



**THE EFFECT OF PRINCIPALS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP
AND TEACHER SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON SCHOOL
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF
BOVEN DIGOEL DISTRICT, PAPUA, INDONESIA**

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Abstract:

School organizational climate is the visceral 'sense' of safety and belonging that people experience on site. This present study aimed at describing the effect of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the Elementary Schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua? Two problem statements guided the study as follows: (a) does principals' transformational leadership effect positively and significantly on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua? and (b) does teachers' socioeconomic status effect positively and significantly on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua? A purposive sampling was used to obtain 217 drawn from amongs 412 elementary schools' teachers of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua. Data were analysed quantitatively using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Findings of the study showed that: (a) principals' transformational leadership effects positively effect on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua; and (b) teachers' socioeconomic status effect positively and significantly on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua. These findings might be worthwhile for the Head of Education Office at regional government level to take an effort of improving both principals' transformational leadership and teachers'

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socioeconomic status in order that school organizational climate is conducive for all on site.

Keywords: transformational leadership, socioeconomic status, school organizational climate, principal, teachers

1. Introduction

Schools, just like other organizations, are a series of interactions occurring among the principal, teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. These interactions may affect all the individuals in a school as well as affect the total environment and the climate of the school (Vasquez, 1995). Vary of studies have been conducted on the topic of school organizational climate (e.g. Mendel et al., 2002; Arani & Abbasi, 2004; Vasquez, 2015; Werang & Lena, 2014; Werang et al., 2016), but the lack of studies on this topic in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District makes this present study robust.

This present study aims to describe the effect of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. To describe the effect of both principal transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status, we employed a quantitative approach using survey research design which we briefly explain below.

2. Related Literature

2.1 School Organizational Climate

Organizational climate is the visceral 'sense' of safety and belonging that people experience on site. In school settings, organizational climate is of interest to principals, teachers, parents, and students as it has found to affect students' outcomes, including cognitive and affective behavior, psychomotor, values, and personal growth (Arani & Abbasi, 2004).

Sweetland and Hoy (2000, p. 704) aptly denoted that "*the concept of school climate itself is defined in myriad ways and is often merely a slogan rather than a carefully defined and meaningful construct*". Sweeney (1988) defined climate as a combination of values, beliefs, and attitudes shared by all those who have roles to play in the school. Similarly, Mitchell et al. (2010) defined school climate as the shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that shape interactions between the students, teachers, and school principals. Whereas

National School Climate Center (2017, p. 1) viewed school climate as the quality and character of a school which is based on patterns of students', parents', and schools' personal experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. Despite of no single definition of school organizational climate, scholars seem to agree that the school climate is the sum total of attitudes and behaviors elicited by the school's policies, practices and physical environment; staff interactions with peers and students; opportunities for student engagement and leadership; and beliefs and attitudes students bring to the school from their families and the community (Community Matters, n/d.).

School climate has been measured along two dimensions of interpersonal interactions with regard to principal's behavior and teachers' behavior. Principal's behavior comprised of four aspects: (a) *aloofness*: refers to principal's behavior that characterized by a formal and impersonal relationship, (b) *production emphasis*: refers to principal's behavior that characterized by a close supervision that uses directions and stereotyped communication channels, (c) *trust*: refers to principal's behavior that characterized by an evident effort to move the organization forward, and (d) *consideration*: refers to principal's behavior that characterized by a human relationship with teachers; while teachers' behavior comprised of four aspects: (a) *disengagement*: refers to teachers' tendency to be non-chalant and merely routinized in task oriented situation, (b) *hindrance*: refers to teachers' feeling that the principal bothers them with routine duties and other commitments that do not relate to the actual job of teaching and which they consider as unnecessarily encroaching on their time, (c) *esprit*: refers to morale felt as a result of social-needs satisfaction while teachers still enjoy a sense of task accomplishment, and (d) *intimacy*: refers to teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with other teachers [Adejumobi & Ojikutu, 2013; Selamat et al., 2013].

2.2 Principal Transformational Leadership and School Climate

The central issue in contemporary school principals' leadership is participation in the process of making decision (Werang, 2014a). Principals who are secure their leadership skills will be confident when distributing responsibility. Owens (2004) in his study argued that a healthy organization should empower people at all levels of the organization that might foster leadership and motivation. Simple action by the school principal such as smiling and asking about family matters can make a teacher feel

encouragement and a deeper connection the school community as a whole (Littleford, 2007).

There are various types of leadership. In this study we focus only on the transformational leadership style as it emerged as the most popular approach to explain leaders' way of directing organizations in modern world (Werang, 2015). Transformational leadership theory has continually emphasized the importance of leaders' influence on followers' emotional states (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000). Meanwhile Northouse (2007) defined transformational leadership as the ability to get people who want to change, improve, and be led. Transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire all the followers to attain extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity (Werang, 2015). Bass and Riggio (2008) asserted that transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by both empowering them and aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leaders, the group, and the larger organization.

Principal's transformational leadership is known as one of the factors influencing school organizational climate. Mendel et al. (2002) study the relationship between positive school climate and leadership styles of principals, based on teachers' perceptions of their principals and climate. They conclude that a principal with a collaborative style contributes to a positive school climate. *"A principal's method of administration, or leadership style, may affect the morale and productivity of teachers, as well as the entire climate of the school"* (Mendel et al., 2002,p.3). In the similar way, Lashway (2003) stated that effective principals lead school transformation with positive school climates, effective instruction, increase parental involvement, and increase student academic achievement. In the words of Hord (2004), principals have the opportunity to nurture the human capacities needed for communication by helping staff relate to each other, providing some social activities for staff members to get to know each other on a personal level, and creating a caring environment. Besides, Werang & Lena (2014) and Werang (2015) also found that a positive and significant relationship between school principals' leadership and school organizational climate. These findings lead us to hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: Principals' transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) will positively and significantly effect on school organizational climate (aloofness, production emphasis, trust, consideration, disengagement, hindrance, esprit, and intimacy) in the Christian Elementary Schools of Boven Digoel District, Papua.

2.3 Teacher SES and School Organizational Climate

There are various definitions of socioeconomic status. American Psychological Association (n/d.) viewed socioeconomic status as the social standing or class of an individual or group which is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. Meanwhile Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia (n/d.), viewed socioeconomic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation. Whereas Burden and Byrd (1990 as cited in Werang et al., 2017, p. 24) defined SES as a measure of a family's relative position in a community, determined by a combination of income, occupation, and level of education.

Despite of no single definition of socioeconomic status, what is consistent in the literature is that socioeconomic status refers to the social outstanding based on education, income, and occupation status. Socioeconomic status in this present study refers to teachers' socioeconomic status. Teachers' socioeconomic status has been found as one of the factors influencing school organizational climate. Werang et al. (2017, p. 33) described of how teachers' socioeconomic status influencing school organizational climate as follows:

"Low-SES teachers are sometimes entering the classroom with all the burdensome thoughts and feelings of how to caring their sick family member, to rent housing, to pay electricity arrears, to meet child(ren)'s need for school, and so on. They looked somehow too tired and exhausted. This fact can directly impact on teacher's work of teaching and relations at school."

Besides, Eggen & Kauchak (2004 as cited in Werang et al., 2017, p. 25) regarded teachers' socioeconomic status as one of the most powerful factor related to school's life and performance. Teachers' socioeconomic status provides a sence of their social-economic standing in a community, how much flexibility the have in where they live or what they buy, how much influence they have on political decision making, and the educational opportunities their children have (Eggen & Kauchak, 2004 as cited in Werang 2014b, p. 437). These findings lead us to hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2: Teachers' socioeconomic status (the availability of family basic needs, the availability of learning facilities at home, and teacher's social position in his or her respective community) will positively and significantly effect on school organizational climate (aloofness, production emphasis, trust, consideration,

disengagement, hindrance, esprit, and intimacy) in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Papua.

2.4. Analytical Framework of the Study

Based on related literature examining the effect of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate, the analytical framework of this present study is as presented in Figure 1.

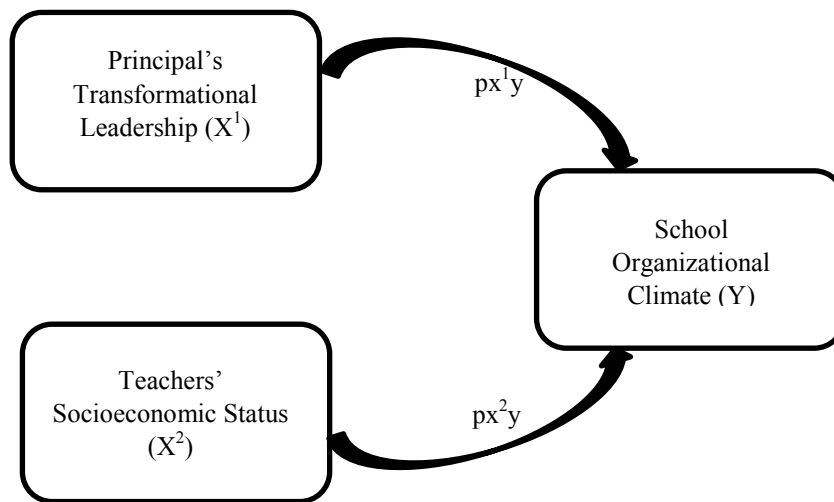


Figure 1: Analytical Framework of the Study

3. Method of the Study

3.1 Research Design and Participants

The nature of the study is a quantitative research approach that is conducted using survey research design as it sought to establish the effect of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. We employed a survey research design due to that: (a) high representativeness; (b) low cost; (c) convenient data gathering; (d) good statistical significance; (e) little researchers subjectivity; and (f) precise results.

Three quantitative questionnaires using Likert Scale was administered 217 elementary schools' teachers of Boven Digoel District who are samples/respondents. Null hypothesis that were examined in this study as follow: (a) there is no significant effect of principals' transformational leadership on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia; and (b) there is no significant effect of teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. Data were analyzed

quantitatively using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) program for Windows version 21.

3.2 Measures

Principals' transformational leadership. Principals' transformational leadership was measured by modifying *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 6S* [Bas & Avolio, 1997] item-item into 12 positive statements which are distributed over four dimensions of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration). The inventory uses a four point scale (4 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree). In this context of view, respondents are requested to respond each statement on a scale of four alternatives, that are strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). Sample items include "School principal makes teachers feel good to be around him/her", "School principal provides appealing images about what teachers can do", "School principal enables teachers to think about old problems in new ways", and "School principal helps teachers develop themselves".

Teacher's SES. Teachers' SES was measured by modifying Albatch, Amove, and Kelly (1982) and Woolfolk's (1993) descriptors into 26 positive statements which are distributed over three dimensions of SES (the availability of family basic needs, the availability of learning facilities at home, and teacher's social position in his or her respective community). The inventory used a four point scale (4 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree). Respondents are requested to respond each statement on a scale of four alternatives, that are strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). Sample of items include "I am satisfy with the level of pay I receive", "Home where my family and I stay is our own", "my monthly salary is enough to pay electricity arrears", "my monthly salary is enough for child(ren)'s education", "My salary is enough to provide learning facilities at home", "I feel supported, valued, and appreciated by my community".

School Climate. School climate was measured by modifying Halpin & Croft's (1963) *Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ)* item-item into 29 positive statements which are distributed over eight dimensions of school climate (aloofness, production emphasis, trust, consideration, disengagement, hindrance, esprit, and intimacy). The inventory uses a four point scale (4 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree). In this context of view, respondents are requested to respond each statement on a scale of four alternatives, that are strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). Sample items include "teachers seek special favors from the

principal”, “teachers interrupt other faculty members who are talking in staff meeting”, “teachers have too many committee requirements”, “teachers know the family background of other faculty members”, “the principal goes out of his way to help teachers”, and “the principal help teachers solve personal problem”.

4. Results of the Study

The study aims to describe the effect of principal transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomis status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency, Papua, Indonesia. As stated above, we employed the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 in order to have an accurate results of data analysis. The result of data analysis of the effect of principal transformational leadership on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency is reflected in the Tabel 1 below.

Table 1: Result of Data Analysis of the Effect of Principal Transformational Leadership on School Organizational Climate

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.595 ^a	.354	.351	5.58428	.354	117.873	1	215	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transf_Leadership

Meanwhile the result of data analysis of the effect of teachers' socioeconomic status on the school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel Regency is reflected in the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Result of Data Analysis of the Effect of Teachers' Socioeconomic Status on School Organizational Climate

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.644 ^a	.415	.412	5.31627	.415	152.281	1	215	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Socioeconomic_Status

Based on the results of data analysis as they are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, empirical model of the effect of principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia is as reflected in Figure 2 below.

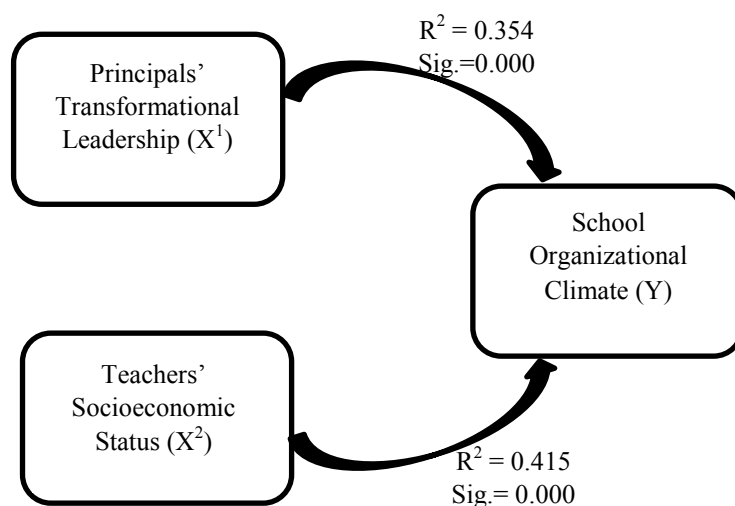


Figure 2: Empirical Model of the Study

The results of data analysis as they are reflected in Figure 2 show that:

- a. Principals' transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on school organizational climate as the R^2 value of 0.354 is significant at $p = 0.000$ ($\alpha = 0.05$). As the significant value (p -value) is less than 5 %, our research hypothesis that principals' transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) will significantly effect on school organizational climate (aloofness, production emphasis, trust, consideration, disengagement, hindrance, esprit, and intimacy) in the elementary Schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia, is accepted. In other words, at the alpha (α)'s level of 0.05, the null hypothesis that principals' transformational leadership has no significant effect on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia, is rejected.
- b. Teachers' socioeconomic status has a positive and significant effect on school organizational climate as the R^2 value of 0.415 is significant at $p = 0.000$ ($\alpha = 0.05$). As the significant value (p -value) is less than 5 %, our research hypothesis that

teachers' socioeconomic status (the availability of family basic needs, the availability of learning facilities at home, and teachers' social position in his or her respective community) will significantly effect on school organizational climate (aloofness, production emphasis, trust, consideration, disengagement, hindrance, esprit, and intimacy) in the elementary Schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia, is accepted. In other words, at the alpha (α)'s level of 0.05, the null hypothesis that teachers' SES has no significant effect on school organizational climate in elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia, is rejected.

5. Discussion

Principals are of important in setting expectations for teachers and students and, in turn, overrides other issues such as teaching environment and school climate as general. Winter and Sweeney (1994 as cited in Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011) stated as follows,

“Administrators can improve school climate and student achievement by understanding their role in the school environment and working to improve them. Successful principals encourage risk-taking and support good ties. When principals back teachers, are fair and trust-worthy, and are genuinely concerned about teacher growth, teachers go the extra mile” (p. 318).

Having good principal who view teachers and students as part of his or her school family is a key to boost school climate and teachers' morale. Results of data analysis shows a positive and significant effect of principals' transformational leadership on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. This means that change one point in independent variable “principals' transformational leadership” will strongly effect on dependent variable “school organizational climate”. In other words, as the value of R^2 is positive and significant, it shows that when the research variable “principals' transformational leadership” increases or decreases then the variable “school organizational climate” will also increase or decrease. This finding is in line with Holley's (1995 as cited in Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011) finding that leadership style of administrators can create a climate that is conducive and supportive of the instructional emphases in the school. This finding is also in line with Bailey's (1988 as cited in Tajasom & Ahmad, 2011) finding that high

school principals who desire to improve their school climate need to exhibit high task and high relationship behavior with their teachers.

Teachers are still men and women who, just like others, likely to feel more fit and enjoy a socioeconomic status of which their needs are adequately met, both physical, psychological, and socio-cultural. The results of data analysis also shows a positive and significant effect of teachers' socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. This means that change one point in independent variable "teachers' socioeconomic status" will strongly effect on dependent variable "school organizational climate". In other words, as the value of R^2 is positive and significant, it shows that when the research variable "teachers' socioeconomic status" increases or decreases then the variable "school organizational climate" wil aslo increases or decreases. This finding is in line with Eggen and Kauchak' s (2004) findings which regarded teachers' socioeconomic status as one of the most powerful factor related to school's life and performance. This finding is also in line with Werang et al.' (2017) findings that teachers with low-socioeconomic status are often entering the classroom with all the burdensome thoughts and feelings of how to caring their sick family member, to rent housing, to pay electricity arrears, to meet child(ren)'s need for school, and so on. They looked somehow too tired and exhausted. This fact can directly impact on teacher's work of teaching and relations at school.

6. Conclusions

This present study provides a closer look on the effect of principal transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status on school climate in elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. Based on the results of data analysis that have already been discussed, the conclusions depicted from the results of the study are follows:

- a. Principals' transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. It is indicated by the R^2 value of 0.354 is significant at $p = 0.000$. It means that school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District is of 35.4 % explained by principals' transformational leadership, while the rest of 64.6 % is explained by other research variables which are not the focus of this present study.

- b. Teachers' socioeconomic status has a positive and significant effect on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Indonesia. It is indicated by the R^2 value of 0.415 is significant at $p = 0.000$. It means that school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District is of 41.5 % explained by teachers' socioeconomic status, while the rest of 58.5 % is explained by other research variables which are not the focus of this present study.

Practical implications of this present study is that if the Head of Education Office at regional government level desires to improve school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District then he/she has to make sure that principals' transformational leadership and teachers' socioeconomic status are at high level. Since there is still lack of studies on this topics in Boven Digoel District context, findings of this present study may theoretically add the existing literature on the topics of principals' transformational leadership, teachers' socioeconomic status, and school organizational climate.

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