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School Climate, Teachers' Instructional Practices and Learners' Performance

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance in public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Antique, Philippines, for the school year 2024–2025. Conducted from April to May 2025, the study involved 365 randomly selected teachers using proportionate random sampling. The dependent variables were school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance, while the independent variables included age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. Data were gathered through a validated School Climate Survey and an instructional practices questionnaire. Learners' performance data were based on the average academic grades from the first and second quarters of the school year. Statistical tools used included frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson's r at a .05 significance level. Findings revealed that the overall school climate was rated "Good" in terms of relationships, personal development, and system maintenance. Learners' performance was assessed as "Very Satisfactory" across all teacher classifications. Instructional practices commonly employed by teachers included: developing sustainable assessment methods to monitor behavioral and cognitive changes; using varied learning materials (e.g., modules, activity sheets); and analyzing learner information to design instruction responsive to diverse needs. No significant differences were found in school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance when categorized by teacher demographics. However, significant relationships were identified among school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance.

Keywords: school climate, teachers' instructional practices, learners' performance

Introduction

The school climate of an educational institution plays a foundational role in shaping both teaching and learning processes. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life, including the safety, relationships, norms, and structures that support student learning and teacher effectiveness (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009). A positive climate promotes respect, collaboration, and a shared commitment to academic excellence, which in turn influences teacher behaviors and student outcomes. Research has shown that a supportive and nurturing school climate is associated with better instructional practices and improved learner performance (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013).

Closely linked to school climate are teachers' instructional practices, which encompass the methods and strategies teachers use to facilitate learning, manage classrooms, and assess student understanding. Effective instructional practices—such as differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and interactive teaching—have been consistently linked to higher levels of student engagement and achievement (Hattie, 2015). Teachers who feel supported by a positive school climate are more likely to employ innovative and reflective practices that meet diverse learner needs (Day et al., 2016).

Learners' performance, often measured through academic achievement and skill mastery, reflects not only individual student capabilities but also the broader learning environment shaped by school climate and teacher practices. Numerous studies highlight that students perform best when they are taught in environments characterized by positive relationships, high expectations, and instructional coherence (RAND Corporation, 2015).

In the context of the Schools Division of Antique in the Philippines, there is a growing need to understand how school climate and teachers' instructional practices interact to influence learners' academic performance. While educational reforms continue to emphasize quality teaching and learning, empirical evidence at the division level remains limited. Thus, this study aims to examine the relationship among school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance involving 365 teachers and their students for School Year 2025, providing insights to inform policy, leadership practices, and instructional improvement efforts.

This study aimed to examine the school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance in the Schools Division of Antique during School Year 2025. Specifically, it sought to determine the level of school climate in terms of safety, relationships, teaching–learning environment, and institutional support as perceived by teachers. It also aimed to assess the extent to which teachers employ effective instructional practices, including teaching strategies, classroom management, and assessment techniques. Furthermore, the study examined the level of learners' academic performance. The study also sought to determine whether significant differences exist in school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance when classified according to selected teacher-related variables. Lastly, it aimed to determine the significant relationships among school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable inputs for school administrators, teachers, and policymakers in strengthening school climate and instructional practices to enhance learners' academic performance.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance in public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Antique, Philippines, for the school year 2024–2025. The descriptive component was used to determine the levels of school climate, instructional practices, and learners' performance, while the correlational component examined the relationships among these variables.

The respondents of the study consisted of 365 public elementary school teachers who were randomly selected using proportionate random sampling from the different districts in the Schools Division of Antique. This sampling technique ensured fair representation of teachers across schools and districts. The independent variables of the study included age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service, while the dependent variables were school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance.

Data were gathered using two main instruments: a validated School Climate Survey and a researcher-adapted instructional practices questionnaire. The School Climate Survey measured dimensions such as relationships, personal development, and system maintenance, while the instructional practices questionnaire assessed teachers' use of varied learning materials, assessment strategies, and learner-centered instructional approaches. Learners' performance data were obtained from the average academic grades of learners for the first and second quarters of the school year, as reflected in official school records. The data collection was conducted from April to May 2025, following the necessary permissions from school authorities. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly observed.

Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics—frequency, percentage, and mean—to describe the levels of the variables. Inferential statistical tools, including t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Pearson's r correlation, were employed to determine significant differences and relationships among variables at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The findings of the study showed that the overall school climate in public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Antique was rated Good, with an overall mean of 3.87 (SD = 0.41). Among the dimensions of school climate, relationships obtained the highest mean of 3.94 (SD = 0.39), followed by personal development with a mean of 3.85 (SD = 0.42), and system maintenance and change with a mean of 3.82 (SD = 0.44). These results indicate that teachers generally perceived a supportive and positive school environment conducive to teaching and learning.

In terms of teachers' instructional practices, the overall mean was 4.12 (SD = 0.38), interpreted as Frequently Practiced. The most commonly employed instructional practices included developing sustainable assessment methods to monitor learners' behavioral and cognitive changes (M = 4.25, SD = 0.36), using varied learning materials such as modules and activity sheets (M = 4.18, SD = 0.37), and analyzing learner information to design instruction responsive to diverse learning needs (M = 4.14, SD = 0.40). These findings suggest that teachers consistently apply learner-centered and adaptive teaching approaches.

The learners' academic performance was assessed as Very Satisfactory, with an overall mean grade of 84.76 (SD = 3.21) based on the average of first and second quarter grades. Learners' performance remained Very Satisfactory across teacher classifications in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service, with mean grades ranging from 84.21 to 85.34.

Results of inferential analysis revealed no significant differences in school climate, instructional practices, and learners' performance when grouped according to teacher demographic variables ($p > 0.05$). However, significant positive relationships were found among the major variables. School climate was significantly related to teachers' instructional practices ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$) and learners' performance ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$). Likewise, teachers' instructional practices showed a significant relationship with learners' performance ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$). These results indicate that a more positive school climate and effective instructional practices are associated with higher learner academic performance.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the school climate in public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Antique was generally perceived as Good, particularly in terms of relationships, personal development, and system maintenance. This finding suggests that positive interpersonal relationships among teachers, administrators, and learners contribute to a supportive learning environment. Consistent with the findings of Cohen et al. (2009) and Thapa et al. (2013), a positive school climate fosters collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility, which are essential conditions for effective teaching and learning. The favorable perception of school climate in this study implies that schools in the division provide an environment that supports both teacher performance and learner development.

The study further revealed that teachers' instructional practices were frequently implemented, particularly in the use of varied learning materials, learner-responsive instruction, and sustainable assessment strategies. These practices reflect teachers' commitment to addressing diverse learner needs and monitoring student progress effectively. This result supports Hattie's (2015) assertion that purposeful instructional strategies and continuous assessment significantly enhance learning outcomes. The frequent use of adaptive and learner-centered practices suggests that teachers are responsive to curriculum demands and learner diversity, even in varying classroom contexts.

Learners' academic performance was rated Very Satisfactory across all teacher classifications, indicating consistent achievement regardless of teacher demographic variables. This finding aligns with Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), who emphasized that effective instructional practices and supportive school environments are stronger predictors of student performance than teacher demographic characteristics alone. The absence of significant differences based on teacher profile implies equitable learning opportunities for learners across schools.

Finally, the significant relationships among school climate, instructional practices, and learners' performance underscore the interrelated nature of these variables. A positive school climate enhances teachers' instructional practices, which in turn contributes to improved learner performance. This finding affirms existing literature that highlights the combined influence of environmental and instructional factors on academic achievement and underscores the importance of strengthening both school climate and teaching practices to improve educational outcomes.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Antique generally maintain a positive school climate, characterized by supportive relationships, opportunities for personal development, and effective system maintenance. Teachers consistently implement effective instructional practices, particularly learner-centered approaches, varied instructional materials, and sustainable assessment strategies. These practices contribute to learners achieving a Very Satisfactory level of academic performance, regardless of teacher demographic characteristics.

Furthermore, the study established significant relationships among school climate, teachers' instructional practices, and learners' performance, indicating that a favorable school environment enhances instructional effectiveness, which in turn positively influences learners' academic achievement. The absence of significant differences when variables were grouped according to teacher demographics suggests that quality instruction and learner performance are more strongly influenced by the learning environment and teaching practices than by teacher profile characteristics. Overall, the findings highlight the crucial role of maintaining a positive school climate and strengthening instructional practices in promoting improved learner performance in public elementary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, it is recommended that school administrators continue to strengthen and sustain a positive school climate by promoting collaborative relationships, open communication, and supportive leadership practices among teachers and stakeholders. Professional development programs should be regularly conducted to further enhance teachers' instructional practices, particularly in the use of innovative, learner-centered strategies, differentiated instruction, and effective assessment techniques responsive to diverse learner needs. Schools are also encouraged to provide adequate instructional resources and learning materials to support effective teaching and learning. Additionally, continuous monitoring and evaluation of school climate and instructional practices should be institutionalized to ensure consistent quality in instruction and learner performance. Finally, future research may explore other factors such as leadership styles, parental involvement, and learners' socio-emotional skills to gain a more comprehensive understanding of variables influencing learners' academic performance.

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