The function of managers-leaders in influencing the school atmosphere for the efficient functioning of educational units. Exploration of the viewpoints of directors and instructors in the Secondary Education of Fthiotida

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of the principal, as the leader of the school unit, in shaping the school climate, to achieve its effective operation by studying the opinions of the principals and teachers who serve in the secondary schools of Fhiotida. To carry out the research and obtain a comprehensive picture regarding the views of the directors and teachers working in the Secondary Education quantitative and qualitative methods were used. A survey was conducted among the teachers of the Secondary Education of Fthiotida. An electronic questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. What was established by the research are the positive opinions that exist about the school climate, as well as about the school leadership and the effective operation of the school units.

Key words: Leadership, School climate, Education

Introduction

Education has always been the most important institution for providing the necessary knowledge to developing people, contributing to the development and development of any organized society. The basic educational and functional unit of any educational system, governed by a framework of principles and regulations that aim at structuring, coherence, and relevance of all its activities, is the school. In modern times, the school unit is included in public services since the laws and current educational provisions are considered for the completion of its educational work. Besides, for the Greek educational reality, as defined in Article 16 of the Greek Constitution, "education is a basic mission of the State and aims at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical education of Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and their formation into free and responsible citizens". For this goal of education to be achieved, the functioning of the school must be effective.

The school, however, is also a social system (Kambourides, 2002), whose staff, e.g., the principal, the teachers, and the students, have the main responsibility for the successful course and satisfaction of the work it does. As mentioned in the literature, among the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of the school is the favorable working climate, or otherwise the good school climate. In other words, the effectiveness of the school unit is based on several factors that have a decisive effect on ensuring a positive climate and good interpersonal relations between the members of the school community. The degree of success of interpersonal relationships is based on the quality of the climate formed at school. The main characteristics of a good climate in a school community are unity, respect, and exchange of views, as well as the possibility of freely expressing ideas and opinions, without suffering any feeling of fear. The guideline for maintaining a positive climate is the degree of development of interpersonal relationships between the principal and teachers, which is directly reflected in the effectiveness of students and the degree of their performance, and this is because

students perceive the climate prevailing in the school unit, the result of which is their degree of performance (Pashiardis, 2004).

It is noted that in recent years there have been several studies on the factors that contribute to the proper functioning and effectiveness of the school unit. From this research, it is found that effectiveness is intertwined with the quality of educational work but also with equality in the ability to participate in this work, without any discrimination, which leads to its success. The positive climate that exists within the school unit acts as a driving force for good operation for all involved persons, teachers, and students (Pashiardis, 2001). This means that when the atmosphere in the school unit exudes a positive aura due to all the parameters that make up the school environment, then the mental mood of teachers is affected, respectively, and to a significant extent, which is reflected in their productivity, i.e. in the exercise of their educational and teaching work (Savvidis, 2015). The school as an organizational structure consists of members, as well as a hierarchical pyramid, in which each of these members assumes a role. Consequently, at the top of this hierarchical pyramid is someone who has a coordinating role of all activities in the school with a view to achieving goals, as well as responsibility for decision-making. This means that the person in whom all the actions of administrative and leadership responsibility will be concentrated, mainly the principal or the principal of each school unit, contributes significantly to the formation of the corresponding climate, positive or negative, that prevails there. Of course, the result shows whether someone is only a good manager or a good manager or even a good leader. What is considered necessary for the effectiveness of the school unit, according to the relevant literature on administrative leadership, is the combination of leader and principal (Saitis, 2014). The principal-leader, as the main orchestrator of the operation of each school unit, has the primary responsibility for the qualitative formation of a climate inspired by his vision for the school and by his cooperation with all other members of the school community, for it to become a reality. By defining himself, the principal-leader, a framework of teamwork, cooperation, cohesion, and consistency in the execution of school activities, motivation and activation of teachers to achieve the goals set by the school unit, as well as undertaking innovative actions, contributes to the successful course of the school process (Pashiardi, 2001, Pashiardis, 2004). Therefore, the personality of the person who directs and leads a school unit must have various characteristics, each of which influences his actions and determines a specific behavior (Kambourides, 2002).

Literature review
The role of the principal in shaping the school climate
According to previous research, for the proper and effective creation of a positive and favorable climate in a school unit, the contribution of the person exercising the administration to it is important. The degree of communication between the principal and the other members of the school community, as well as the extent of the importance attributed by everyone to it for the formation of the school climate. Communication can be considered the way in which information, opinions and ideas are exchanged between people in general and members of a school organization, who try to interpret their meaning to be more effective in the performance of their duties (Dance, 1970). As it is argued, the best functioning of a school organization, like any organization, is based on good communication, which is why the effectiveness of communication depends, primarily, on accuracy in decoding information, transmission, and feedback. This means that with the quality of the relationships created in the school, all its members are given the opportunity to interact with each other in a climate of communication, which leads to effective cooperation.

This means that teachers act to satisfy the goals and desires set by the educational community as a whole and hierarchically, aiming at the proper functioning of the school unit. Consequently, the effectiveness of the school depends on the capacity, will and alertness of the principal to communicate, thus communicating the success or failure of the expected

results. The principal has not only the role of leader but also of mentor, coordinating and informing the teachers at the school unit about the responsibilities that are necessary to be carried out. The systematic dialogue between those involved in a school community is what will lead to the creation of a pleasant and friendly environment. The continuous monitoring and observation of teachers during the educational process by the principal helps to better inform and improve communication between them. Ethics, honesty and communication are elements of an effective communication between the principal and teachers (Pashiardi, 2001).

The headmaster through a series of actions examines the action plans democratically and in cooperation with the teachers, considering not only his own point of view but also that of the teachers. Through the freedom of expression of teachers and their cooperation, you achieve a pleasant school climate. In addition, the structure and infrastructure of a school unit undoubtedly plays a decisive role for the cooperation between the school management and teachers. The principal is responsible for cultivating a sense of collegiality and teamwork and therefore contributes to the smooth and balanced communication of the members of a school community (Pashiardi, 2001).

Undoubtedly, the role of the head teacher influences the formation of a positive climate and this in turn affects the efficiency and quality of work of teachers. The principal is responsible for planning and understanding the teachers' competencies so that the assignment of the school's tasks is done correctly. The assignment of both teaching and extracurricular work should be done equally and based on the personality, talent, and abilities of teachers. However, the principal should be aware that teachers' desire for work and their efficiency depend on the degree of satisfaction of personal needs (Saitis, 2007). The personal interest of the principal in the problems suffered by each teacher, respect for the personality of teachers, equal treatment, and the choice of type of administration contribute to the formation of a favorable climate. It should be noted that the principal acts as an instigator to improve teachers' knowledge and skills, motivating their own personal improvement. However, the creation of a positive climate is based on the appropriate handling of the principal who in turn is obliged to control, observe, and correct the behavior of the members of the school community in such a way as to avoid any conflict in their cooperation.

Another factor deriving from the role of the principal and influencing the formation of a favorable school climate is the good communication he can have with his students (Pashiardi, 2001, Saiti & Saitis, 2012). A key obligation of the principal is to create an appropriate and inclusive communication relationship between teachers and students. The teaching staff of the school community, within the school of inclusion, should care, respect and motivate all students, without discrimination, to achieve their goals and desires, enhancing their self-confidence (Guijosa et al., 2016). In this way, students will also contribute significantly to the formation of a positive climate of the school community. Also, the principal contributes significantly to the formation of a favorable climate based on the degree of communication he will develop with the parents of the students of his school (Katsaros, 2008). According to the international bibliography, good and frequent communication between these two social actors leads to a smooth and pleasant communication, favoring positively the climate of cooperation between them. Consequently, the creation and maintenance of a positive climate in a school community depends on the personality and educational level of the principal who undertakes to offer any support to the people with whom he cooperates for the benefit of the school (Chatzipanagiotou, 2012).

Methodology
Purpose of the study
The purpose of the empirical part of this research was to describe the views of 213 teachers regarding the role of principals in shaping the school climate for the effective functioning of school units. The investigated research questions were:
1. How is the school climate described by the research participants?

2. What is the leadership's contribution to the formation of a healthy and productive school climate?

3. Are differences of opinion observed based on their demographics – their individual characteristics?

Research tool.

The data collection tool of the research was the questionnaire in electronic form. The questionnaire that was used is a configuration of the questionnaire, cited by Passiardi (2001:97-100), based on the theoretical part of the work, to be able to answer the examined research questions. It consisted of 2 sections. The first section recorded the demographic data of the research participants and more specifically, gender, specialty, work relationship, years of educational service, years of prior service at the school and role at the school (Educator, Principal). The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 27 questions with the help of which the school climate and the contribution of the principals of the schools in which they serve were investigated. The evaluation of the examined statements was done with the help of dichotomous Likert scales (Yes/No). Cronbach's alpha coefficient values was equal to 0.898 for all 27 questions. Based on these results, the questionnaire can be used in another similar research.

Sample

According to the results, 73.2% of participants are women and 80.3% work as permanent employees. The years of educational service with the highest occurrence rate were more than 19 years with an occurrence rate equal to 45.1%. Then 28.6% stated from 15 to 19 years, 18.8% less than 5 years and 1.9% between 10 and 14 years. Then 47.9% stated that they work less than 5 years in school, 17.4% from 5 to 9, 16.4% from 1- to 14, 10.8% from 15 to 19 and 7.5% more than 19 years. The years working in the same. Regarding their specialty, 40.85% were in the sciences, 38.03% in theory, 15.96% in health and wellness, top 2.35% in visual arts and 2.82% in natural sciences.

Methodology

After collecting the data, they were registered and coded in the statistical program SPSS V29. Descriptive statistical analysis methods were then applied to describe the responses to the 27 questions of interest. As their grading was done with the help of a dichotomous scale, the description of the answers was done with the help of frequency tables and graphs. Exploratory Factor Analysis was then applied to extract indicators for a more detailed analysis of the results and to answer the research questions. The factor analysis was based on the examination of first factors with Varimax rotation and cutting off the loadings at the 0.5 point. After the construction of the factors, a categorization was made based on the 0.5 point, where average values of the index greater than the value of 0.5 were categorized as 1 = Yes and values less than 0.5 were categorized as 0 = No. Finally, to examine the effects of demographic characteristics on the indicators, the X2 independence test was applied.

Results

In the first part of the analysis, the responses of the survey participants were described with the help of percentages and frequencies per category. A high percentage of agreement was found in almost all statements. More specifically, through their responses, the research participants showed almost complete agreement that the verbal feedback that teachers receive from their director regarding the work they offer is useful (N=201, N% =94.4%), that teachers are free to determine their own work schedule in their classroom (N=194, N%=91.1%) and that there is a possibility for taking initiatives and responsibilities in the school area (N=192, N%=90.1%). In these cases, 9 out of 10 survey participants answered positively. Subsequently, about 8 out of 10 agreed that they are able to perform to the maximum extent possible for the good of the students of the school (N=177, N%=83.1%), that the verbal feedback that the teachers receive is useful by their evaluator regarding the work they offer (N=174, N%=81.7%), that the teachers' work is recognized (N=173, N%=81.2%) and that the

written feedback that teachers get from their manager in their work (N=168, N%=78.9%). This was followed by the agreements that the students' needs have a central position in what happens in the school area (N=163, N%=76.5%), that the school regulations and official procedures guide the educational/administrative (N= 160, N%=75.1%), that the quality of the education provided is good for the students? (N=150, N%=70.4%) and that the school environment is pleasant for students (N=148, N%=69.5%). In that the offered education aims, among other things, at the development of students' abilities (N=124, N%=58.2%) and that the offered education helps prepare the students' future careers (N=110, N%=51.6%) the answers were quite lower but greater than 50%. Finally, to the question that the decisions implemented in schools are made by the appropriate persons (N=96, N%=45.1%) the agreement rate was less than 50%.

Table 1. Responses

	No		Yes	
	N	N%	N	N%
Is the work done by teachers recognized?	40	18.8%	173	81.2%
Do you believe that school regulations and formal procedures guide your educational/administrative work?	53	24.9%	160	75.1%
Do you think that the written feedback that teachers receive from their principal on their work or does the principal give to teachers is useful?	45	21.1%	168	78.9%
Do you think that the verbal feedback that teachers receive from their principal regarding the work offered or given by the principal to teachers is useful?	12	5.6%	201	94.4%
Do you think that the oral feedback that teachers receive from their evaluator regarding the work they offer is useful?	39	18.3%	174	81.7%
Is it possible to take initiatives and responsibilities at school?	21	9.9%	192	90.1%
Are teachers free to set their own work schedule in their classroom?	19	8.9%	194	91.1%
Do you think that the decisions implemented in schools are made by the right people?	117	54.9%	96	45.1%
Do you think that the needs of your students are central to what happens in the school environment?	50	23.5%	163	76.5%
Do you believe that the quality of education provided is good for students?	63	29.6%	150	70.4%
Do you think you are able to perform to the maximum extent possible for the good of the students of your school?	36	16.9%	177	83.1%
Do you think that the education offered helps prepare students for their future careers?	103	48.4%	110	51.6%
Do you believe that the education offered aims, among other things, at developing students' competences?	89	41.8%	124	58.2%
Do you think that the school environment is pleasant for students?	65	30.5%	148	69.5%

A more detailed analysis was carried out, as an attempt to construct indicators with the help of factor analysis. Factor analysis was used to extract new dimensions of the questionnaire. The first step was to assess the goodness of fit of the data, with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. The results showed that sampling is sufficient since the KMO test value is greater than 0.7 (KMO = 0.706). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (X^2 = 3558.941, df=351, p < 0.001), thus rejecting the null hypothesis of orthogonality of the variables or equivalently that the data set is suitable for a data reduction technique. The minimum extraction value was equal to 0.511, which means that 51.1% was the minimum percentage of shared variance found, which means that all variables are potential candidates for entry into a potential component, as low values imply small communality with the remaining variables and are candidates for non-participation in the final model. According to

figure 1, the maximum number of factors that can be generated based on their eigenvalue (Eigenvalue > 1) is 6 factors. Nevertheless, the percentage of explained variance greater than 5% was observed only in the first 5 factors which means that only the first 5 factors make sense to examine. Nevertheless, all 7 components were examined, and the final decision was based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated as an index of internal consistency.
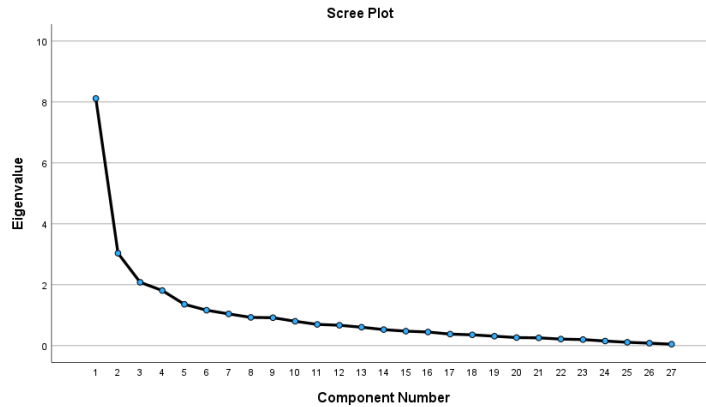
Figure 1. Selection of indices based on eigenvalue.

Six new dimensions - indicators were extracted, Communication, Effective operation, Healthy working environment, Expectations and Cooperation. The reliability of each index, as a measure of internal consistency, is presented in table 2. According to the results, in all cases an alpha index greater than 0.7 was present, confirming the correctness of their use.

Table 2. New dimensions

Variable	Description	Alpha	N
Communication	Effective communication	0.891	7
Efficient operation	Student performance	0.856	6
Healthy working environment	Whether the work environment is not toxic	0.707	4
Expectations	Degree of fulfilment of expectations	0.806	2
Collaboration	Participation in decisions	0.893	3
School climate	Overall school climate	0.898	27

After calculating the new indicators, they were categorized into two categories. These were the category "Yes" for a mean score greater than 0.5 and "No" for values less than or equal to 0.5. The distribution of the categories of the calculated dimensions is presented in table 10. According to the results, it was found very good cooperation (N=202, N%=94.8%), school climate (N=197, N%=92.5%), communication (N=191, N%=89.7%) and a healthy work environment (N=191, N%=89.7%). The score of the expectations dimension was lowest (N=174, N%=81.7%) and the effective functioning was considerably lower (N=126, N%=59.2%).

The last part of the analysis examined the effect of demographic characteristics on the new indicators. This investigation was done with the help of the X^2 independence test. The results showed that (See also Table 3) the role of the participants in the research is the most frequently appearing factor of change in the categories of the examined indicators with 4 out of 6 total effects. This was followed by the years of seniority at the school with 3 effects and the total seniority and work relationship with 2 effects. In addition, it was found that women reported a better collaborative climate compared to their male colleagues. It was then found that science major participants report less effective school functioning compared to their peers in different majors. Regarding the work relationship, it was found that permanent positioned education professionals, disagree to a greater extent on the effective operation of the school and on the productive school climate to a greater extent compared to the

substitutes. In addition, it was found that participants with less than 10 years of seniority are expected to have a more positive view of communication in their workplace compared to participants with more seniority of more than 10 years. But in the case of effective operation, participants with more than 20 years of service reported ineffective operation to a greater extent compared to participants with less than 20 years of service. Regarding the effect of seniority at the school, survey participants with more than 20 years of seniority had a lower proportion of agreement compared to the other seniority categories. Similarly, the expectations of the research participants who have more than 20 years of experience at the school are lower compared to the other categories of experience. Finally, the same seniority category disagreed to a greater extent about the productive school climate. The role of the research participants was the factor with the greatest impact on the analyzed indicators. More specifically it was found that the research participants who are principals showed a more optimistic perspective on communication, effective operation, healthy work environment and general school climate. It is worth noting that the managers who participated in the survey reported negative views only on effective operation.

Table 3. Significance value of demographics on the new dimensions

	Sex	Specialty	Employment relationship	Work Experience (Total)	Work Experience (School)	Role
Communication	0,95	0,642	0,186	*0,042*	*0,043*	*0,01*
Efficient operation	0,93	*0,016*	*0,012*	*<0,001*	0,301	*0,029*
Healthy working environment	0,28	0,642	0,347	0,752	0,07	*0,01*
Expectations	0,86	0,456	0,759	0,109	*0,032*	0,591
Collaboration	*0,04*	0,116	0,518	0,737	0,393	0,806
School climate	0,31	0,439	*0,039*	0,089	*0,002*	*0,031*

Discussion and conclusions

In this research, an attempt was made to investigate the views that teachers have regarding the role of school leadership in shaping the school climate and in the effective operation of the school unit. The research utilized quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain a holistic picture of the views of the teachers of the Regional Unit of Fthiotida. The results of the survey show that there are positive views on school climate, school leadership and effective school functioning. The findings of the research have common points with those of other studies, as presented below.

The first research question examined using qualitative and quantitative methods concerned the way participants describe the school climate in the school where they work. The results of the quantitative research show that the participants present a positive and healthy school climate, at the heart of which is the cooperation between the involved members. According to Tsakalidou and Goutziou (2023), the cooperation and communication of teachers and school directors are key points of a positive school environment that can promote the proper functioning and achievement of the goals of the school unit. Similarly, they point out that cooperation and communication between the involved school members are the key components of a positive school climate (Grazia & Molinari, 2021). Therefore, the presence of communication and cooperation also marks the formation of a healthy and productive school climate.

In this survey, teachers stated that communication is satisfactory as they have oral and written feedback on their work from their principal. The research by Tajasom and Ahmad (2011) also shows the important role that school principal feedback has in creating a positive climate. The researchers, as well as the participants of this research, emphasize that the

provision of feedback and especially positive feedback contributes to the development of a positive climate in the school unit. In the same context is the research of Valckx et al. (2020) which emphasizes that receiving feedback from school principals highlights the presence of a climate of trust and communication.

The survey also showed that the school where teachers serve is given freedom to set the classroom work schedule and the ability to take initiatives. This means that teachers value school leadership positively, experiencing the freedom and autonomy they need to carry out their educational work effectively. According to Dou et al. (2017), providing teachers with free work and autonomy is a factor that leads to effective school leadership on the one hand and a healthy school climate on the other. In essence, the results of the research, as well as the present one, agree with the theoretical framework of school leadership of the school climate, in which it is emphasized that the ability to take initiatives and autonomy leads to the formation of educational units that prevail in a positive climate (Smith et al., 2020).

Regarding the recognition of their work, teachers and principals stated that this exists. This result is also in line with the expectations of the survey participants. Similar findings are noted in Aslanargun's (2015) survey, which examined teachers' views on school leadership and school climate. Survey participants reported on their expectations of school principals in receiving recognition and support. The fulfillment of these expectations also led to the reporting of positive views on the school climate. Similar results are noted in the research of Morris et al. (2020) in which it seems that the experience of teacher recognition on the part of principals signals the prevalence of a desirable school leadership that leads to a positive school climate.

However, in the findings of the present research there is a concern on the part of the participants regarding the development of students' competences, the future career of students and decision-making. In these cases, a significantly lower degree of agreement was found compared to views on the school climate. This means that teachers and school principals have objections to the effectiveness of the school unit. Such objections are related to the effective operation of the school unit and in particular the effects it has on students. According to Johnson and Stevens (2006), students' performance and psychosocial development are influenced by school climate. This means that the presence of a positive climate, as shown in this research, leads to the achievement of academic and psychosocial goals concerning students. However, the positive effect of school climate on school effectiveness is not always evident, as is the case in this research, as it may be influenced by exogenous factors concerning the education system and corresponding policies (Bear et al., 2014). This means that the school climate is positive, especially in terms of stakeholder relationships, but it is not as effective as it does not positively affect students (Özgenel, 2020).

The second research question of the quantitative research examined the contribution of school leadership to the formation of a positive and productive climate in the school unit. What was found is that school leadership plays an important role in shaping the school climate, through the feedback and guidance it provides to teachers as well as through the formation of a positive climate for students. This means that the attitudes and practices of school leadership are inextricably linked to the climate that is formed in the specific environment. The important role of leadership in shaping the school climate is also observed in another research. A typical example is the empirical study by Allen et al. (2015) in which a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables was found. Similar findings are noted in other studies (McCarley et al., 2016). Among them is that of Capp et al. (2022) in which it is pointed out that school leadership practices are associated with the formation of a positive climate. In this empirical study, as in this one, it is stated that the expectations of school leadership as well as its vision are linked to the positive views of educational staff on the school climate. In this way, it seems that the provision of information,

instructions, and feedback from the leadership to teachers works to strengthen the formation of a positive school climate.

The contribution of school leadership to the formation of the school climate was also studied in the context of qualitative research and in the topic concerning the views of teachers and school principals on school leadership. The results of the qualitative survey showed that school principals and teachers recognize the key role that school leadership has in shaping the school climate. At a general level, the two groups of participants expressed positive views regarding the dimensions of the school climate that are positively influenced by leadership, such as communication, collaboration, autonomy, initiative, and expression of new ideas. This means that the participants of the survey believe that if these characteristics exist, a positive climate is formed that results from the practices of school leadership. Similar views are noted in the research of Blömeke and Klein (2013) which emphasizes that communication with the school principal, autonomy, trust, and appreciation of work are the components of a healthy school climate. In the same context belongs the empirical study of which also examines the relationship of the two variables. What was found in the experts' research, as in the present one, is that school leadership influences the school climate. In particular, the formation of a cooperative climate on the part of school leadership is the most important factor for the existence of positive opinions on the part of teachers. In the same context, the empirical research of Sanchez et al. (2022) presents common findings with the present one. The teachers in the research of Sanchez et al. (2022) make positive assessments of school leadership, which are significantly related to the present of a positive school climate. Therefore, the results of this research are consistent with those of other studies highlighting the contribution of school leadership to the school climate.

However, the results of the quantitative survey reveal some differences between the views of school leaders and teachers. More specifically, principals are the ones who showed the most positive views, especially on issues related to communication, effective operation, healthy working environment, and school climate in general. In fact, principals perceive the specific dimensions of the school climate as more positive than teachers. Similar findings are recorded in research in the international literature. For example, in the research of Handford and Leithwood (2013) teachers are observed who are not satisfied with school leadership and especially with the way it interacts with them. What teachers emphasize is that the inability of school leadership to solve problems as well as non-communication are characteristics of school leadership that lead to the formation of a negative school climate. The results of this research, as well as this one, have similarities with those of the empirical study of Reddy et al. (2018) in which teachers and principals also participated. Experts stress in the results of their survey that the views of school principals are more positive about the school climate compared to the views of teachers. This means that teachers identify more the disadvantages of the school unit they are in compared to the principals. Weak leadership traits are cited more by teachers and less by school principals. According to Price (2012), the school climate is shaped by the communication relationship that develops between teachers at school leadership. School principals, due to their hierarchical position, tend to present the positive characteristics of the school unit. On the other hand, teachers as recipients of leadership behaviors can experience negative experiences by noting the disadvantages they observe in the school climate.

Furthermore, in the context of the investigation of the relationship between school leadership and the school climate, teachers' reticence regarding the result produced, i.e. student performance, was also identified. The survey participants, while presenting positive views on both leadership and school climate, do not have similar experiences regarding school effectiveness. This means that they believe that school does not always achieve the goals, i.e. the performance and psychosocial development of students. Such reservations are also recorded in other surveys, such as that of Dahiru and Almustapha (2022). In the empirical

study of the experts as well as in the present one, it seems that the participants maintain negative views about the effective operation of the school unit due to the limitations arising from educational policies and cooperation with parents. In this survey, participants maintain positive perceptions of effectiveness but also express objections to the educational guidelines they follow from government agencies. According to Cruickshank (2017), school effectiveness is a complex content influenced by leadership, school climate and external factors such as parents and educational policies. This means that while school leaders have influences on school climate, these influences do not always have an impact on student outcomes.

These findings are consistent with the results obtained from the qualitative research that took place in this paper. In the third research question of qualitative research, the views of school principals and teachers regarding the effectiveness of the school unit were examined. The results of the qualitative analysis showed that there are positive and negative views from both groups of participants. At a general level, school principals and teachers argue that the school is effective as the members involved work with a view to satisfying the academic and psychosocial needs of students. This means that their positive views on school leadership and the school climate led to positive views on school effectiveness. This finding is consistent with the results of the empirical study by Al-Safran et al. (2014). In the research of experts, as in this one, it is noted that the positive school climate that stems from a supportive leadership is positively related to the effectiveness of the school unit. Similar results are recorded in the empirical research of Shen et al. (2021). More specifically, this research notes that teachers need to understand the efforts made by school leadership to empower students. These efforts are positively appreciated and lead to the acquisition of positive views of leadership. Therefore, teachers who experience positively the climate and their interaction with school leadership can achieve the goals concerning the development of their students.

However, from both groups of participants there were reports of barriers to fulfilling all students' needs. These difficulties arise from school leadership, the structure of the education system and the corresponding policies. Therefore, although school employees prioritize students, the effectiveness of the school is not desirable. These results are consistent with those of another research. For example, research by Pristyowati et al. (2021) shows that teachers' dissatisfaction with school leadership affects their effectiveness and therefore the effectiveness of the school. Therefore, teachers' objections regarding school leadership may also lead to the experience of difficulties in the performance of their educational work. Moreover, in the research of Polymeropoulou and Sorkos (2015), as in the present one, it was shown that the dissatisfaction of participants in cooperation and communication with their colleagues contributes to the reduction of school effectiveness. This means that employees who experience a negative school climate are also those who feel that the school does not provide quality education.

The above data show that school principals and teachers express positive views on the school climate on the one hand and on the role played by school leadership in it on the other. The results of quantitative and qualitative research reveal the positive characteristics of the school climate, which are inextricably linked to school leadership. This means that the involved members of the school unit develop positive developmental relationships that allow them to interact and cooperate harmoniously, creating a positive climate and a productive school. The limitations experienced by participants regarding school effectiveness are based more on external factors and less on the characteristics of school leadership (Brinia et al., 2022).

The third research question of the quantitative research concerned the influence of demographic and individual characteristics of participants on their views. What was found is that there is little influence of demographic characteristics on views of the general school climate and its dimensions. According to the results, the minimal effects showed that women reported a better climate of cooperation compared to their male colleagues. The finding This is consistent with the results of research by Bevans et al. (2007). The empirical study recorded

the tendency of male teachers to express higher dissatisfaction with the school climate compared to their female colleagues. Similar findings are reported in another study in which gender creates differences between teachers' views of school climate (Chowdhury et al., 2021). Women teachers were the ones who most positively appreciated the climate prevailing in the school unit where they work.

Another demographic characteristic examined in terms of its influence on teachers' views is the working conditions of professionals, i.e., whether they are permanent or substitute. Permanent teachers disagree to a greater extent on the effective functioning of the school but also on the productive school climate to a greater extent compared to substitutes. This finding has similarities with the results of the empirical study by Konu et al. (2010) which also involved substitute and permanent teachers. In the survey of experts, as in this one, it is recorded that substitutes are those who maintain the highest negative views about the school climate and the effective operation of the school unit. This finding is also noted in Marinou's research (2023), which also studies teachers' views. What emerges is that substitute teachers, due to the difficulties they experience, value the school climate more negatively than permanent teachers.

In addition, among the results of the survey is the role of the years of experience of the participants in the dimensions of the school climate. More specifically, participants with less than 10 years of experience are expected to have a more positive view of communication in their workplace compared to participants with more than 10 years of experience. This finding can be interpreted by considering the fatigue experienced by older teachers. According to Sokal et al. (2021), many years of teaching experience contribute to teacher fatigue and therefore to the formation of negative perceptions about school climate and leadership. In fact, teachers who work longer have experienced obstacles and difficulties that lead to their psychological fatigue. This fatigue can lead to the experience of challenges in the formation of communicative relationships (Aelterman et al., 2007).

However, the results of this survey show that in the case of effective functioning, participants with more than 20 years of experience reported ineffective operation to a greater extent than participants with less than 20 years of experience. Similar findings are noted in the research of Mitchell et al. (2010) in which teachers' views on school climate were examined. In this study, as in this one, it was found that participants with less experience have more positive views regarding school effectiveness and especially student performance compared to those with more years of experience. This may be because teachers with less experience do not have accumulated work fatigue and receive greater satisfaction from their work and the prevailing climate (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2022).

Finally, regarding the impact of work experience at school, respondents with more than 20 years of experience had a lower proportion of agreement compared to other categories of work experience. Similarly, the expectations of survey participants who have more than 20 years of experience at school are lower compared to other categories of work experience. Finally, the same category of seniority disagreed to a greater extent about the productive school climate. Similar findings are recorded from other studies which show the negative effects that many years of experience have on teachers' views on school climate. A typical example is the research by Kasalak and Dağyar (2021) in which it appears that younger teachers are the ones who have the most enthusiasm and the least fatigue from their work. What is argued is that teachers with long experience and therefore experienced professionals negatively perceive their role in school because of the fatigue they have suffered, resulting in ambiguous and negative views (Kamil, 2014).

Research limitations and suggestions for future research.

The main limitation of the survey was the scale of evaluation of statements. More specifically, the dichotomous variables did not allow detailed analysis of the views of the

survey participants as possible intermediate views could not be captured. This result confirms the correct use of the research tool, but in future similar research it is proposed to use at least a 5-point Likert scale that will allow the conduct of other tests such as correlations and examination of average values.

As regards the sampling method, the disadvantages of using convenience sampling have already been mentioned. However, as the method had a very high response rate, the effect of possible bias is expected to be small. However, in a similar future research it is proposed to apply a more analytical sampling method, such as simple random sampling in which randomization is applied.

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