

# RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN WEST KENYA UNION CONFERENCE

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The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of subscales of school climate and organizational commitment. All one hundred thirty-six (136) secondary school teachers from thirteen (13) secondary schools in West Kenya Union Conference participated in the study. The researchers employed quantitative research method in collecting data. Based on the data collected, the findings revealed that there was relatively high organizational commitment of the secondary school teachers and also it was found that there is positive relationship between selected school climate subscales and secondary teachers' organizational commitment. It is recommended that school administrators need to focus on improving school climate areas so that greater commitment will be seen among the West Kenya Union Conference secondary school teachers.

**Keywords:** Secondary school teachers, school climate, organizational commitment

## Introduction

In recent years, provision of quality education has become a global concern. As a result, it almost becomes the ultimate goal of every nation's educational reforms. Moreover, due to the never-ending insufficient numbers of the right human capital in the education sector, one of the most crucial factors to consider is the commitment of teachers to their job. As Fredriksson (2004) observes, teachers are responsible in lifting up the school effectiveness because they have actual power to make a difference in students' development during teaching and learning process.

But commitment of quality teachers is a major challenge facing schools worldwide. Many school leaders are faced with the question about what is it that influences teachers' organizational commitment? What motivates teachers to become committed to their schools? In other words, what must be done to retain teachers for a longer period of time after engagement with the schools? Abd Razak, Darmawan, and Keeves (2009) indicate that organizational commitment is a critical aspect in determining the success of education reform and school effectiveness. A positive school climate becomes the critical first step administrators need to foster. Joffres and Haughey (2001) observe that teachers who are committed tend to highly perform their duties in more or less as if the school belonged to them.

However, relatively few studies have been conducted to examine the relationships school climate

and organizational commitment especially in local settings particularly in the Seventh-day Adventist context. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the research of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in West Kenya Conference and how it is influenced by school climate factors.

## Statement of the Main Problem

The main concern of the researchers in this study was to establish whether there is any significant relationship between school/organizational climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference.

## Research Questions

The following are the specific research questions this study sought to find out:

1. What is the level of commitment of secondary school teachers in Western Kenya Union Conference?
2. What is the prevailing school climate of the secondary schools in Western Kenya Union Conference?
3. Is there a significant relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference?



## Hypothesis

There is only one hypothesis that was tested in this study. It is stated as:

There is no significant relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of West Kenya Union Conference secondary school teachers.

## Significance of the Study

Obtaining an accurate picture of a school climate is an essential component for improving the learning environment. As part of the school climate improvement process, specific measures can be used to highlight schools' areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. It can also be used to assess changes in school climate over time. This study would help teachers and school administrators to be sensitive to the climate factors that enhance teachers' commitment. Further, sensitivity to factors that enhance teachers' commitment in schools may be critical in promoting the goals of school's improvement initiatives, besides promoting interpersonal relationship and academic achievement. Moreover, the climate measurement tool can be used to identify specific items the teachers perceived as deficiencies which will lead to improve teachers' greater commitment in schools. Hopefully this study can be used to help educators take a critical look at the aspects of school success and attempt to initiate change with fruitful success.

## Review of Literature

The literature review for this study was based on printed materials and internet sources. This is outlined as follows: School or School/Organizational Climate and Teacher Commitment.

### School/Organizational Climate

The elements that comprise a school's climate are extensive and complex. According to the National School Climate Council (2007), school climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. Manning and Saddlemire (1996) identified aspects of school climate to include: "trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for other's welfare can have powerful effects on educators' and learn-

ers' interpersonal relationships as well as learners' academic achievement and overall school progress" (p.41).

Meyer and Allen (1991) stated that organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct of psychological state that describes an employee's relationship with his or her organization that has implication on employee's decision to remain or leave the organization. Kuperminic, Leadbeater, Emmons, and Blatt (1997) believe that a positive school climate can yield positive educational and psychological outcomes for students and school personnel; similarly, a negative climate can prevent optimal learning and development.

School climate, therefore, matters. According to research findings, positive and sustained school climate is associated with and/or predictive of positive child and youth development, effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased student graduation rates, and teacher retention" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2003; Berkowitz & Bier, 2006; Greenberg et al., 2003).

### Teachers' School/Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is commonly defined as employees' interest in, and connection to an organization (Hunt, Wood, & Chonko, 1989; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Commitment implies an intention to persist in a course of action. It is commonly believed that committed employees will also work harder and be more likely to "go the extra mile" to achieve organizational objectives. Research has consistently demonstrated that commitment does indeed contribute to a reduction in turnover (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Allen and Meyer (1996) provide evidence that employees with high level of affective commitment and normative commitment could contribute to high job performance and were more likely to have less turnover intention. Recent research reported that teachers with low organizational commitment often come late to work and tend to be frequently absent from work by abusing sick leave (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Rosenblatt, 2010) which caused loss of valuable instruction time due to ineffective substitute teacher or class cancellation (Gaziel, 2004).

According to other research findings, teachers

with low organizational commitment tend to migrate to another school or resign from the teaching profession altogether (Labatmediene, Kaunas, Endriulaitiene, & Gustainiene, 2007). This forces the administration to look for replacements even with inexperienced teachers. But according to Xaba (2003), the inexperienced replacement teachers may cause the school to struggle to maintain its quality of education because the less effective inexperienced teachers may contribute to low student achievements (Rinke, 2008). Whatever the reasons for teacher's organizational commitment, it is important to enhance organizational commitment as a whole because an employee who demonstrates strong organizational commitment will be engaged in positive work behavior such as low levels of absenteeism, tardiness and turnover which result in organizational effectiveness (Angle & Perry, 1981; Iverson & Buttigieg, 1999).

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

This research used a descriptive-correlational design. It sought to determine whether there is significant relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference.

### Population and Data-gathering Procedures

The population for this study consisted of 136 teachers from 13 selected secondary schools in West Kenya Union Conference who participated to assess the relationship between level of commitment and organizational climate. All of the 136 secondary teachers in West Kenya Conference participated in the study. The questionnaires were administered to all secondary school teachers.

### Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaires

This study used two valid and reliable questionnaires namely; Organizational Commitment Questionnaire by Mowday, Steers and Porter, as cited in Lin and Wang (2012) and Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire by Hoy (2015) which are available online. The reliability coefficients produced in this study were .773 for the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire and .772 for Organizational Climate Description

Questionnaire.

## Statistical Treatment of Data

Descriptive statistics was employed to establish the level of commitment and the prevailing school climate. Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was utilized to determine the relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference.

## Ethical Considerations

The researchers paid close attention to ethical considerations in the conduct of their work. The researchers ensured that relevant persons, committees and authorities had been consulted and asked permission and that the researchers accepted responsibility for maintaining confidentiality.

## Results and Discussion

This study was guided by three research questions seeking to establish whether there is any significant relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference.

### Research Question one: What is the level of commitment of secondary school teachers in Western Kenya Union Conference?

Teachers' responses were analyzed and interpreted by means of mean scores as follows: 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree, 1.50 - 2.49 = Disagree, 2.50 - 3.49 = Undecided; 4.00 - 4.49; Agree, 4.50 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree.

Descriptive statistics in Table 1 indicates that teachers strongly agreed that they were willing to put a great deal of effort beyond that which is normally expected of them in order to help their schools to be successful (4.65) and that they really cared about the fate of the schools they served (4.56); that they were proud to tell others that they are part of the schools they served (4.45). The teachers were generally committed to the schools they served as shown by their tendency to agree that they would talk up their organization to their friends as a great school to work for (4.35); that they were extremely glad that they chose



their schools to work for over others they considered at the time of joining the schools they serve (4.35); All these results reveal that the level of commitment of secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference is generally high.

This tends to agree with the findings of Allen and Meyer (1990) which stated that, when the employees identify themselves with the organizational goals, values, and mission, and are willing to make their best efforts in the organization, they not only would help, and communicate with their colleagues, but also try

their best to devote their efforts to the organization.

That is,

they end up developing affective commitment, which according Meyer and Allen (1991), refers to employee's identification with, involvement in and emotional attachment to the organization.

Table 1

*Organizational Commitment of Secondary School Teachers in West Kenya Union Conference*

Items	Mean	Interpretation
1. I am willing to put a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this school to be successful.	4.65	Strongly Agree
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great school to work for.	4.35	Agree
3. I feel very little loyalty to this school.	1.85	Disagree
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this school.	3.44	Undecided
5. I find that my values and the school's values are very similar.	4.18	Agree
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this school.	4.45	Agree
7. I could just as well be working for a different school as long as the types of work were similar.	2.85	Undecided
8. This school really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	4.01	Agree
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this school.	3.04	Agree
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this school to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.	4.35	Agree
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this school indefinitely.	1.94	Disagree
12. Often, I find difficult to agree with this school's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	2.22	Disagree
13. I really care about the fate of this school.	4.56	Strongly Agree
14. For me this is the best of all possible schools for which to work.	3.97	Agree
15. Deciding to work for this school was a definite mistake on my part.	1.46	Strongly Disagree

**Research Question Two: What is the prevailing school climate of the secondary schools in Western Kenya Union Conference?**

Teachers' responses were analyzed and inter-

preted by means of overall mean scores as follows:  
 1.05 - 1.49 = Rarely Occurs, 1.50 - 2.49 = Sometimes Occurs, 2.50 - 3.49 = Often Occurs, 3.50 - 4.00 = Very Often Occurs. Descriptive statistics is shown in Table 2a.

Table 2a

*School Climate of Secondary Schools in West Kenya Union Conference*

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<b>A. Supportive Principal Behavior</b>		
1. The principal sets an example by working hard himself/herself.	3.35	Often occurs
2. The principal compliments teachers.	2.79	Often occurs
3. The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers.	2.47	Sometimes occurs
4. The principal explains his/her reason for criticism to teachers.	2.53	Often occurs
5. The principal is available after school to help teachers when assistance is needed.	2.68	Often occurs
6. The principal uses constructive criticism.	2.57	Often occurs
7. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of the faculty.	2.56	Often occurs
<b>Subtotal for Supportive Principal Behavior</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>Often occurs</b>
<b>B. Directive Principal Behavior</b>		
8. Teacher-principal conferences are dominated by the principal.	2.34	Sometimes occurs
9. The principal rules with an iron fist.	1.92	Sometimes occurs
10. The principal monitors everything teachers do.	2.78	Often occurs
11. The principal closely checks teachers' activities.	2.88	Often occurs
12. The principal is autocratic	2.35	Sometimes occurs
13. The principal supervises teachers closely.	2.94	Often occurs
14. The principal talks more than he listens	3.04	Often occurs
<b>Subtotal for Directive Principal Behavior</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>Sometimes occurs</b>
<b>C. Engaged Teacher Behavior</b>		
15. Teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems.	3.25	Often occurs
16. Teachers are proud of this school.	3.04	Often occurs
17. Student government has an influence on school policy.	2.36	Sometimes occurs
18. Teachers are friendly with students	3.49	Often occurs
19. Teachers help and support each other.	3.23	Often occurs
20. Pupils solve their problems through logical reasoning.	2.57	Often occurs
21. The morale of the teacher is high.	2.86	Often occurs
22. Teachers really enjoy working here.	2.79	Often occurs
23. Pupils are trusted to work together without supervision	2.29	Sometimes occurs
24. Teachers respect the personal competence of their colleagues	3.43	Often occurs
<b>Subtotal for Engaged Teacher Behavior</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>Often occurs</b>



Table 2a (cont.)

*School Climate of Secondary Schools in West Kenya Union Conference*

<b>A. Frustrated Teacher Behavior</b>		
1. <b>The mannerisms of teachers at this school are annoying.</b>	1.37	Rarely occurs
2. <b>Teachers have too many committee requirements.</b>	2.03	Sometimes occurs
3. <b>Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching.</b>	1.88	Sometimes occurs
4. <b>Teachers interrupt other faculty members who are talking in faculty meetings.</b>	1.28	Rarely occurs
5. <b>Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.</b>	1.85	Sometimes occurs
6. <b>Assigned non-teaching duties are excessive.</b>	1.70	Sometimes occurs
<b>Subtotal for Frustrated Teacher Behavior</b>	<b>1.68</b>	<b>Sometimes occurs</b>
<b>B. Intimate Teacher Behavior</b>		
7. <b>Teachers' close friends are other faculty members at this school.</b>	2.45	Sometimes occurs
8. <b>Teachers know the family background of other faculty members.</b>	1.66	Sometimes occurs
9. <b>Teachers invite other faculty members to visit them at home.</b>	1.87	Sometimes occurs
10. <b>Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis.</b>	3.01	Often occurs
<b>Subtotal for Intimate Teacher Behavior</b>	<b>2.23</b>	<b>Sometimes occurs</b>

The results in table 2a shows that the set of principal behaviors that often occurred as perceived by teachers included: the principal sets an example by working hard himself/herself (3.35), the principal compliments teachers (2.79), the principal explains his/her reason for criticism to teachers (2.53), the principal is available after school to help teachers when assistance is needed (2.68), the principal uses constructive criticism (2.57), the principal looks out for the personal welfare of the faculty (2.56).

As established by Yukl (1998) and supported by Hulpia, Devos, and Rosseel (2010), teachers derive satisfaction working with a principal who is friendly, cooperative and supportive. A smart principal will initially make small changes, allow time for teachers to get to know them, and then gradually make larger, more meaningful changes over the course of time. It is important to note that any significant changes should be made only after seeking and considering input from teachers (Meador, 2016).

Table 2b

*Summarized School Climate of Secondary Schools in West Kenya Union Conference*

<b>SN</b>	<b>School Climate Subscale</b>	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Supportive Principal Behavior</b>	2.71	Often Occurs
<b>2</b>	<b>Directive Principal Behavior</b>	2.47	Sometimes Occurs
<b>3</b>	<b>Engaged Teacher Behavior</b>	2.91	Often Occurs
<b>4</b>	<b>Frustrated Teacher Behavior</b>	1.68	Sometimes Occurs
<b>5</b>	<b>Intimate Teacher Behavior</b>	2.23	Sometimes Occurs

Summarized descriptive statistics in Table 2b reveals that principals in West Kenya Union Conference often demonstrated supportive behavior with an overall mean of 2.71; and teachers often appeared engaged with a mean of 2.91.

**Research Question Three: What is the relationship between school climate and the level of commitment of secondary school teachers in Western Kenya**

Table 3

*Relationship between School Climate and Commitment of Secondary School Teachers in West Kenya Union Conference*

School Climate Subscales	Organizational Commitment	Pearson r	Sig Value	Interpretation
1. Supportive principal behavior		.403	.000	Significantly Related
2. Directive principal behavior		-.040	.670	No Significant relationship
3. Engaged teacher behavior		.464	.000	Significantly related
4. Frustrated teacher behavior		-.052	.572	No Significant Relationship
5. Intimate teacher behavior		.252	.005	Significantly related

The first one is Supportive principal behavior ( $r = .403$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Another interesting finding is that engaged teacher behavior is positively correlated with organizational commitment ( $r = .464$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Lastly, it was found that intimate teacher behavior is also positively correlated with teachers' commitment ( $r = .252$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

This result indicates that the more supportive the principal becomes, the more teachers show engaged behavior and the more intimate teachers become to each other the greater the tendency for them to remain loyal to their institution.

These findings tend to agree with research which was conducted to test the three-component model of commitment which demonstrated that commitment can be characterized by different mindsets – desire, obligation, and cost (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees with a

**Union Conference?**

This research question sought to determine whether there is any significant relationship between school climate and organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in WKUC. As seen in Table 3, there are three subscales of school climate that are significantly related to organizational commitment.

strong affective commitment stay because they want to, those with strong normative commitment stay because they feel they ought to, and those with strong continuance commitment stay because they have to do so.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

The following are the major conclusions and recommendations of this study:

**Conclusions**

This study found out that organizational commitment is high among secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference. Supportive



principal behavior and engaged teacher behaviors often occurs. It was also found out that supportive principal behavior, engaged teacher behavior and intimate teacher behavior are significantly related to organizational commitment.

### Recommendations

The school management should be responsible in playing a vital role in creating conducive working environment for the teachers. It is recommended that school administrators need to focus on improving school climate so that greater commitment will be seen among the secondary school teachers in West Kenya Union Conference. The principal should look out into the welfare of the faculty by paying attention to their professional and social needs. The principal should be available after school to help teachers whenever they need his/her assistance. The principal should complement/appreciate his/her teachers every time that becomes necessary. Principals can help to cultivate and nourish strong collective efficacy beliefs through communicating confidence in the ability of teachers to promote student learning, whatever the difficulties and challenges of the particular context of the school. Teachers should find time to socialize with each other so that intimate relationships or good camaraderie will be developed. Teachers should support one another in both good times and bad times. Lastly, teachers should become more engaged in the learning activities of the students and spend time with students who have individual problems.

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