MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Teacher perceptions of organizational climate and the ratings of Wyoming elementary school principals on selected leadership behaviors
by Edward Leslie Wright

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:
The problem of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the organizational climate scores of Wyoming elementary schools and how such differences related to principals' ratings on the identified leadership behaviors of: (1) supports teachers, (2) emphasizes achievement, and (3) provides orderly atmosphere.

The problem was investigated by: (1) a review of literature related to effective school operations and organizational climate, (2) the development of a two-part questionnaire utilizing the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) designed by Andrew W. Halpin to measure school climate and a checklist adapted from the Council of Basic Education as a rating instrument for principals, (3) the selection of population criteria and distribution of survey instruments to a total population of 716 classroom teachers, and (4) the tabulation, analysis and comparison of the data.

The major findings of the study were that: (1) there were significant differences between the organizational climate scores of sample schools, (2) schools with less than two hundred students received the lowest scores in school climate regardless of the ratings of principals on identified leadership behaviors, (3) principals who were rated higher by their teachers in "supports teachers," "emphasizes achievement," and "provides orderly atmosphere" received higher scores on school climate as determined by the general openness score of the OCDQ, and (4) female administrators received higher school climate scores than their male counterparts when general openness scores were used as the dependent variable in leadership behaviors of "supports teachers," and "provides orderly atmosphere." Female administrators also received consistently higher scores than males when OCDQ subtest scores for characteristics of the principal were used as the dependent variable on ratings for "provides orderly atmosphere." The major recommendations included further studies to: (1) discover how other biographical variables of the school principal may affect school climate scores, (2) identify specific interventions to improve the organizational climate of schools, (3) find how principal ratings on other identified leadership behaviors relate to school climate scores. It was also recommended that measurements of school climate be introduced into current school evaluation practices.

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

AND THE RATINGS OF WYOMING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PRINCIPALS ON SELECTED LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

by

Edward Leslie Wright

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
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ii

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Edward Leslie Wright

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis
committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding
content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic
style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the
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_2/29/88_   _Donald L. Robson_
Date   Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the Major Department

_2/29/88_   _Donald L. Robson_
Date   Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies
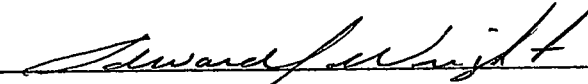
_3-1-88_   _Michael P. Malone_
Date   Graduate Dean

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

Signature _Edward _____

Date _2-17-88_____

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS--<u>Continued</u>

TABLE OF CONTENTS--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF TABLES--<u>Continued</u>

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF FIGURES--<u>Continued</u>

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The problem of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the organizational climate scores of Wyoming elementary schools and how such differences related to principals' ratings on the identified leadership behaviors of: (1) supports teachers, (2) emphasizes achievement, and (3) provides orderly atmosphere.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The quality of education provided for our children and youth is a major concern in American society. During recent years the desire of the public to hold teachers, principals and school systems accountable for the education of students has become widespread (Boyer, 1983:7).

Public desire for accountability has been heightened as the level of achievement in basic skills and other areas of student behavior has been reported as less than satisfactory by such authors as John Goodlad (1984) in his book, A Place Called School. The public's desire to see how well their schools compare in test scores with other schools and districts in similar situations is clear evidence of a call for accountability.

As early as 1976, Owens and Steinhoff (1976:1) began describing a crisis in the American public schools brought on by diminishing public trust and confidence. This lack of trust continued and gained momentum as reports such as A Nation at Risk (1983:5) reported that ". . . the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people."

A Nation at Risk (1983:32) provided a clear call for accountability in its recommendation for leadership and fiscal support:

> We recommend that citizens across the Nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms.

In implementing the recommendations of A Nation at Risk, school administrators were called upon to play a critical leadership role in bringing about educational reform. Such a request was not surprising since for over one hundred years principals have exercised power and control over the public schools. Because of their importance to public education, numerous studies of principals' functions have been conducted. These studies represent a systematic attempt to understand the role of the school principal.

Knezevich (1975:9) stated that there is no assurance:

> . . . that because equipment, personnel, facilities, and resources exist, excellent teaching and resultant learning are occurring in an elementary school. The key ingredient is the elementary principal who has the potential to provide the dynamic leadership that allows the institution to perform its important functions of providing quality education to children.

In 1982, a summary of the eight most important research studies of positive leadership behaviors was published in Educational Leadership (Sweeney, 1982). The positive behaviors of building administrators included: coordinates instructional programs, emphasizes achievement,

frequently evaluates pupil progress, provides orderly,
atmosphere, sets instructional strategies, and supports
teachers.

Sweeney (1982) argued that building principals must
exhibit those leadership behaviors within a building in
order that teachers might be effective in their classrooms.

Other researchers argued that student success was not
as clearly related to school personnel as it was to school
climate. Halpin (1966:131) stated:

> The open climate describes an energetic, lively
> organization which is moving toward its goals,
> and which provides satisfaction for the group
> members' social needs. Leadership acts emerge
> easily and appropriately from both the group and
> the leader. The members are preoccupied dispro-
> portionately with neither task achievement nor
> social-needs satisfaction; satisfaction on both
> counts seems to be obtained easily and almost
> effortlessly. The main characteristic of this
> climate is the 'authenticity' of the behavior
> that occurs among all the members.

Hughes (1971:12) referred to an "open" climate as a
situation within any organization in which participating
members receive personal satisfaction from both inter-
personal relationships with co-workers and accomplishment
of assigned tasks. Halpin (1966:137), on the other hand,
described a "closed" climate as being undesirable and
crippling to students and instructors alike.

McPhee (1967:188) identified the school principal's
position as the motivating force which creates the school
climate. In that regard, Halpin (1966:199) stated that in

a "closed" climate, the behavior of the principal fails to foster a condition where staff members are free to design, experiment, or initiate new techniques and methods for teaching or learning.

The attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of all personnel within the school organization serve as the "personality" of the system as a whole. This personality is what makes organizations whatever they actually are. Halpin (1966:131) stated:

> And so, too, as one moves to other schools, one finds that each appears to have a 'personality' of its own. It is this 'personality' that we describe here as the 'Organizational Climate' of the school. Analogously, personality is to the individual what Organizational Climate is to the organization.

A clear relationship between school climate and the principal's performance was noted by Squires (1983:4) when he argued that student success was clearly related to school climate, which was, in turn, related to leadership.

> Three leadership processes build and maintain a school's climate: modeling, feedback, and consensus building. Leadership generally comes from the principal, although teachers may provide it as well. Principals in particular, model appropriate behavior, which supports a positive school climate. Principals support inservice programs, monitor classrooms and supervise instruction and provide time for teachers to plan together. By doing so, they set the tone and focus of the school.

Taken as a whole, Sweeney (1982) suggested that principals who emphasized instruction were assertive, results-oriented, and able to develop and maintain an

atmosphere conducive to learning made a difference -- a difference which was reflected in elevated school outcomes. Identifying differences between the organizational climate scores of schools and the ratings of principals on selected leadership behaviors should be helpful in determining how much of a difference principals make in the organizational climate of schools, and how such differences relate to this study's identified leadership behaviors.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the organizational climate scores of Wyoming elementary schools and how such differences relate to the ratings of principals on identified leadership behaviors.

Purpose of the Study

The importance of principals in the administration of public schools justifies a systematic study of principal behaviors and their relationship to effective school operations. The present era of increased accountability by parents and students intensifies the need for such awareness.

Sweeney (1982) recommended that there was an obvious need to continue, even intensify, school effectiveness research. Sweeney's recommendations were to focus future

research on the so-called average schools and to clearly define and describe instructional leadership behaviors since in most cases they were stated in vague and general terms.

This study can assist principals, superintendents and colleges of education by providing further information on elementary school principals and the relationship between the organizational climate scores of schools and principals' ratings on selected leadership behaviors.

General Questions to Be Answered

This study examined the organizational climate scores of selected Wyoming schools to determine if there were significant differences between the scores, and how such differences were related to the ratings of principals on identified leadership behaviors. The study answered the following questions:

(1) Were there significant differences in the organizational climate scores of sample schools?

(2) Were differences in the organizational climate scores of sample schools related to school size?

(3) Were organizational climate scores (as measured by the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire [OCDQ], Form IV) related to the ratings of principals on specific leadership behaviors?

(4) Were organizational climate scores (as measured by the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire [OCDQ], Form IV) significantly different as they related to the following set of independent variables:

(a) Principal's age

(b) Principal's gender

(c) Principal's total years of teaching experience

(d) Principal's total years of administrative experience

General Procedures

The procedures followed in this study began with an extensive review of literature which provided a background for the study. A random sample of fifty Wyoming elementary schools was drawn from the eligible schools in Wyoming who volunteered to participate in the study. A listing of public schools in Wyoming was used, as recorded in the 1986-87 Wyoming Education Directory. Only elementary schools with seven or more full-time elementary teachers were sampled. Appendix A lists the 159 eligible Wyoming schools. Of those eligible, sixty-three volunteered to participate in the study.

After identifying sample schools in Wyoming, a letter of introduction (see Appendix G) was forwarded to the

superintendent/supervisor of elementary schools three weeks prior to the proposed administration date of the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), and school checklist. The letter of introduction explained the need and purpose of the study as well as the benefits to participating districts. Superintendents/supervisors were asked to complete a response checklist (see Appendix E) and return it in a self-addressed, stamped envelope. They were invited to request more information if there were unanswered questions or unresolved concerns hampering their ability to make a decision on the request for this study's execution in their respective school district.

With permission granted from the superintendent/ supervisor, principals in the sample schools were forwarded a letter of introduction explaining the study and procedures for participating schools.

Teachers in sample schools were asked to respond to the OCDQ. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher during an after-school meeting called by the school administration.

The OCDQ measured teachers' interpretations of the functioning of the school's organizational environment. All participants were asked to respond to sixty-eight statements using a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = rarely occurs, 2 = sometimes occurs, 3 = often occurs, and 4 = very frequently occurs).

During the same after-school meeting as the OCDQ administration, principals in the sample schools were asked to respond to a biographical data sheet. The biographical data sheet for principals provided information about their gender, age, years of teaching experience and years of administrative experience. Data were also collected concerning school size.

The school checklist measured the teachers' perceptions of the school principal on the following three leadership behaviors: (1) Emphasizes Achievement, (2) Provides Orderly Atmosphere, and (3) Supports Teachers. The results of the school checklist were used to rank the principals as high, medium, or low on each of the leadership behaviors. High and low rankings were assigned by the researcher using plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean.

Data from the OCDQ, school checklist and biographical data sheets were recorded, studied and statistically analyzed. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn and recorded.

Summaries of the study and individual school profiles were mailed to those participating superintendents/ supervisors and principals who expressed an interest in the results of the study.

Limitations

The scope of this investigation was confined to the study of a sample of public elementary schools in Wyoming during the 1986-87 school year. Using only elementary schools with seven or more full-time elementary teachers, a random sample of fifty Wyoming elementary schools was drawn from a list of sixty-three eligible schools who volunteered to participate in the study. The investigation excluded private and parochial schools.

Only those items appearing in the OCDQ as developed by Andrew W. Halpin and Donald B. Croft (Halpin, 1966:148-150) were used as a measurement of organizational climate. Inferences from this study must be limited to those districts within Wyoming and not be considered as appropriate for any other state.

Definition of Terms

The terms listed below are used throughout this study, and are defined as follows:

(1) Elementary School Principal: An administrative or supervisory officer responsible for an elementary school, usually limited to a single school or attendance area (Good, 1959:436).

(2) Supervisor or Elementary Principal: Any school officer charged with the responsibility for the

overseeing and improvement of elementary principals; often a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or director (Good, 1959:401).

(3) Classroom Teacher: A certified instructional staff member whose assignment includes teaching full-time in a single school building. This excludes librarians, counselors, administrators, and teachers serving more than one school, and other staff members not assigned in terms of definition.

(4) Organizational Climate: ". . . a delicate blend of interpretations by persons in the organization of their jobs and roles in the organization" (Cornell, 1955:222).

(5) Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ): Created by Andrew W. Halpin and Donald B. Croft (Halpin, 1966:148-150). A measurement device designed ". . . to dimensionalize the behaviors that define the organizational climate of schools" (Hayes, 1973:3) and ". . . to place schools on a continuum from closed to open climate" (Mullen, 1976:9). Halpin and Croft's (1963:2-5) Six Climates are defined as follows:

(a) The Open Climate describes an energetic, lively organization which is moving toward its goals, and which provides satisfaction for the group members' social needs. Leadership acts emerge easily and appropriately from both the group and the leader. The members are preoccupied disproportionately

with neither task achievement nor social-needs satisfaction; satisfaction on both counts seems to be obtained easily and almost effortlessly. The main characteristic of this climate is the 'authenticity' of the behavior that occurs among all the members.

(b)   The Autonomous Climate is described as one in which leadership acts emerge primarily from the group. The leader exerts little control over the group members; high Esprit results primarily from social-needs satisfaction. Satisfaction from task achievement is also present, but to a lesser degree.

(c)   The Controlled Climate is characterized best as impersonal and highly task-oriented. The group's behavior is directed primarily toward task accomplishment, while relatively little attention is given to behavior oriented to social-needs satisfaction. Esprit is fairly high, but it reflects achievement at some expense to social-needs satisfaction. This climate lacks openness, or 'authenticity' of behavior, because the group is disproportionately preoccupied with task achievement.

(d)   The Familiar Climate is highly personal, but under-controlled. The members of this organization satisfy their social needs, but pay relatively little attention to social control in respect to task accomplishment. Accordingly, Esprit is not extremely high simply because the group members secure little satisfaction from task achievement. Hence, much of the behavior within this climate can be construed as 'inauthentic.'

(e)   The Paternal Climate is characterized best as one in which the principal constrains the emergence of leadership acts from the group and attempts to initiate most of these acts himself. The leadership skills within the group are not used to supplement the principal's own ability to initiate leadership. Accordingly, some leadership acts are not even attempted. In short, little satisfaction is obtained in respect to

either achievement or social needs; hence, Esprit among the members is low.

(f) The Closed Climate is characterized by a high degree of apathy on the part of all members of the organization. The organization is not 'moving'; Esprit is low because the group members secure neither social-needs satisfaction nor the satisfaction that comes from task achievement. The members' behavior can be construed as 'inauthentic'; indeed, the organization seems to be stagnant.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND

RELATED RESEARCH

Introduction

A review of literature and related research yielded
information about both organizational climate and the
principal's role in school effectiveness. These variables
are treated separately and in their relationship to one
another. The concept of organizational climate will be
discussed under the following sections: (1) Definitions of
Organizational Climate, and (2) Conceptualizations and
Measures of Organizational Climate.

The concept of the principal's role in school effec-
tiveness reviews research as it relates to both leadership
behaviors of principals and the role of school climate in
effective school operation.

Definitions of Organizational Climate

In an article published in the <u>Phi Delta Kappan</u>,
Francis Cornell (1955:222) originated the term "organiza-
tional climate." Cornell defined organizational climate
as:

. . . a blend of perceptions by persons in an organization concerning their jobs or roles in relation to colleagues and their roles within the organization.

In a study dealing with behavior of role participants in a bank setting, Chris Argyris (1958:501) defined organizational climate as a living complexity composed of three related systems or variables: formal organizational procedures, personal needs, and ". . . the complicated pattern of variables associated with the individual's efforts to accommodate his own needs with those of the organization."

Forehand and Gilmer (1964:362) defined organizational climate as:

The set of characteristics that describe an organization and that (a) distinguish the organization from other organizations, (b) are relatively enduring over time, and (c) influence the behavior of people in the organization.

Halpin (1966:131) suggested 1966 that organizational climate was to the organization what personality was to the individual.

Organizational climate was defined by Tagiuri and Litwin (1968:27) as:

. . . a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of the organization, that is (a) experienced by its members, (b) influences their behavior, and (c) can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics (or attitudes) of the organization.

Foreman (1968:375) defined climate as involving at least three sets of variables: (1) environmental

variables, such as size and structure; (2) personal variables, such as motivations, attitudes, desires and needs; and (3) outcome variables, such as satisfaction, job motivation and productivity.

A visit to several schools demonstrates that there are major differences in school climates. Halpin (1966:131) noted:

> In one school the teachers and the principal are zestful and exude confidence in what they are doing. They find pleasure in working with each other; this pleasure is transmitted to students. . . . In a second school the brooding discontentment of teachers is palpable; the principal tries to hide his incompetence and his lack of direction behind a cloak of authority. . . . And the psychological sickness of such a faculty spills over on the students who, in their own frustration, feed back to teachers a mood of despair. A third school is marked by neither joy nor despair, but by hollow ritual . . . in a strange way the show doesn't seem to be 'for real.'

Hoy and Miskel (1982:185) described climate as:

> . . . an end product of the school groups -- students, teachers, administrators -- as they work to balance the organizational and individual aspects of a social system. The end product includes shared values, social beliefs, and social standards.

Conceptualization and Measures of Organizational Climate

Hoy and Miskel (1982:215) described organizational climate as consisting of a set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behavior of the people in a school. The four important

conceptualizations of organizational climate as outlined by Hoy and Miskel (1982:215) included: (1) the climate of interaction among teachers or between teachers and principals; (2) the climate which portrays schools as lying along a continuum of participative to exploitive-authoritative managerial systems; (3) the conceptualization which views school climate in terms of a continuum of control over students, from humanistic to custodial; and (4) the conceptualization of school climate in terms of development and control processes.

The conceptualization of organizational climate as the interaction among teachers, or between teachers and principals, has been described as open or closed in the study by Halpin and Croft (1962:175). Halpin and Croft mapped the organizational climate of schools when they observed that (1) schools differed markedly in their feel; (2) the concept of morale did not provide an index of this feel; (3) "ideal" principals who were assigned to schools where improvement was needed were immobilized by the faculty; and (4) the topic of organizational climate generated interest.

In their 1962 study, Halpin and Croft developed a descriptive questionnaire to identify important aspects of teacher-teacher and teacher-principal interactions. Each of the nearly one thousand items which were composed were designed to answer the basic question: To what extent is

this true of your school? From the original bank of items, they developed a final set of sixty-eight items called the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ). The sixty-eight items were grouped into eight factors, or subtests. Four of the subtests referred to the characteristics of the faculty group, and four described various components of teacher-principal interactions. The eight dimensions or subtests are presented and defined in Chapter 3.

Taken together, the eight subtests designed by Halpin and Croft created a profile of the climate in terms of the eight dimensions. The scores of all subtests and schools in the Halpin and Croft study were standardized so that the mean score was fifty and the standard deviation was ten.

Not only were the profiles of each of the seventy-one elementary schools in the Halpin and Croft study mapped, but also identified, through factor analysis, were six basic school climates which were arrayed along a rough continuum from open to closed: open, autonomous, controlled, familiar, paternal, closed (Halpin, 1966:150-181). School climates are presented and defined in Chapter 3.

The conceptualization of climate as an interaction among teachers, or between teachers and principals, can be described as open or closed and has been measured most often with the OCDQ (Hoy, 1982:186).

As defined by the OCDQ, the climate of a school is clearly a description of the perceptions of the faculty. Halpin stated simply that the climate is open (or closed) if the faculty describes it as such.

Researchers such as Brown (1965:7) and Watkins (1968: 52) questioned the usefulness of the six climates identified by Halpin and Croft. Halpin and Croft (1966:104) themselves had some reservations concerning the middle climates:

> We have said that these climates were ranked in respect to openness versus closedness. But we fully recognize how crude this ranking is. As in the case of most ranking or scaling, we are much more confident about the climates described at each end of the listing than we are about those described in between.

John H.M. Andrews (1965:333), in one of the most comprehensive validity studies of the OCDQ, concluded that the eight dimensions of the OCDQ possessed good construct validity but that the designation of discrete climate categories added nothing to the meaning already present in the subtests, and in fact, detracted from the OCDQ. Hoy and Miskel (1982:191) agreed that the discrete middle-climate classifications were less convincing than the extremes. They did argue, however, that the open-closed continuum did provide a good theoretical description of climate, and did map that climate.

One way of determining the relative openness or closedness of a set of school climates was described by Hoy and Miskel in the following climate openness index:

OPENNESS INDEX = Thrust Score
+ Esprit Score
- Disengagement Score

According to Hoy and Miskel (1982:191):

> The higher the index, the more open the climate of the school. Recall that these three OCDQ subtests are the most important characteristics of open and closed climates, and when used together, they tend to identify the open and closed profiles described by Halpin and Croft. When schools with open and closed climates are contrasted, open climates tend to be higher in esprit, thrust, and consideration and lower in disengagement, hindrance, aloofness, and production emphasis.

The OCDQ has also been criticized by researchers like Carver and Sergiovanni (1969:71-81) because it was not well suited to study large, urban, or secondary schools. This criticism was based in part on Halpin and Croft's "prototypic profile method" of determining climate since the norms used to classify the schools using the prototypic profile method were based on seventy-one elementary schools in the original study.

Hoy (1972b:41-51) argued, however, that although the prototypic profiles method of designating discrete climates among secondary schools was not especially useful, the openness index did provide a means of examining relative openness and closedness. Furthermore, all the subtests of the OCDQ measured important components of the

organizational climates of secondary as well as elementary

schools. In summarizing the usefulness of the OCDQ, Hoy

and Miskel (1982:192-193) stated:

> In conclusion, the OCDQ seems to be a useful
> device for charting school climate in terms of
> teacher-teacher and teacher-principal relation-
> ships, which can be considered social standards
> or shared agreements concerning the acceptability
> of behavior. The eight subtests constitute what
> appear to be valid and reliable measures of
> school climate. These subtests form a profile of
> a school that can be used for research, evalua-
> tion, inservice work, or self-analysis. In
> addition, the openness index provides a means of
> comparing one's school with others along an open-
> closed continuum. Halpin and Croft suggest that
> openness might be a better criterion of a
> school's effectiveness than many that have
> entered the field of educational administration
> and masquerade as criteria. Although some may
> argue about whether or not an open climate is
> good, the OCDQ does provide a 'personality
> battery' of scales for diagnostic as well as
> prescriptive purposes.

A second conceptualization of climate is one which

portrays schools as lying along a continuum of participa-

tive to exploitive-authoritative managerial systems, which

may be operationalized by a profile of organizational

characteristics.

Likert (1961:4) developed a continuum along which

organizations can be placed according to the character of

their superordinate-subordinate relationships. The

organizational types, or managerial systems, fall into four

categories: System 1 -- Exploitive-Authoritative, System

2 -- Benevolent-Authoritative, System 3 -- Consultive, and

System 4 -- Participative.

Likert's Profile of Organizational Characteristics (POC) was originally used to study business organizations. Likert was interested in how changes in the climate of the organization were related to objective performance criteria, such as productivity, earnings, and employee satisfaction. Likert (1961:123) concluded that, in general, the closer a profile approached the participative (System 4), the greater the likelihood of superior performance.

A third way to conceptualize the climate of the school is to review the dominant patterns the teachers and principals use to control students. Willard Waller (1932) studied the school as a social system, and called attention to the importance of pupil control with regard to both structural and normative aspects of school culture.

There is little question that pupil control is a central aspect of school life. Research initiated by Donald J. Willower, Terry I. Eidell, and Wayne K. Hoy (1969:110-127) at Pennsylvania State University provided a basis for the perspective that the concept of pupil control could be used to distinguish among school climates.

Willower and the other Penn State researchers were the first to outline a pupil-control continuum from custodial to humanistic. They described the pupil-control ideology as how school officials viewed the students.

The pupil-control ideology (PCI) (Appleberry and Hoy, 1969:74-85) was developed in order to operationalize the concept of a pupil-control orientation along the custodial-humanistic continuum. The PCI measures pupil-control orientation by pooling the individual ideologies of professional staff members of the school. This represents an estimate of the model orientation of the school and provides an index of the degree of custodialism (or humanism) with respect to the pupil-control orientation of the school.

Research by Hoy (1972a:38-51) concluded that schools characterized by a humanistic pupil-control orientation would foster opportunities for meaningful and authentic social relations, producing students with a positive commitment to their schools. A custodial pupil-control orientation, according to Hoy, should provide an atmosphere that limits identification with teachers and the school and may indeed produce a sense of alienation among students.

The results of Hoy's study (1972a) also indicated that the principals have an important role in the development of climates conducive to student commitment and sense of power. Schools with principals who were high in thrust and those characterized by low hindrance had significantly less student alienation in terms of powerlessness. Hoy's research concluded that the more custodial and closed the

school climate, the greater the student sense of alienation.

The fourth conceptualization and measure of organizational climate is based on a need-press model to explain behavior. As early as 1938, Henry A. Murray stressed the necessity of explaining behavior as an outcome of the relationship between the individual and his or her environment. Murray's work was based on the research of Kurt Lewin (1935) who formulated that behavior (B) was a function (f) of the interaction of personality (P) and environment (E). This was expressed by the formula B=f(PxE). Environmental stresses were defined by Murray (1938) as the external situational counterparts to internalized personality needs. Behavior in the environment was described as a function of the congruence between need and press.

Based on the thirty basic needs identified by Murray, George G. Stern and Carl R. Steinhoff (1965) developed the organizational climate index (OCI) for use in public schools.

Stern (1970:271-273) defined development press and control press as follows:

> The term 'development press' refers to an organizational climate that stresses intellectual activity, achievement, practicality, respect for individual integrity, and concern for procedural orderliness. The term 'control press,' on the other hand, refers to an organizational climate

that is characterized by high levels of constraint and restrictiveness.

The OCI allows a profile of organizational climate to be drawn with a school's scores on the six first-order factors.

The four types of organizational climates which Stern and Steinhoff theorized could be conceptualized by cross-partitioning the development-press and control-press axes.

Owens and Steinhoff (1969:252-263) suggested that research indicated that most public schools fell into quadrants II and IV.

Hoy and Miskel (1982:214) summarized the importance of school climate by explaining:

> Students' sense of powerlessness, meaninglessness and normlessness can be identified as basic dimensions of alienation and analyzed in terms of organizational climate characteristics. In general, although other variables affect the level of alienation in a school, the more open or humanistic the climate, the less student alienation there is. Strategies can be developed for changing the climates of schools.

The Principal's Role in School Effectiveness

Many of the researchers on effective schools (Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979; Hoover, 1978; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; and Weber, 1971) have emphasized the importance of the school principal in bringing about high levels of student achievement.

One of the first researchers to provide an alternative to Coleman's critical 1966 conclusion that schools did not make a difference was Weber (1971). Weber's interviews and observations at inner-city schools in New York, Los Angeles and Kansas City revealed that in successful schools there was a decided emphasis on reading; careful and frequent evaluation of pupil progress; and a pleasant, orderly and quiet atmosphere. Leadership appeared to be a significant factor; school administrators set the tone for the school and assumed responsibility for instruction and allocation of resources to reach school goals. Process-outcome research like Weber's focused on school processes which resulted in improved student achievement.

Brookover et al. (1979:143-144) identified differences among schools with students from the same SES levels and cited some results of comparisons between high- and low-achieving schools:

> Teachers and principals in higher achieving schools express the belief that students can master their academic work, and that they expect them to do so, and they are committed to seeing that their students learn to read, and do mathematics, and other academic work. These teachers' and principals' expectations are expressed in such a way that the students perceive that they are expected to learn and the school academic norms are recognized as setting a standard of high achievement.

Of leadership differences, Brookover et al. concluded:

> Lack of pressure relative to teacher performance and little emphasis on increased achievement

appeared to differentiate low achieving schools from those more effective.

In the descriptions of Brookover et al. there was a shift in perspective from the material aspects of the school, such as Coleman had researched, to a cluster of attitudes and perceptions which affected student achievement.

Another major research study which focused on school processes and school leadership was Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children (Rutter and others, 1979). Fifteen hundred junior high age students in twelve inner-city schools of London were assessed on school entry variables at ten years of age and reassessed at exit three years later. Schools were identified as either schools that appeared to exert a positive influence on pupil progress or those less successful based on an analysis of the standardized test scores.

During observations, interviews and surveys conducted over two years, the researchers concluded that the influence of the head teacher (supervisor) was very considerable in bringing about high levels of student achievement.

In summarizing eight research studies of positive leadership behaviors, Sweeney (1982:350) stated:

> The evidence clearly indicates that principals do make a difference, for leadership behavior was positively associated with school outcomes in each of the eight studies. Of equal importance

was the emergence of specific leadership behaviors consistently associated with effective schools.

Sweeney suggested that effective schools have effective leaders, and that much of what the school did to promote achievement was within the principal's power to influence and control.

In summarizing, Sweeney (1982:349) identified six leadership behaviors of principals that were consistently associated with effective schools. They were:

(1) Emphasize Achievement: They give high priority to activities, instruction, and materials that foster academic success. Effective principals are visible and involved in what goes on in the school and its classrooms. They convey to teachers their commitment to achievement.

(2) Set Instructional Strategies: They take part in instructional decision making and accept responsibility for decisions about methods, materials, and evaluation procedures. They develop plans for solving students' learning problems.

(3) Provide an Orderly Atmosphere: They do what is necessary to ensure that the school's climate is conducive to learning; it is quiet, pleasant, well-maintained.

(4) Frequently Evaluate Student Progress: They monitor student achievement on a regular basis. Principals set expectations for the entire school and check to make sure those expectations are being met. They know how well their students are performing as compared to students in other schools.

(5) Coordinate Instructional Programs: They interrelate course content, sequences of objectives, and materials in all grades. They see what goes on in the classroom has

bearing on the overall goals and program of the school.

(6) Support Teachers: Effective principals communicate with teachers about goals and procedures. They support teachers' attendance at professional meetings and workshops, and provide inservice that promotes improved teaching.

More recent researchers have forwarded the proposition that schools are rarely effective unless the principal is a proficient instructional leader.

Three recent studies have examined the role of the principal from a variety of perspectives. They provide evidence of the influence principals exert on their school's climate and their students' progress.

A study by Richard L. Andrews and others (1986) in Seattle disclosed a statistical correlation between student achievement gains in reading and mathematics on one hand and teachers' perceptions of their principals as instructional leaders on the other. This correlation was specifically strong in schools with a high proportion of low-income students. The study underscored the importance of a principal's high visibility around the school in creating and sustaining a context for effective instruction.

William Rutherford and others (1983) conducted a study directed primarily at developing a typology of the interventions by which principals promote instructional improvement efforts among their teachers. The findings

indicated that principals were most successful at implementing improvements in practice if they clearly communicated their expectations, provided technical assistance and monitored the results.

Thomas D. Bird and Judith Little (1985) performed extensive case studies in five secondary schools and then surveyed administrators, department heads and teachers in these five and three additional schools to gather further information about leaders' expectations and practices. Their findings suggested that effective instructional leadership consisted in cultivating and sustaining norms of civility, collegiality and continuous improvement.

Ellis (1986), in the National Association of Elementary School Principals publication, Research Roundup, summarized the importance of the principal as instructional leader when he stated:

> Taken as a whole, these studies do not provide any single prescription or formula for effective instructional leadership. Nevertheless, we can derive three useful generalizations from their findings: (1) effective instructional leaders set high expectations and reinforce these expectations through their daily interactions with staff and students; (2) effective instructional leaders are responsive to the socioeconomic context of their schools and communities; and (3) such leaders cultivate norms of collegiality and mutual trust among their teachers.
>
> Further, the studies demonstrate that a committed, caring principal can make all the difference in the world between a school where students and teachers merely 'put in time' and a thriving and successful institution where

principal, teachers and students enthusiastically participate in a common vision of excellence.

Squires et al. (1983), in their research of effective schools, suggested that in effective schools active leadership created a school climate in which success was expected, academics were emphasized, and the environment was orderly. Squires et al. argued that teachers and administrators in effective schools emphasized a curriculum of reading, writing and math in a businesslike environment that promoted and reinforced disciplined instruction that took up much of the school day. Squires et al. believed that students could not be successfully engaged in academic work in a disorderly environment and that effective schools generally recognized a uniform standard of discipline, which was enforced fairly by administrators and teachers.

Squires et al. (1983:6) argued that student success was clearly related to school climate which was, in turn, related to leadership. They stated:

> Three leadership processes build and maintain a school's climate: modeling, feedback, and consensus building. Leadership generally comes from the principal, although teachers may provide it as well. Principals, in particular, model appropriate behavior, which supports a positive school climate. Principals support inservice programs, monitor classrooms and supervise instruction, and provide time for teachers to plan together. By doing so, they set the tone and focus of the school.

In summary, the research indicated that principals did make a difference. The implications were that school

effectiveness was enhanced by principals who emphasized achievement, set instructional strategies, provided an orderly school atmosphere, frequently evaluated pupil progress, coordinated instruction and supported teachers.

Sweeney (1982:350) argued that taken as a whole, research results suggested that principals who emphasized instruction, were assertive, results-oriented, and able to develop and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning made a difference -- one reflected in elevated school outcomes.

Sweeney recommended that there was an obvious need to continue, even intensify, school effectiveness research. Sweeney's recommendations were to focus future research on the so-called average schools and to clearly define and describe instructional leadership behaviors since in most cases they were stated in vague and general terms.

This study was undertaken to gain information through measurement and comparison about the differences between the organizational climate scores of Wyoming elementary schools, and how such differences related to principal ratings on the leadership behaviors of: supports teaching, emphasizes achievement, and provides orderly atmosphere. The next topic to be considered will be the procedures used in the study.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

The problem of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the organizational climate scores of Wyoming elementary schools, and how such differences related to principals' ratings on identified leadership behaviors.

This chapter will describe the nature of the population surveyed, the sampling procedures used, the categories investigated, the data collection methods used, the methods used for organization of data, the hypotheses, the analysis of data and the precautions taken for accuracy.

Population Description and Sampling Procedure

Cochran (1977) cited four principal advantages of sampling as compared with complete enumeration: (1) reduced cost, (2) greater speed, (3) greater scope, and (4) greater accuracy.

This study was limited to a study of a sample of Wyoming elementary schools. Only public schools were included in the study. A random sample of fifty Wyoming elementary schools was drawn from a listing of eligible

public schools who volunteered to participate in the study. Only elementary schools with seven or more full-time elementary teachers were sampled. Appendix A shows the 159 eligible elementary schools in Wyoming as well as the number of full-time classroom teachers employed at each school. Of those eligible, sixty-three Wyoming elementary schools volunteered to participate in the study. Of that number, fifty elementary schools, representing 31.8 percent of the 159 eligible schools in Wyoming, were randomly selected to be included in the study.

District teachers in sample schools were asked to complete a school checklist which measured the teachers' perceptions of the school principal on the following three leadership behaviors: (1) Emphasizes Achievement, (2) Provides Orderly Atmosphere, and (3) Supports Teachers. The results of the school checklist were used to rank the principal as high, medium or low on each of the three leadership behaviors listed above.

Categories for Investigation

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the relationship between organizational climate scores and the teachers' rating of principals on identified leadership behaviors. In addition, the survey results revealed a composite score indicative of each school's organizational climate. These scores were compared to analyze for

interaction between the climate scores of sample schools and school size.

Biographical data were collected concerning the school principal's age, gender, total years of teaching experience, and total years of administrative experience (see Appendix C). Data were also collected concerning school size.

The ratings of principals were provided by district teachers who were asked to complete a school checklist which measured the teachers' perceptions of the school principal on the three leadership behaviors: (1) Emphasizes Achievement, (2) Provides Orderly Atmosphere, and (3) Supports Teachers. The ratings were used to rank principals as being high, medium, or low in each of the leadership behaviors listed above. High and low rankings were assigned by the researcher using plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean. (A copy of the school checklist is presented in Appendix B.)

Method of Collecting Data

After identifying sample schools in Wyoming, a letter of introduction (see Appendix G) was forwarded to the superintendent/supervisor of sample elementary schools three weeks prior to the proposed administration date of the OCDQ and school checklist.