

1986

A Study of the Organizational Climate of Effingham High School as Perceived by the Faculty

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A Study of the Organizational Climate
Of Effingham High School As Perceived By the Faculty
(TITLE)

BY
Calvin R. Kirk

FIELD STUDY
THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

December 1, 1986
DATE

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ABSTRACT

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this field study was to determine how the faculty at Effingham High School in Effingham, Illinois, perceived the organizational climate of the school.

As first year assistant principal of the high school, the researcher saw the need to understand the personality of the organization with which he worked. The researcher viewed teacher perceptions of the school's organizational climate as a meaningful beginning point for initiating an ongoing project to build a positive school climate at Effingham High School.

Procedure

The Organizational Climate Index constituted the instrument used to gather faculty perceptions of the organizational climate. The instrument was developed by George Stern and Associates of Syracuse University. The instrument was developed on the social theory of H.A. Murray. The data for the study is based on a sample of forty-five teachers in the Effingham High School using the Organizational Climate Index. The results of the survey were tabulated by Evaluation Research Associates of Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York.

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One explains why the researcher selected the specific question addressed by the study. Chapter Two describes the rationale for the study and a review of the research and literature regarding organizational climate. Chapter Three discusses the general design of the study. The Organizational Climate Index is described, along with information on the administration of the survey. Chapter Three also summarizes the general characteristics of the school. Chapter Four describes the results of the survey along with conclusions. The chapter shows nine tables pertaining to the factors scored by the results of the survey. Chapter Five summarizes the study and lists eleven specific recommendations by the researcher pertaining to the organizational climate as perceived by the faculty of Effingham High School.

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Chapter I

Overview of the Problem

Introduction

Traditionally, schools have attempted to create learning environments which have been responsive to the changing structures in education and which manifested an awareness of major social concerns present within society. Schools should exist as centers of learning based upon the values of self-actualization and intellectual curiosity. When schools are places where people can live together without fear of each other, and learning can be based on a creative exchange of experience and ideas, then there is a chance that those who go from schools to other places in our society will have an increasing desire to live what they have learned.¹

In a time when educational reform is sweeping our nation, school administrators must realize how change may be initiated in schools. Often, educational innovation fails because it is attempted by people who do not understand the organizational climate of a school. They are too simplistic, not aware of all the people who are touched by the change and which historical traditions resist the change.²

Over the past twenty-five years, many attempts have been made to assess the organizational climate of schools or the interaction between satisfaction and productivity for

groups and individuals who live and work in the school environment. Teachers, administrators, non certified staff, and citizens have all been surveyed through many different instruments for their perceptions of organizational climate.

Much concern is evidenced today over the growing perceptions that our schools are not effective in educating children. Assessing the organizational climate of the school is one way to find areas in the school that need to be improved so a healthier atmosphere for learning is present. A positive school climate can make it possible for important goals, such as academic learning, social development, and curriculum improvement to be worked toward productively.

At Effingham, Illinois, High School, the question has been raised regarding how the faculty would perceive the organizational climate of the school if assessed. The researcher, who is in the first year as assistant principal of the school, has considered that an organizational climate assessment, as perceived by the faculty, is a useful systematic means to initiate an on going project of improving the organizational climate of the school.

The rationale for utilizing teacher perceptions of the organizational climate of Effingham High School is predicated on the belief that teachers' perceptions provide a meaningful starting point for the assessment and improvement of climate.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher believes that to be an effective administrator, one must understand the personality of the organization with which he is working. Building a positive climate can produce better learning as well as better feelings. A first step in building a positive climate is to assess the faculty perceptions of the existing climate. Therefore, rather than assuming various descriptions by various individuals of the organizational climate of Effingham High School, the researcher initiated an assessment of the climate based on a review of school climate research. The specific question addressed by this study is: How is the organizational climate perceived by the faculty?

Limitations of the Study

A major limitation of this study is relying entirely on teacher input as the reference point for assessing the organizational climate of Effingham High School. Relying on perceptual data as opposed to outcome measures, such as student achievement, is also a limitation. Despite limitations, however, the researcher believes that faculty perceptions of the school's organizational climate is a meaningful beginning point for initiating an on going project to build a positive school climate at Effingham High School.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the terms school climate and organizational climate have been viewed interchangeably. The definition of school climate was the interaction between satisfaction and productivity for groups and individuals who live and work in the school environment. Satisfaction addressed morale, feelings, or happiness. Productivity considered attainment, achievement, and task accomplishment. The basis of this definition comes from the work of H.A. Murray and his associates (1938).³

Chapter II

Rationale, Related Literature and Research

Rationale

This research is based on the premise that an initial step in initiating changes for improvement in a school begins with seeking teacher input. This study accepts past research on organizational climate as valid and uses the Organizational Climate Index, constructed by George G. Stern and Associates, as a survey instrument to measure organizational climate. Stern and Associates constructed the instrument based upon the social theory work of H.A. Murray.⁴

In essence, the rationale of this study is that assessing the faculty perceptions of the organizational climate will provide an initial starting point in making change for improvement at Effingham High School. The researcher plans to make this study the initial step in an ongoing project to promote a positive climate at Effingham High School.

Related Literature and Research

As far back as 1935, Thomas Wade's study attempted to develop a convenient and usable scale for measuring the tangible elements of the secondary school as a part of the students' environment. Wade's scale was later developed and

used to show the degree to which the presence or absence of certain factors affected the student, based on the fundamental assumption that all aspects of the school environment make their contribution.⁵

Numerous attempts to study organizational climate have been made. Cornell (1955) defined organizational climate as follows:

... a delicate blending of interpretations (or perceptions as a social psychologist would call it) by persons in the organizations of their jobs or roles in relationship to others and their interpretations of the roles of others in the organization.⁶

Halpin and Croft (1963) used this analogy:

"personality is to the individual what organizational climate is to the organization."⁷

From their studies, Halpin and Croft developed the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire, a 64 item instrument for assessing the organizational climate of schools. Working under a grant from the United States Office of Education, Halpin and Croft carried out what they called an exploratory inquiry. Because it was a pioneer study, the investigators felt it desirable to carve out an area of research from virtually uncharted territory and leave the rest to others who would follow. They chose, first, to concentrate on the impact of the behavior of teachers and the principal on the organizational climate of

schools. Secondly, they developed the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire, an adaptation of the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, developed by Hemphill and Coons of Ohio State University.⁸

The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire study grew out of the intuitive notion that there are differences in climates between and among schools, and that these differences can be sensed as one moves from school to school. In broad terms, Halpin and Croft were attempting to establish for the school organization a means of determining the climate. In discussing their work, the researchers pointed out they were mapping roughly the same domain of inquiry that other investigators have described as morale, but that they were seeking to conceptualize or map this domain in a way which would provide more heuristic value to the concept.⁹

Halpin and Croft described their study by saying, "Even as one can regard minds as open or closed, so we can view organizational climates. We can describe the open climate as marked by functional flexibility, and the closed climate as distinguished by functional rigidity."¹⁰ The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire is one of the best known and widely used instruments to assess the organizational climate of schools.

Katz and Kahn (1966) viewed climate as the resultant of a number of factors which are reflected in the "total culture" of an organization. They concluded: "The climate

or culture of the system reflects both the norms and the values of the formal system and the reinterpretation of the informal system. Organizational climate reflects also the history of the internal and external struggles, the types of people the organization attracts, its work processes and physical layout, the modes of communication and the exercise of authority within the system."¹¹

Tagiuri (1968) defined climate and atmosphere as summary concepts dealing with the total environmental quality within an organization. According to Tagiuri, dimensions of an environment include its ecology (the physical and material aspects), its milieu (the social dimension concerned with the presence of persons and groups), its social system (the social dimension concerned with the patterned relationships of persons and groups), and its culture (the social dimension concerned with belief systems, values, cognitive structures, and meaning). Words that refer to concepts more specific than environment include field, behavior setting, situation, conditions, and circumstances.¹²

Insel and Moos (1974) developed a similar categorization device to conceptualize the human environment. Their delineation of human environments, called social ecology, involves human interactions with physical and social dimensions of the environment. In their system, climate and psychosocial characteristics are one of six approaches to the human environment. Others include

ecological factors, behavior settings, organizational structure, average personal characteristics of individuals within the environment and functional dimensions of specific situations.¹³

A positive school climate is perhaps the single most important expression of educational leadership, as the British study, Fifteen Thousand Hours, makes clear. Rutter (1980) concludes that the differences from school to school, according to this study, center upon the principal's ability to build a supportive, challenging, and positive school climate.¹⁴

Although the use of the term climate (as a label for a concern with both productivity and satisfaction as well as the relationships which exist between these two dimensions) does not appear in the research literature until the mid 1950's, the development of climate as a concept separate from morale is based on the work of H.A. Murray during the 1930's. Murray described behavior as "a function of the relationship between the person and the environment." Both the person and the environment have needs or expectations; Murray described this relationship as being that which exists between the "needs" of the individual and the "press" (organizational needs and expectations) of the environment.¹⁵

Working independently of Halpin, George Stern developed a different approach to the description and measurement of organizational climate. Stern's early interest was in human

personality. Early on, Stern, in dealing with college students, noted that colleges are distinctively dissimilar in many significant ways. Stern, like Halpin, a psychologist, tended to see an analogy between human personality and the personality of the institution and drew upon the work of Murray's need-press theory.¹⁶

Stern developed the Activities Index which dealt with the needs of individuals, and the College Characteristics Index, which proved the organizational press as experienced by persons in the organization. Over the years, these two questionnaires have been used on a number of campuses where they have helped researchers assess the organizational climate in colleges.¹⁷

Stern and Steinhoff (1965) developed an adaptation of the College Characteristics Index, applicable to schools and other organizations, called the Organizational Climate Index, which was first used to study the public schools in Syracuse, New York. Stern, for many years, was a professor at Syracuse University until his death a few years ago.

The Organizational Climate Index was originally developed with 300 statements that would apply to schools. It is now available in an eighty statement shortened form. Teachers are asked to make statements true or false, as applicable to their schools. Using the Organizational Climate Index, the two key dimensions which describe the organizational climate of a school are development press and control press. The Organizational Climate Index score of a

school can be described in terms of the dimensions or with regard to the data from other schools.¹⁸

While the issue can be confusing because researchers have not agreed on a common definition of school organizational climate, there is much agreement that schools do possess something called climate. Some researchers have focused on productivity or achievement. A second group has sought to equate climate and morale. Yet, a third group has adopted a definition parallel to that used in research about social organizations. For the most part, this definition has been based on the work of Murray and his associates.¹⁹

Based on a review of the literature and research pertaining to organizational climate, one can see that many perceptions exist. The criterion measure for this study, the Organizational Climate Index, was developed on the social theory of H.A. Murray by George Stern and Associates at Syracuse University.

It is hoped that this instrument will allow the researcher to evaluate and study the organizational climate of Effingham High School so that sound educational improvements can be made in the school.

Chapter III

Design of the Study

General Design of the Study

This is a field survey where data was collected in a non-laboratory environment without any manipulation of the independent variable. The independent variable is the organizational climate performance as perceived by the teachers at Effingham High School. The dependent variable is the first and second order factors developed by the survey. The survey instrument, Organizational Climate Index (Appendix A) is a general instrument that is used to characterize the climate of a wide variety of institutionalized work settings.

Six first order school work environment scores and two second order scores are produced through use of the instrument. First order factors are Intellectual Climate, Achievement Standards, Personal Dignity, Organizational Effectiveness, Orderliness, and Impulse Control. The six first order factors combine to produce two second order factors. They are Development Press and Task Effectiveness.

The six first order scores are listed on the following pages. The definition of each score is followed by a list of need scales from which the score was originally derived.

1. Intellectual Climate

Schools with high scores on this factor have environments that are perceived as being conducive to scholarly interests in the humanities, arts and sciences. Staff and physical plant are seen to be facilitative of these interests and the general work atmosphere is characterized by intellectual activities and pursuits.

(Ego Achievement, Exhibitionism, Fantasied Achievement, Humanities/Social Science, Nurturance, Reflectiveness, Science Sensuality, Understanding)

2. Achievement Standards

Environments with high scores on this factor are perceived to stress high standards of personal achievement. Tasks are successfully completed and high levels of motivation and energy are maintained. Recognition is given for work of good quality and quantity and the staff is expected to achieve at the highest levels.

(Achievement, Counteraction, Ego Achievement, Emotionality, Energy)

3. Personal Dignity

Organizational climates scoring high on this factor respect the integrity of the individual

and provide a supportive environment that would closely approximate the needs of more dependent teachers. There is a sense of fair play and openness in the working environment.

(Assurance, Affiliation, Blame Avoidance, Conjunctivity, Tolerance, Objectivity, Supplication)

4. Organizational Effectiveness

Schools with high scores on this factor have work environments that encourage and facilitate the effective performance of tasks. Work programs are planned and well-organized, and people work together effectively to meet organizational objectives.

(Achievement, Adaptability, Blame Avoidance, Conjunctivity, Deference, Energy, Order, Practicalness)

5. Orderliness

High scores on this factor are indicative of a press for organizational structure and procedural orderliness. Neatness counts, and there are pressures to conform to a defined norm of personal appearance and institutional image. There are set procedures, and teachers are expected to follow them.

(Sameness, Conjunctivity, Harm Avoidance, Deliberation, Narcissism, Order)

6. Impulse Control

High scores on this factor imply a great deal of constraint and organizational restrictiveness in the work environment. There is little opportunity for personal expression or for any form of impulsive behavior.

(Non-Affiliation, Inferiority Avoidance, Deliberation, Work, Prudishness)

The six first order environmental dimensions combine to produce second order area scores. These area scores are defined below. The factors that contribute to each area score are listed after the area description.

Area I - Development

Schools with high scores on Development ~~Press~~ are characterized by organizational environments that are supportive of intellectual and interpersonal forms of activity. The environments are intellectually stimulating, supportive, set high standards for achievement, and do not inhibit personal expression.

(Intellectual Climate, Achievement Standards, Personal Dignity, Impulse Control)

Area II - Task Effectiveness

High scores on Area II are indicative of an organizational environment that emphasizes high levels of orderliness and structure. The

environment is work oriented, rather than people oriented. (Organization Effectiveness, Orderliness)²⁰

Sample and Population

This study is based on a sample of forty-five teachers in the Effingham High School. All teachers were present when the instrument was administered. One survey became void due to invalid responses to questions. Specifically, ninety-seven percent of the school's teachers were included in the survey results. Since virtually all of the teachers participated in the survey, the issue of randomness does not apply. The high response rate also gives credence to a representative sample. Implications of this study for other schools would largely depend upon characteristics of the sample and the population to which one would be inferring.

Effingham High School is one of nine attendance centers compiling Effingham Unit District 40. It is the only senior high school in the district. Effingham is primarily a rural community with a population of 11,200. The current high school, built in 1939 with an addition built in 1964, houses the 850 students (9-12). All the students and adults in the school are white with a mix of Protestants and Catholics. Most staff members live in the community of Effingham.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The Organizational Climate Index constituted the norm-referenced measure used to solicit teachers perceptions of the organizational climate of Effingham High School. Dr. George Stern of Syracuse University and his associates developed the Organizational Climate Index. The instrument has undergone factor analyses which has yielded a number of first and second order scores which are most commonly reported for the index. The Organizational Climate Index (short form) contains 80 items. A "true" or "false" response is required for each item. Separate measurements have been made for elementary, junior, and senior high school climates. Because of the general nature of the Organizational Climate Index, different institutional types tend to elicit slightly different factor structures. Reliabilities (Appendix B) have been elicited for school settings. The Organizational Climate Index is presented as Appendix A.

The data was collected September 5, 1986. The surveys were completed at the teachers' leisure on that day.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics in the form of norm referenced interpretations are the basis of data reporting. The data was analyzed by the mean score and standard deviation of each factor compared to the norm mean score and standard

deviation. So that more specificity could be added to the results, the scores were compared to not only all schools field tested, but also to senior high schools and rural schools. The Organizational Climate Index was scored by Evaluation Research Associates at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York.

Chapter IV

Results and Conclusions

Introduction

The mean scores and standard deviation for the six first order factors and two second order factors for Effingham High School compared to all schools, senior high schools, and rural schools are presented in the tables ahead. Separately presented and following each table will be conclusions.

TABLE 1
FACTOR #1 - Intellectual Climate

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	5.4914	2.8046
Senior High Schools (n=353)	5.496	2.903
Rural Schools (n=885)	4.66	2.708
Effingham High School	3.42	1.99

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored well below the mean scores for all types of schools previously field tested. The 1.99 standard deviation was also lower than for all types of schools.

The work environment at Effingham High School is perceived to be very low in regard to the Intellectual Climate. Typically, a low score for this factor would indicate that high expectations with regard to personal status are not held for individuals in the workplace. Spiritual self-satisfaction is not sought in an environment with low intellectual climate. The general work atmosphere is not characterized by intellectual activities and pursuits.

The low score is indicative of a negative perception of intellectual climate in Effingham High School. Teachers do not view the climate conducive to scholarly interests in the humanities, arts, and sciences.

TABLE 2
FACTOR #2 - Achievement Standards

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	6.4642	2.7018
Senior High Schools (n=353)	5.909	2.621
Rural Schools (n=885)	6.311	2.871
Effingham High School	6.69	1.92

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored above the mean scores for all schools, senior high schools, and rural schools. The

1.92 standard deviation was lower than the scores for all other types of schools.

The work environment at Effingham High School is perceived to be characterized by beehive-like activity. The work pace is not slow or sluggish. In this kind of environment, individuals are hardworking and dedicated to doing quality work. The environment in the school is also perceived to be marked by intense, open emotional expression. High levels of motivation are maintained and a "can-do" mentality is promoted. Individuals are encouraged to take up challenges and to be critical of others' decisions which affect them.

The 6.69 score indicates that the teachers at Effingham High School perceive the achievement standards to be higher than for all other types of schools listed in the table. A higher than average score indicates a positive conclusion for Factor Two.

TABLE 3
FACTOR #3 - Personal Dignity

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	6.4554	2.8370
Senior High Schools (n=353)	6.506	2.720
Rural Schools (n=885)	5.952	2.817
Effingham High School	6.51	2.54

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored slightly above the mean scores for all schools, senior high schools, and rural schools. Also, the 2.54 standard deviation was below the mean for all other types of schools previously field tested.

The organizational climate of the school tends to respect the integrity of the individual and provides a supportive environment. The environment is marked by a sense of fair play and openness. Teachers perceive the school to be a friendly, groupish environment where individual arrogance and hostility are suppressed.

The environment is perceived to be organized, efficient, and purposeful which reflects a high degree of thoughtful planning. Individuals have confidence in their ability and in others' ability to assess situations objectively. High scores in this factor represent an

environment characterized by mutual respect and tolerance. People depend on one another for emotional support, assistance and protection.

The fact that Effingham High School scored slightly above the mean scores for all school types, indicates a positive sense of personal dignity is maintained as perceived by the teachers.

TABLE 4

FACTOR #4 - Organizational Effectiveness

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	6.5140	2.6913
Senior High Schools (n=353)	6.099	2.720
Rural Schools (n=885)	6.293	2.817
Effingham High	6.96	2.54

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored well above the mean scores in all types of schools for Factor 4, Organizational Effectiveness. The 2.54 standard deviation was lower than the scores for all other types of schools previously field tested.

A high score for Organizational Effectiveness reflects an environment where sanctions are taken for making mis-

takes. Individuals learn to deal with criticism of others because their actions are subject to evaluation and review.

This environment has individuals who are conscious of rank and people encourage that rank be acknowledged. Practical and conventional activities with a high degree of productivity are emphasized. More abstract and speculative undertakings have little or no interest.

The 6.96 score indicates that teachers perceive a high degree of organizational effectiveness in the workplace. Individuals tend to think the organization is productive and working smoothly toward common goals in an effective manner. Therefore, in conclusion, one would rate the school positively for this factor.

TABLE 5
FACTOR #5 - Orderliness

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	5.3121	2.4865
Senior High Schools (n=353)	5.671	2.499
Rural Schools (n=885)	4.918	2.244
Effingham High School	5.09	2.03

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored above the mean score for rural schools for Factor 5, Orderliness. However, when

considering all schools and more specifically, senior high schools, Effingham High School scored below the mean. The 2.03 standard deviation was lower than the mean scores for all school types.

The low score on the Orderliness Factor indicates there is little preoccupation with neatness and meticulous attention to detail. The environment is characterized by messiness, neglect, and disarray. Little attention is paid to personal charm, beauty, and appearance. Little concern is given to the impression one makes on others. Teachers perceive the environment to be one where there is little pressure to conform to a defined norm of institutional image.

The 5.09 score indicates that teachers perceive less than average degree of orderliness in the workplace. This score also reflects a somewhat negative conclusion about the workplace.

TABLE 6
FACTOR #6 - Impulse Control

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	5.4535	2.3349
Senior High Schools (n=353)	6.097	2.29
Rural Schools (n=885)	5.546	2.269
Effingham High School	4.87	2.27

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored lower than the mean scores for all other school types. However, a lower score for Factor 6 indicates a better score. The 2.27 standard deviation was very comparable to the other school types.

Low scores on this factor imply little constraint and organizational restrictiveness in the climate. The environment is not marked by a "down to business" attitude, nor is it persistently serious. Individuals do not avoid attention and the workplace is not marked by an air of personal privacy. The atmosphere is not restrained or inhibited with regard to sex. Social detachment is discouraged and individuals work together in a relaxed atmosphere but not to the point where tasks are not completed effectively.

The low Impulse Control score would reflect somewhat positively for Effingham High School. Teachers perceive the school to be a friendly, social workplace where individuals can have fun while still tending to business.

TABLE 7
SECOND ORDER FACTOR #1 - Development Press

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	22.9575	8.5529
Senior High Schools (n=353)	21.814	8.672
Rural Schools (n=885)	21.377	8.868
Effingham High School	21.76	6.45

Conclusions

Effingham High School fell slightly below the mean score for all types of schools, except rural schools. The standard deviation was considerably lower than all school types, at 6.45. Development Press is derived from the scores in the factors of Intellectual Climate, Achievement Standards, Personal Dignity, and Impulse Control.

Since it cannot be considered that Effingham High School recorded a high score for this factor, it is concluded that the workplace is not one that is especially intellectually stimulating or characterized by interpersonal forms of activity. However, since the 21.76 score is close

to the average, it cannot be concluded the school is completely without high marks, especially in the factors of Achievement Standards and Personal Dignity.

Since the score is close to other schools previously field tested, it is derived because of the low score recorded in the Factor of Intellectual Climate, the overall score was pulled down negatively. This indicates in the other three factors used to derive the total score, Effingham High School scored appreciably well.

TABLE 8

SECOND ORDER FACTOR # 2 - Task Effectiveness

School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
All Schools (n=3939)	11.8268	4.4593
Senior High Schools (n=353)	11.763	4.530
Rural Schools (n=885)	11.206	4.474
Effingham High School	12.04	3.94

Conclusions

Effingham High School scored above the mean scores for all schools, senior high schools, and rural schools. The 3.94 standard deviation was considerably below the mean for all types of schools. Task Effectiveness is derived from the Factors of Organizational Effectiveness and Orderliness.

The high score in this factor is indicative of an environment where the individuals are work-oriented and believe in organizational structure. The workplace is characterized by encouragement of effective performance and people work together to meet organizational objectives.

The 12.04 score indicates a positive overall perception of the Task Effectiveness factor in the overall organizational climate.

TABLE 9
CONCLUSIONS FOR ALL FACTORS

Factor	Positive Result	Negative Result	Mixed Result
Intellectual Climate		x	
Achievement Standards	x		
Personal Dignity	x		
Organizational Effectiveness	x		
Orderliness		x	
Impulse Control	x		
Development Press			x
Task Effectiveness	x		

General Conclusions of Results

Effingham High School showed positive scores in five of the eight total factors. Two scores are considered negatively, with one result being considered mixed. Overall, this would initially indicate that the teachers at Effingham High School perceive the organizational climate favorably. It also indicates there are definite areas of strength and weaknesses in the organizational climate of the school.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The researcher conducted this study to determine how the faculty at Effingham, Illinois, High School would perceive the organizational climate. The study accepts the validity of past research concerning the organizational climate of schools.

The Organizational Climate Index, constructed by Dr. George Stern and Associates of Syracuse University, serves as the criterion measure for this study. The index was developed on the social theory of Dr. H. A. Murray.

The data for the study was collected on September 5, 1986. Teachers at Effingham High School completed the instrument at their leisure on that day. Ninety-seven percent of the school's teachers responded accurately to the instrument. One instrument response was voided due to invalid responses. More specifically, the study is based on a sample of forty-five teachers.

The eighty items on the Organizational Climate Index were scored and tabulated by Evaluation Research Associates at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York. Six first order school work environment scores and two second order scores are produced through the scoring of the instrument. Presented in this study are the mean scores of all schools,

senior high schools and rural schools compared to Effingham High School scores. Also provided is the standard deviation for all types of schools previously field tested. Each factor is scored along with the conclusions of the researcher.

This chapter offers the recommendations of the researcher based upon the conclusions of each factor analyzed. The researcher believes the faculty perceptions of the organizational climate is a meaningful starting point for initiating an on going project to build a positive school climate at Effingham High School.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the researcher offers the following eleven recommendations which the school should consider to strengthen the apparent weaknesses of the organizational climate of the school.

1. The Board of Education and administration should study the possibility of building a new facility or extensively remodeling the old high school. A more modern facility with additional space would enhance the teachers' accessibility for increased involvement in intellectual pursuits. A positive physical setting would also encourage a more intellectual atmosphere for teachers to work. (Factor #1)
2. The Board of Education should allow for the building of a new library and media center which would benefit teachers

and students. It would make available more resources for teachers to work with and enhance opportunities for intellectual pursuit. (Factor #1)

3. The administration should encourage more scholarly pursuits of the faculty. This could be done by allowing teachers more opportunities to attend conferences and in-service sessions where they can share ideas and experiences with colleagues. (Factor #1)

4. The administration should continue to recognize and praise faculty members. However, teachers at Effingham High School earn less than the average teacher salary statewide. Monetarily rewarding the teachers is one way of showing appreciation for the dedication and quality work they are doing. (Factor #2)

5. To encourage more efficient and better record keeping, the school should move to a computerized system of grade reporting, scheduling, and attendance. This system would replace the antiquated hand method and create a more orderly fashion of maintaining accurate records. (Factor #5)

6. Better and more efficient use of maintenance personnel should be examined by the administration. Improving the maintenance of the current building could allow the faculty to work in a more orderly environment. (Factor #5)

7. The administration should look at clarifying the responsibilities of the assistant principal and principal along with their secretaries. Possibly a separate physical setting for the two offices would allow more specificity of responsibilities for each administrator's secretary and initiate a more orderly environment. More clarity of administrative responsibilities is needed in the building.

(Factor #5)

8. The administration should seek additional clerical help. More clerical help would allow the administration to carry out the responsibilities of their respective offices more effectively. (Factor #5)

9. Teachers should be given more formal instructions in the day to day operation of the building. This would insure that the school was being administered and promote more orderliness. (Factor #5)

10. The researcher should do a follow-up study of the organizational climate in the not too distant future. This follow-up study could be compared to the initial assessment and help the researcher determine if the organizational climate of the school is improving.

11. The school should utilize this study by seeking ways to improve certain weaknesses of the organizational climate of the school. The administration should examine the recommendations by the researcher and attempt to implement

those recommendations by prioritizing. The administration should seek input from the staff by running a needs assessment constructed based upon the recommendations made by the researcher.

End Notes

¹James T. Tunnet, "School Climate - What's It All About?" Thrust (November 1977), p. 3.

²Jane Close Conoley, "Organizational Assessment," School Psychology Review, (Winter 1980), p. 86.

³Edgar A. Kelley, "Auditing School Climate," Educational Leadership, (December 1981), p. 181.

⁴Joel Richman and George G. Stern, Stern Personality and Environment Indexes: A User's Technical Manual, (Evaluation Research Associations, Syracuse New York, 1979), p.1.

⁵Burton Elliott, "Assessing the Environment of the Secondary School," NASSP Bulletin (November 1972), p. 76.

⁶A. Ross Thomas, "The Organizational Climate of Schools," International Review of Education, (1976), p. 444.

⁷Thomas, 1976, p. 444.

⁸Robert G. Owens, Organizational Behavior in Schools, (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Eaglewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1970), p. 175-76.

⁹J. Foster Watkins and Allen D. Cleveland, "The Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire: A Process Feedback Application in an Elementary School," Educational Technology, (August 1977), p. 31.

¹⁰Jack Roy, "Hey Mr. Principal! What's the Climate Really Like In Your School?" School and Community, (November 1974), p. 32.

¹¹Thomas, 1976, p. 444.

¹²Carolyn S. Anderson, "The Search for School Climate: A Review of the Research," Review of Educational Research, (Fall 1982), p. 369.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Edgar A. Kelley, Improving School Climate, (The National Association of Secondary School Principals, Reston, Virginia, 1980), p. v.

¹⁵Kelley, 1980, p. 6-7.

¹⁶Owens, 1970, p. 184.

¹⁷Owens, 1970, p. 185-86.

¹⁸Owens, 1970, p. 186-87.

¹⁹Kelley, 1981, p. 180-81.

²⁰Richman and Stern, 1979, p. 8-9.

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ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE INDEX

SHORT FORM
OCI - 375 SF

George G. Stern, Carl R. Steinhoff, and Joel Richman

There are 80 statements in this booklet. They are statements which describe the environment in which people work. The statements refer to daily activities, to rules and regulations and policies, to typical interests and projects, to features of the physical environment, etc. The statements may or may not be characteristic of your situation because organizations differ from one another in many ways. You are to decide which statements are characteristic of your institution and which are not. Your answers should tell us what you believe the institution is like rather than what you might personally prefer. You won't know the answer to many of these statements, because there may not be any really definite information on which to base your answer. *Your responses will simply mean that in your opinion the statement is probably true or probably false about your organization.*

Do not omit any item.

DIRECTIONS

On the special answer sheet print your name, and the other information requested. Then, as you read each statement in the booklet, *blacken* space

T — when you think the statement is generally TRUE or characteristic of the organization, is something which occurs or might occur, is the way people tend to feel or act.

F — when you think the statement is generally FALSE or not characteristic of the organization, is something which is not likely to occur, is not the way people typically feel or act.

Be sure to fill in the whole answer space with a heavy black mark, using any No. 2 or softer pencil. Do not use ball point or ink.

YOU MUST ANSWER EVERY ITEM.

Work rapidly, going through the entire list of statements as quickly as you can. Occasionally compare item numbers from the booklet with the answer sheet space to see that they correspond. Please do not make any stray marks on the answer sheet or in this booklet. Erase all errors and stray marks completely.

Legend: T — True. Generally true or characteristic of the organization, is something which occurs or might occur, is the way people tend to feel or act.

F — False. Generally false or not characteristic of the organization, is something which is not likely to occur, is not the way people typically feel or act.

1. Work programs are well organized and progress systematically from week to week.
2. People here express their feelings openly and enthusiastically.
3. Everyone here has a strong sense of being a member of the team.
4. There is a lot of group spirit.
5. Administrative policy, goals, and objectives are carefully explained to everyone.
6. When people here disagree with an administrative decision, they work to get it changed.
7. People here put a great deal of energy into everything they do.
8. Improving one's knowledge of important works of art, music, and drama is encouraged here.
9. One of the values most stressed here is open-mindedness.
10. Social events get a lot of enthusiasm and support.
11. People who have friends of the opposite sex show their affections openly.
12. People find others eager to help them get started.
13. People here spend a great deal of time thinking about and discussing complex problems.
14. The ability to plan ahead is highly valued here.
15. Many social activities are unplanned and spontaneous.
16. People are expected to have a great deal of social grace and polish.
17. Untidy reports or ones that depart from a specified style are almost certain to be returned unaccepted.
18. Most people here go to lots of parties and other social activities.
19. There are many facilities and opportunities for individual creative activity.
20. Most people here love to dance.
21. Personality and pull are more important than competence in getting ahead around here.
22. The administrative staff are often joked about or criticized.
23. Most activities here are planned carefully.
24. People here speak up openly and freely.
25. People here are not only expected to have ideas but to do something about them.
26. Good manners and making a good impression are important here.
27. The activities of charities and social agencies are strongly supported.
28. Criticism is taken as a personal affront in this organization.
29. Neatness in this place is the rule rather than the exception.
30. Male-female relationships sometimes become quite serious.
31. Many people here enjoy talking about poetry, philosophy or religion.
32. Everyone is helped to get acquainted.
33. All work assignments are laid out well in advance, so that people can plan their own schedules accordingly.
34. People here thrive on difficulty — the tougher things get, the harder everyone works.
35. Individuals who are not properly groomed are likely to have this called to their attention.
36. Service to the community is regarded as a major responsibility of the institution.
37. People here are not really concerned with deep philosophical or ethical matters.
38. Good work is really recognized around here.
39. Work is checked to see if it is done properly and on time.
40. Administrators are practical and efficient in the way they dispatch their business.

Legend: T — True. Generally true or characteristic of the organization, is something which occurs or might occur, is the way people tend to feel or act.

F — False. Generally false or not characteristic of the organization, is something which is not likely to occur, is not the way people typically feel or act.

41. There are no favorites in this place; everyone gets treated alike.
42. People here can get so absorbed in their work they often lose all sense of time or personal comfort.
43. People frequently do things on the spur of the moment.
44. Proper social forms and manners are not particularly important here.
45. Few people here are challenged by deep thinking.
46. People set high standards of achievement for themselves here.
47. New ideas are always being tried out here.
48. People here tend to take the easy way out when things get tough.
49. Administrators put a lot of energy and enthusiasm into directing this program.
50. People here talk about their future imaginatively and with enthusiasm.
51. There is a general idea of appropriate dress which everyone follows.
52. There always seem to be a lot of little quarrels going on here.
53. It's easy to get a group together for games, cokes, movies, etc.
54. The work atmosphere emphasizes efficiency and usefulness.
55. People spend a great deal of time together socially.
56. There is not wasted time here; everything has been planned right to the minute.
57. Discussions about improving society are common here.
58. Unusual or exciting plans are encouraged here.
59. People here feel free to express themselves impulsively.
60. People here expect to help out with fund drives, CARE, Red Cross, etc.
61. There is a specific place for everything and everyone here.
62. People here often get involved in long, serious intellectual discussions.
63. The administrative staff will go out of its way to help you with your work.
64. Many people here read magazines and books involving history, economics or political science.
65. Looking and acting "right" is expected.
66. The people here are easily moved by the misfortunes or distress of others.
67. Everyone has the same opportunity to make good.
68. Communications within the organization is always carried on through formal channels.
69. Most activities here present a real personal challenge.
70. People ask permission before deviating from common policies or practices.
71. There is a recognized group of leaders who receive special privileges.
72. People here feel they must really work hard because of the important nature of their work.
73. Parties are colorful and lively here.
74. Programs here are quickly changed to meet new conditions.
75. People are always carefully dressed and neatly groomed.
76. "Lend a helping hand" could very well be the motto of this place.
77. There is considerable interest in the analysis of value systems and the relativity of societies and ethics.
78. There is a lot of interest in the philosophy and goals of science here.
79. Frank discussions about sex are not uncommon among people here.
80. People here are usually quick to help each other out.

Organizational Climate IndexReliabilities (KR20)

Form OCI-375SF

Schools (N=3939)Colleges (N=1533)Factors

1. Intellectual Climate	.77
2. Achievement Standards	.77
3. Personal Dignity	.81
4. Organizational Effectiveness	.77
5. Orderliness	.70
6. Impulse Control	.63

1. Achievement Standards	.75
2. Intellectual Climate	.77
3. Practicalness	.69
4. Supportiveness	.73
5. Orderliness	.66
6. Impulse Control	.65

Areas

1. Development	.86
2. Task Effectiveness	.76

Areas

1. Development	.82
2. Control	.75