* 1.00–1.75, *Occasionally:* 1.76–2.50, *Frequently:* 2.51–3.25, and *Almost Always:* 3.26–4.00). Lozano et al. (2008) have shown that four alternatives are an optimum number in a comparison type test. The reliability and validity decreases with fewer than four alternatives and the psychometric properties of the scale scarcely increase further with more than seven alternatives.

When gathering data for this study, the researcher requested permission from the TAM officers to collect data from schools directly under its jurisdiction. The survey instrument was taken before the TAM Administrative Committee for a vote of approval. The researcher also requested permission from the chief administrator of each individual school under study. Paper copies of the instrument were hand-delivered to schools and distributed as per instructions at the convenience of each school administrator. Upon completion, the researcher collected the completed instruments for data analysis.

The tabulated collected data was analyzed using SPSS software. The surveys were grouped according to role group (Administrator, Staff Member, and Teachers). The sum and mean scores were calculated for each role group. Mean scores were statistically compared by *t*-test and One-Way ANOVA. The information obtained allowed for an interpretation of how these school climate factors contributed to the degree of perceptual positivity.

Finally, the open-ended comments from the survey participants in each school were presented individually in numerical order, followed by a summary involving all the schools. Comments were categorized by climate factor and frequency to determine the strongest and the weakest aspects. These perceptions were used to complement other comparisons across schools.

Results and Discussion

Demographic information (Table 1) shows a breakdown of sample participants by schools. The findings showed that when combined, employees across all four TAM schools had a high-positive ($H_{1.1}$) current ("what is", Mean = 3.08) and/or ($H_{1.2}$) expected ("what should be", Mean = 3.79) perception of selected school climate factors. These scores failed to indicate support for Hypothesis 1.1; however, Hypothesis 1.2 was supported.

Findings also show that employees within each of the four TAM schools had a high-positive ($H_{2.1}$) current ("what is", Means = 2.75 to 3.62) and/or ($H_{2.2}$) expected ("what should be", Means = 3.56 to 3.87) perception of select school climate factors. These findings partially supported Hypothesis 2.1. School 3 showed higher levels of positive perceptions of the current situation than the other schools. These findings provided support for Hypothesis 2.2. There were no differences in organizational climate perceptions regarding 'what should be'.

Table 1. Demographic Information

Variable	Sample (*N*)	Percentage (%)	Variable	Sample (*N*)	Percentage (%)
School	23	10.7	**Years of Service**		
School A	118	54.9	< 2 years	61	28.4
School B	44	20.5	3–4 years	43	20.0
School C	30	14.0	5–6 years	20	9.3
School D			7–8 years	14	6.5
Role			9–10 years	12	5.6
Staff Member	34	15.8	≥ 10 years	65	30.2
Teacher	171	79.5	**Religion**		
Administrator	10	4.7	Adventist (SDA)	169	78.6
Gender			Other Christian	10	4.7
Male	78	36.3	Buddhist	32	14.9
Female	137	63.7	Other	4	1.9

Findings showed that employees across all four TAM schools differed according to their ($H_{3.1}$) role, ($H_{3.2}$) gender, ($H_{3.3}$) length of service, and/or ($H_{3.4}$) religion. They exhibited differences in their current (what is) and expected (what should be) perceptions of school climate factors. Analysis showed their current perceptions partially supported Hypothesis $H_{3.1}$ (Role) ($p < .05$).

Table 2. Organizational Climate Compared by Role

Organizational Climate Factor	Current Situation		What Should Be	
	F	*p*	*F*	*p*
Cohesiveness	4.24*	.02	2.33	.10
Morale	3.07*	.05	1.66	.19
Growth	1.88	.16	0.93	.40
Trust	3.79*	.02	0.89	.41
Respect	5.93**	.00	1.23	.30
Caring	3.48*	.03	1.24	.29
Spirituality	2.15	.12	0.18	.84
Resources	1.27	.28	0.79	.46
Conflict	1.53	.22	0.63	.53
Communication	2.30	.10	0.96	.38
Problem	2.63	.07	3.65*	.03

Note. * mean difference is significant at the .05 level; ** mean difference is significant at the .01 level

Differences in the perceived current organizational climate factors by Role were related to respect, cohesiveness, morale, trust, and caring (Table 2). Staff members reported less perceptual positivity toward the selected current organizational climate factors than teachers and administrators ($p < .05$). This finding should be studied to find out whether there may be any intentional or unintentional organizational prejudice toward staff members. Statistical analysis, however, showed no difference in organizational climate perceptions of "what should be" by Role, and therefore, did not support Hypothesis $H_{3.1.}$

No significant differences were observed between Male and Female employees (Hypothesis 3.2, gender) in most of the perceived current organizational climate category factors. However, there was a difference in the "resources" factor of perceived organizational climate factors among employees by gender. Male employees had a higher perception of the organizational climate resources. This, again, is an unexpected finding with no apparent reason for it. A deeper study may reveal that there are more males in leadership or resource rich positions, or it may reveal a gender bias in the allocation of resources. Statistical analysis, however, showed no difference in organizational climate perceptions of "what should be" by gender. The findings regarding these perceptions, therefore, do not support Hypothesis $H_{3.2}$ (gender). The findings also did not support Hypothesis 3.3 (years of service). The results of statistical analysis showed no differences in organizational climate perceptions for both "what is" and "what should be" based on years of service.

Table 3. Organizational Climate Compared by Religion

Organizational Climate Factors	Current Situation		What Should Be	
	F	***p***	***F***	***p***
Cohesiveness	1.31	.272	3.72*	.012
Morale	1.54	.206	3.85*	.010
Growth	1.21	.308	3.68*	.013
Trust	0.67	.573	2.82*	.040
Respect	2.83*	.039	1.77	.154
Caring	1.50	.329	1.98	.118
Spirituality	2.20	.090	6.27**	.000
Resources	5.27**	.002	2.59	.054
Conflict	0.95	.418	2.27	.081
Communication	3.17*	.025	2.57	.055
Problem Solving	1.59	.192	0.96	.413

Note. * mean difference is significant at the .05 level; ** mean difference is significant at the .01 level

The findings partially supported Hypothesis 3.4 (Religion). Differences in organizational climate factor perceptions of the current situation were noted by religion relating to respect, resources, and communication (Table 3); and in the "what should be" perceptions of organizational climate by religion relating to cohesiveness, morale, growth, trust, and spirituality. The current perceptions of the organizational climate factors of respect and resources analyzed against employee religion showed SDA employees reporting higher scores in both categories ($p < .05$) compared with Buddhist employees, as shown in Table 3 above.

These findings deserve a deeper analysis in the category of religion involving the climate factors of respect and resources. The finding on respect is difficult to understand without further study. A simple, and perhaps superficial, reason for the perceptual difference toward resources may be due to SDA employee perceptions being modified by a better understanding and acceptance of the financial constraints on organizations and their mission. Buddhist employees, however, may not be as knowledgeable or as accepting of such perspectives. It is important for school administrators to examine this factor in more detail to try to remedy this perception. Buddhist employees provide

essential services to these organizations. Administrators should, therefore, strive to pay more attention to caring for minority Buddhist employee needs. This may be done through improved means of communication, inclusive resource allocation, and better support.

Perceptions relating to the expectation of "what should be" relating to the climate factors of cohesiveness, morale, growth, trust, and spiritualty by employee religion showed that SDA and Other Christian employees reported higher perception levels in cohesiveness, morale, growth, trust, and spiritualty than Buddhist employees ($p < .05$).

Findings showed that employees across all four TAM schools exhibited differences in current (what is) and expected (what should be) perceptions of school climate factors. Statistical findings supported Hypothesis 4 (Table 4).

Table 4. Differences between Current Situation and the Expectation of Organizational Climate

Organizational Climate Factors	Current Situation		What Should Be			
	Mean	***SD***	**Mean**	***SD***	***t***	***p***
Cohesiveness	3.17	0.57	3.81	0.39	-15.47	.00
Morale	2.90	0.61	3.75	0.42	-18.98	.00
Growth	2.94	0.67	3.77	0.46	-17.26	.00
Trust	2.85	0.67	3.71	0.50	-18.39	.00
Respect	3.26	0.56	3.82	0.41	-14.69	.00
Caring	3.17	0.59	3.80	0.42	-15.15	.00
Spirituality	3.19	0.58	3.82	0.42	-15.42	.00
Resources	3.10	0.59	3.83	0.41	-17.16	.00
Conflict	3.00	0.70	3.79	0.44	-15.35	.00
Communication	3.26	0.57	3.82	0.45	-13.87	.00
Problem Solving	3.06	0.68	3.81	0.45	-15.05	.00
Average	**3.08**		**3.79**			

Legend: Almost Never: 1.00–1.75, Occasionally: 1.76–2.50, Frequently: 2.51–3.25, Almost Always: 3.26–4.00

Note. * mean difference is significant at the .05 level; ** mean difference is significant at the .01 level

The findings that the overall perception of the current situation at schools was slightly positive (Likert scores in *Frequently* territory, or 2.51 to 3.25) may be regarded as satisfactory, and that it indicated a relatively good positivity toward organizational climate factors. The overall combined perception of all four schools regarding expectations was a high-positive and, therefore was a good indicator that employees generally understood that there is always room to improve and do better.

Climate factor scores revealed that morale (Schools 1, 2, and 4), trust (Schools 1, 2, 3, and 4), resources (Schools 1, 3, and 4), and growth (Schools 2 and 4) were perceived to be among the lowest climate factors. These findings should be of concern to stakeholders and administrators because they are all essential components of the educational process. Each of these factors should be taken under consideration for improvement.

Climate factor scores revealed that respect (Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4), communication (Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4), and cohesiveness (Schools 3 and 4) were perceived to be among the strongest aspects of their organizational climates. There is always a danger, however, that if the aforementioned lowest climate factor perceptions are not addressed, they may erode or weaken the strongest climate factor perceptions over time.

Open-ended comments regarding employee perceptions of the strongest and weakest aspects of their school climate revealed the following:

1. The climate factor "Spirituality" was perceived by some respondents at Schools 1, 2, 4 as the strongest aspect of their school climate. In School number 3, "Spirituality" ranked as the fourth

strongest aspect, which may be of interest or concern to administrators. Furthermore, "Spirituality" did not feature in any school's perceptions of its weakest aspects.

2. The school climate factor "Caring" was perceived to be one of the strongest aspects by all schools; furthermore, "Caring" did not feature in any school's perceptions of its weakest aspects.
3. The school climate factor "Cohesiveness" ranked as the strongest aspect in Schools 3, and one of the strongest aspects in Schools 2 and 4. It should be noted, however, that "Cohesiveness" was also perceived to be among the weakest aspects by some observers in Schools 2 and 4, which may indicate contrasting or ambivalent perceptions of this climate factor that may be of interest or concern to administrators. Furthermore, the major negative perception expressed in School 4 regarding this factor was a group or clique mentality.
4. The school climate factor "Communication" was perceived to be a strong aspect by School 2 only; however, it was also perceived to be a weak aspect by Schools 2 and 4. This may indicate contrasting or ambivalent perceptions of this climate factor, which may be of interest or concern to administrators. Negative perceptions for School 4 regarding this factor primarily had to do with inadequate communication between administrators and teachers/staff.
5. The school climate factor "Resources" ranked as one of the weakest aspects across all schools, which may be of interest or concern to administrators. In Schools 1 and 4, a negative spread between positive and negative perceptions of this factor indicates a potential area of interest to administrators. The negative perceptions in School 4 regarding resources primarily had to do with insufficient space or room. School 3 shows potentially contrasting or ambivalent perceptions of resources, which may be of concern to administrators. Furthermore, the negative perceptions in School 4 regarding resources primarily had to do with the large number of students, along with insufficient teachers and classroom space.
6. The school climate factor "Morale" was not perceived to be a strong aspect in any of the schools; it was perceived to be among the weakest aspects at Schools 1, 2, and 3, which may be of interest or concern to administrators. Morale may be a potential area of interest to administrators in School 3, as negative perceptions in this factor primarily had to do with low salaries and insufficient benefits.
7. Employees at School 4 indicated that they perceived the strongest aspects of their school climate to be a family-like community with a high degree of harmonious cooperation, care, and spirituality.
8. Comments from employees at School 3 indicated that they perceived the strongest aspects of their school climate to be a family-like community, with a high degree of harmonious cooperation and a strong appreciation for their environment.

The findings in the open-ended comments indicate that spirituality was perceived to be among strongest factors in most schools, and that caring was perceived to be one of the strongest in all schools. This should be commended, insofar as the overall employee perception corresponds favorably with the organizational culture (mission and philosophy) at TAM schools. The findings that cohesiveness and communication featured as both strong and weak climate perceptions may be of concern. Of greater concern is the perception that resources ranked as one of the weakest aspects across all schools. Furthermore, it is should be of great concern that morale was not perceived to be a strong aspect in any of the schools, and was perceived to be among the weakest aspects at most schools. These open-ended findings appear to generally support the findings based on statistical analysis.

Limitations and Implications

An inability to make a comparative analysis between biographical categories at each of the participating schools for this study was a limiting factor due to time constraints. Inability to receive surveys back from two schools within the allocated time period was another limiting factor. It is recommended that the format of the survey in future studies be slightly modified to make it more

user friendly by more clearly explaining, separating and identifying the "what is" and "what should be" columns. It is recommended that the survey be simplified with more direct statements for easier understanding and translation in future editions. Furthermore, the open-ended section of the survey can be modified to make it easier and simpler, thereby encouraging more respondent participation. It is recommended that miscellaneous comments from the open-ended section be evaluated for potential new factors to be included in future surveys. Future studies may include other stakeholders, such as board members and parents.

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