

The book 'Good learning climate in vocational training in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Case of VTC in the Eastern DRC' addresses the issue of learning climate in vocational training centres in the Eastern part of the DRC. The book focuses on the psychological climate and environment as a central criteria of quality education. The book can be of interest of vocational educators and teachers, who strive to install competences and skills in trainees while preparing them for entry into the labour market. Furthermore, the book can be of interest to headmasters of vocational schools, who are responsible for learning climate and school management to foster the outcomes of trainings for effective human resource development. Implementing good learning climate in classes and schools will help not only maintain youth in school by limiting dropping out and truancy, but also it allows for a conducive climate to learning. Implementing strategies to ensure good learning climate will help headmasters, teachers, and ultimately trainees to feel respected and valued.

It will encourage them to collaborate and cooperate in learning. More than ever, learning climate poses the foundation of schools, the society and other organization, where no bullying or misunderstanding is reported. Education advances thus both quantitatively and qualitatively.



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Good Learning Climate In Vocational Training



Brot
für die Welt

New Perspectives on Quality Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited by Christine Nyiramana, Susanne Röss, Tharcisse Gatwa,
Susanne Krogull, Annette Scheunpflug, and Penine Uwimbabazi

Good Learning Climate in Vocational Training in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Eraste K. Bulaya Jumapili

PIASS PUBLICATION SERIES N°21

Good Learning Climate in Vocational Training

New Perspectives on Quality Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited by Christine Nyiramana, Susanne Ress, Tharcisse Gatwa, Susanne Krogull, Annette Scheunpflug, and Penine Uwimbabazi

Over recent decades, national and international policy actors together with teachers, parents, community leaders, and faith-based organizations have made great progress in providing access to education. Today around the world, more children are in school than ever before. Yet being in school is not enough. These exceptional improvements in expansion of access to schooling require a sustained effort to ensure the quality of education provided in schools. This series presents new findings on dimensions of quality education in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa. The authors in this series have conducted their research in the context of the *International Master Program of Educational Quality in Developing Countries* (IMPEQ) at the University of Bamberg in partnership with the Protestant University of Rwanda, the Free University of the Great Lakes Region in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Evangelical University of Cameroon. The research was made possible by the funding from Bread for the World – the Development and Relief Agency of the Protestant Churches in Germany. The monographs in this series highlight the importance of continuous teacher education and, most importantly, the centrality of efficient leadership for fostering educational policies and practices that meet the needs of all students.

*To all those who struggle for a real change in the
educational system
of the Democratic Republic of Congo,
To my children Providence Nzanzu Bulaya, Beneza
Bulaya Kahindo, Asha Bulaya Vira, Bulaya Faino Kabuo
and Blessda Bulaya Bwambale,*

I dedicate this book.

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Eraste K. Bulaya Jumapili



Brot
für die Welt



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ISBN 978-99977-0-223-4

ISBN 978-9-9977022-3-4



9 789997 702234

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ABBREVIATIONS

CETT	Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching
CRLT	Center for Research on Learning and Teaching
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IICBA	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMPEQ	International Master Program in Educational Quality
JOPERD	Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
MCREL	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning
NEA	National Education Association
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NSW	New South Wales
Obs.	Observation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
s.a.	sine annum (no year)
SCAMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board
TALIS	Teacher and Learning International Survey

TSA	Transparent standards of assessment
UCP	University-Community Partnerships
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN-ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

Beyond the fact that the completion of compulsory education has substantially improved over the past twenty years, achieving educational quality for all continues to be a major challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa where many children do not reach basic skills in reading and numeracy by the end of primary school (UNESCO, 2014). A focus on quality education is thus paramount to improve the overall performance of educational systems and to support students' academic achievement. High quality education requires high quality research that combines sophisticated knowledge of educational theories, adequate research methods, and contextualizing sensibilities for local realities as they intersect with global political, economic, social, and historical forces. Every educational dimension imaginable – school access, didactics and pedagogical approaches, academic content and competences – if approached with such a notion of high-quality research presents itself as a challenge that poses many questions and few certain answers. To nonetheless forge pathways towards much needed answers requires a sturdy intellect, diligence, creativity, and a supportive community of scholars engaged in critical feedback. Monographs in this series carefully investigate educational concepts and theories as they pertain to quality education in Sub-Saharan Africa. They cover many topics ranging from leadership skills, competence-based and learner-centered pedagogies, cognitive activation, critical thinking skills, and socially responsive and inclusive approaches to teaching. The monographs go beyond theory in that they reflect on the practical implications of the research findings. The authors provide in-depth analyses grounded in a deep knowledge of and experiences in the context in which the research was conducted. They articulate recommendations that touch on

the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of schooling. In this way, the series provides a collective space for emerging African scholars to discuss their research on education to impart lessons for mastering 21st century challenges in education everywhere.

Good Learning Climate in Vocational Training in the DRC is one of the volumes in the series *New Perspectives of Quality Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Focusing on the effect of good learning climate in especially short-term vocational training, Mr. Kakule Bulaya Jumapili raises awareness for the target group of students coming from difficult backgrounds, who often experience a lack of education. In Sub-Saharan Africa, out-of-school youths and adults are offered to attend non-formal, short-term courses as a second chance for education. Not only in the light of the goal of Education for All but also the overall unemployment problem the relevance of an efficient educational program for these students becomes clear.

Mr. Kakule Bulaya Jumapili introduces the topic of Congolese (vocational) education, both referring to the literature as also his experience; he points out problems with respect to good learning climate. Following this, he develops research questions considering the concept and implementations of good learning climate. Based on the state of research and references to Sub-Saharan Africa, the topic is embedded in a broader discourse of teaching and educational quality, before highlighting aspects of good learning climate and the effect on learners' outcome. His applied methodology of a controlled intervention, followed by a qualitative study is very well described; it takes into account theoretical aspects from the literature but also discusses the study's applications. As he modelled every step of the intervention in accordance with the verifiers of

the main theme at hand, he enabled participants to realize the change occurring in their classroom.

The findings of this study support that aspects of good learning climate differ regarding the success of the implementation. He discusses his findings involving student motivation, the theory of change and professional development. Mr. Kakule Bulaya Jumapili concludes that besides the trainees' intrinsic motivation, the key factor for good learning climate, in a short-term vocational classroom, is teaching. Seeking ways of keeping the trainees motivated during the whole learning period and following the requirements of quality teaching are presented as good approaches to improve the learning process. Mr. Kakule Bulaya Jumapili encourages teachers to embrace change in their teaching methods and to emphasize on adult learner motivation.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This book, which is a reworked version of my Master's Thesis, addresses the construct of learning climate and its role for teaching and learning. The work was undertaken and written in the framework of the International Master Programme in Educational Quality for Developing Countries, a Master Programme presented at the University of Bamberg, Germany. Being amongst the criteria for quality teaching, the learning climate has been so far neglected in the praxis as well as in the scientific context of Congolese schools, especially the short-term vocational training, which caters mostly for the students from the vulnerable and difficult backgrounds of society. Its implementation in this context is thus not only a determining step for the development of quality education, but also it helps the target group to be retained in school, thus allowing for training completion and a second chance of employability.

The organisation of the volume is as follows. Part I introduces the context of Congolese vocational education, and the problems faced therein, based on literature and experiences lived on the ground. With regard to this situation, and in attempt to link the issue at hand to the International discourse on education, the research questions are developed with respect to good learning climate implementation by teachers.

The second chapter describes the state of research on good climate, embedding the concept in the international discourse of educational quality, and defining some aspects of good learning climate, namely mutual respect, justice/being fair with all students, responsibility, laughing and humour, transparency of standards of assessment and high expectations.

The third part deals with the research methodology, a mixed-method approach made of a controlled intervention followed by a qualitative study referring to classroom observation. The sampling procedure as well as the sample itself is also described in the same section.

The fourth part, which is rather empirical, describes the intervention, a two-day training workshop for teachers and principals from four vocational training centres in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo on good learning climate. The description components include the objectives of the training, the didactical planning, and the development of the training.

Chapter five presents the data description and the results of the research, whereas chapter six is a discussion of the results of the study with regard to certain theories, the theories regarding student motivation, change, and teachers' professional development. The concluding chapter summarizes the study, gives answers to research questions and presents recommendations for practice and further research, based on the findings and the discourse on educational quality.

No doubt, this research does not cover all the facets of good learning climate. It nevertheless represents a worthwhile progress which should be of interest to researchers, practitioners, school administrators and policymakers in the educational field of Sub-Saharan Africa in general, the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular.

Special thanks go straight to the editor of the series, to Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug, Dr. Susanne Krogull, and Dr. Susanne Ress for their relentless guidance and support to the project. I cannot underestimate the contribution of PD. Dr. Maximilian Pfof, Dr. Marina Wagener, and

Claude-Ernest Njoya, M.A., for their proofreading and comments made on my writings. Their suggestions were very encouraging and motivating.

I am also appreciative to Joseph Mughombe Musike, and Madam Kyakimwa Basambya Mamy, for their support of different kinds. Besides, I will remain indebted to my wife Darlene Sivitulera, and my own children: Providence Bulaya, Beneza Bulaya, Asha Bulaya Vira, Bulaya Faino Kabuo and Blessda Bulaya Bwambale, for enduring suffering due to my prolonged absence from home while studying, researching and writing up the dissertation that resulted in this volume. Hopefully, I achieve the dream of my heart, at last.

Eraste Bulaya

Bamberg, September 2019

1

INTRODUCTION

Research shows that the teacher plays a vital role in helping students learn, mostly through what he/she does in the classroom (UNESCO, 2014a; Hattie, 2012; OECD, 2010; Clues & Charlton, 2007; Dembelé & Gauthier, 2004; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). His/her behaviours are thus worth considering to make students learn effectively. One aspect that the teacher influences with his/her way of teaching is the learning climate. The learning climate in the classroom is considered to be a determining factor for the trainees' achievements (Pryseski et al., 2014; Doll, 2010; Cohen et al., 2009).

1.1 Context and problem

The book addresses the topic of 'learning climate in short-term vocational training schools'. It is contextualized in the vocational educational system of the Democratic Republic of Congo, specifically the short-term sub-system. The Congolese education system knows a differentiation of schools run by different institutions according to their administrative status. These include public schools, privately subsidized schools, and private schools (The World Bank, 2005: 27). Within this system, four levels of formal education are officially recognized, namely pre-primary, primary, secondary and professional and tertiary education levels (see appendix 1). They function under the

responsibility of two ministers, all in charge of education in accordance with the main levels – primary and secondary/professional, and tertiary (République Démocratique du Congo, 2014a: 51). Still there is alphabetization and non-formal education which focuses on training for life skills, and operates either under the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Youth and Sports or the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (Bashir, 2009: 11). This type of education is occupation-specific (Akoojee, et al., 2005: 19), and thus may not follow the standard curriculum, the training time being shortened to six months or less (Mutaleb et al., 2014: 12). It targets to unenrolled youth and dropouts to whom a second chance – French, “Enseignement de rattrapage” (UNICEF, 2010; République Démocratique du Congo, 2002) is offered, or unemployed adults, and its programme is thus multifaceted, being run either by local churches, NGOs or International donors (Bashir, 2009: 11). In this volume, I will focus specifically on short-term private vocational schools.

Besides, I'm going to consider the strengths and weaknesses of one vocational institution in regard to setting a good learning climate in the classroom, the available human resources and the conditions in which teachers are trained, supervised in their work by the founders and by authorities, in order to improve the teaching and learning efficacy in their classes. In fact, despite the recent improvement in providing access to education – there was a gross completion rate at primary level of 62.4 % in the school year 2011-2012 and 72.8 % in 2014 (République Démocratique du Congo, 2014a; Mutaleb et al., 2014) – a quality gap remains, especially so far as students performances or competences are concerned. Research shows that there are low achievements for the Democratic Republic of Congo students, at all levels of the education

system (République Démocratique du Congo, 2014a; Banque Mondiale, 2005). Most students leave primary schools for secondary schools without having acquired the basic skills or competences in reading, writing and numeracy (République Démocratique du Congo, 2014b; UNESCO, 2011; The World Bank, 2005). Poor quality classrooms, poor subject material mastery by teachers, a lack of teacher professional development system and of conducive, supportive and welcoming learning environments, limited availability of textbooks, high repetition rates, high levels of dropout have characterized the Congolese education system until now (Bashir, 2009; The World Bank, 2005). All these shortcomings can be at least partly explained by weaknesses found in the national educational system. A lot of reports and other government documents on education have been pointing education quality improvement as a priority, in reference with quality inputs, quality teaching methods and quality outcomes (République Démocratique du Congo, 2015; République Démocratique du Congo, 2014b; BIEF.sa, 2012; The World Bank, 2005), but the way reveals to be long.

Empowering teachers through in-service teacher training has been referred to as the top strategy for quality development within the system (République Démocratique du Congo, 2014a, République Démocratique du Congo, 2014b; “Enseignement Primaire et Maternel”, 2008; The World Bank, 2005). One central aspect influencing the quality of the teaching and learning process is the learning climate established in the classroom – a good learning climate, as it has been pointed out above, is a key factor in enhancing the learners’ achievements. Telling from my own experience as a school principal, I can say that the lack of a welcoming, caring and supportive learning climate in most of the Democratic Republic of Congo schools accounts

greatly for many students' low achievements, dropouts, truancy and repetitions. For about six years of my running a school, I have seen some teachers threaten newcomers with discourteous speech at start of school year, give corporal punishment, keep their distance from students – whom they consider as being inferior or good for nothing, or criticize publicly low performing trainees. Trainees thus get discouraged, find in schooling a burden, rather than a pleasure; as the school environment becomes unbearable for them, the only way to get rid of school is to discontinue attendance, inhibit participation, and finally drop out. The issue is even bigger with short-term vocational trainees, most of whom being former dropouts from primary and/or secondary schools, or out-of-school children, youth and adults. In regard to the everyday practice in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is evident that the specification and better knowledge of the role of learning climate would influence greatly the quality of vocational training for the teachers and the learning outcomes in regard to the current status quo. However, I don't miss to reveal the successes and failures I have noticed during school visits and while reflecting the situation, as well as the results of large-scale assessments done by the international community and independent researchers in regard to the topic developed herewith.

Good learning climate, in view of the whole theme that I have been dealing with, is linked to the reflection of teaching quality. In fact, the learning climate finds its place in the learning - teaching process, fostering the learners' competences development (UNESCO, 2005; The World Bank, 2005). Research shows that a good learning climate enhances students' motivation in regard to participating in their own learning, thus contributing to school achievements (Goss & Sonnemann, 2017; Doll,

2010), and therefore it is a basis for quality schooling and instruction (OECD, 2009; Blum, 2005). Furthermore, it is up to the teacher to set such learning climate in the classroom, and how he/she implements determines the students' effective learning processes (Adelman & Taylor, s.a: 2). With it an optimal setting for teaching and learning is made possible within a school, as things are done with care to the great satisfaction of all stakeholders (Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013; Scheerens et al., 2011). In this sense, the learning climate can be embedded in the discourse on quality education. As the discourse on teaching quality shows that good learning climate is one of the indicators to reach higher competence levels among students, it is worth considering herewith.

Having in mind what education is intended to be in the third millennium, referring to the Jomtien declaration and the Dakar framework, I would like to confront what I have experienced with vocational training with this global understanding of education in order to develop a more precise idea of what my efforts mean in this general context of the global community. In fact, both the Jomtien conference and the Dakar framework on education do not only insist on giving access to all, but also on educational quality, especially learning for all, equity and better learning environment (UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2000; UNESCO, 1994).

Besides, with the reflection outlined in the book, I'm trying to show how the first steps taken in the field have started to modify the point of departure. This pertains to the intervention done on good learning climate for some short-vocational trainers who, through the in-service teacher training, got illumination though little it might be on quality teaching practices. The class visits and follow-up activities

done sooner after the intervention testify to a great deal the change, which has happened in the schools so far.

1.2 Research questions

Considering the above facts and reflections developed and the concept of quality education on which good learning climate is based, I'm going to focus on the following main question: how do trained short-term vocational trainers implement good learning climate in their classrooms? My research interest can be articulated in three parts with the following sub-questions: (a) What does good learning climate mean? (b) Why is good learning climate important? and (c) What are the challenges faced by short-term vocational trained trainers in implementing good learning climate in the classroom?

1.3 Structure of the book

In this volume, the first and introductory part deals with the context of Congolese schools, mainly the vocational training and the problems faced therein. A link to the International discourse on quality education, and the research questions are discussed in this section, as well. The second chapter deals with the state of research providing an overview of what researchers have as an understanding in regard to the learning climate within a classroom. The third chapter presents the methodology with respect to data collection and data analysis, as well as the intervention itself as a method in implementing change. Section four traces back the intervention development on good learning climate, pointing out some hints on how it was run in connection with education quality. Section five deals with the description of the findings and their presentation as overall result, before analyzing challenges pertained to good learning

climate implementation. The sixth chapter discusses the findings and links them with the discourse on educational quality; whereas the seventh and last chapter concludes and gives responses to the research question, and reflects further ideas as recommendations for educational system improvement.

2

STATE OF RESEARCH

Research about learning climate is prolific. Both teachers and students spend hours of their life in classroom settings (Cheryan et al., 2014: 4). According to the National School Climate Council – NSCC (2007) cited in Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013: 58), the classroom climate has been recognized as being important for scores for years, but it was systematically studied from the 1950s on. Research presents it as impacting both students and staff, either as a benefit or a barrier for learning (Adelman & Taylor, s.a.: 1). In this chapter, I am going to give an overview of the numerous writings on classroom climate, mainly the aspects relevant for answering the research questions outlined in the previous chapter. Before coming there, an overview will be given about research on educational quality. The aim is to get a clear understanding of what learning climate is, especially with regard to its relationship with educational quality, and to give an overview of different ways of fostering a good learning climate in the classroom setting according to research. The general effects of learning climate on the students' achievements will be considered as well, before a concluding note ends the section.

2.1 Overview on educational quality

Education is at the basis of any society's development and prosperity (UNESCO, 2015; Commission internationale sur l'éducation pour le vingt et unième, 1999), so not only should every person have access to it, but it should also be of good quality (UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2000). In this understanding, countries have found in education a weapon for today's competition; in that regard many countries are restructuring their education systems so as to be recognized internationally as top (Blossing et al., 2014: vii). This ongoing need of excellence is at the basis of continuous reform within educational systems all over the world. Nowadays quality is at the heart of educational debates. Educationists are becoming more and more aware of the importance of quality and are consequently dealing with questions relating to how well a system should be – on the one hand the overall system, and the concrete teaching and learning processes taking place at different educational institutions, on the other – in order to make students learn effectively (UNESCO, 2005: 28). The notion of education quality is a complex one as it refers to the interaction between material and non-material dimensions or ingredients. In fact, the education quality framework is made of the context, the learner characteristics, the enabling inputs – namely teaching and learning, and the learning outputs/outcomes (UNESCO, 2005: 36).

The *context* comprises elements education practitioners cannot control, such as socio-cultural factors, religious factors, labour market demands and those relating to war crisis, for example in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo. According to this framework (see appendix 2), in addition to taking into account the actual context, any education, to be effective, should also consider the

individual *learner* with his/her background and prior knowledge, before getting involved in the *teaching and learning* process, so as to come to quality *outcomes*, such as the development of competences on the side of the learner. Quality is thus demanded of all education practitioners and policy-makers for excellent school results and competences in life; and nowadays, the International Community is committed to ensuring quality education to all, contrary to just accessing people of all ages to education – a fact relating to quantity (UNESCO, 2015; Killen, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2000). The learner is at the centre of the education quality framework, as every education activity should aim at reaching him/her and supporting his/her competence development (Government of Ontario, 2010: 2). However, in order to attain success for the educational activity, the teacher gets in as vital factor, provided his/her roles of organizer, planner, information provider, facilitator and advisor (Hattie, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; Harden & Crosby, 2000). With regard to the title of this book, the teacher is a vital influencer on the aspect of learning climate, as Loukas noted (2007: 2).

Concerning education quality in African countries, especially in Sub-Sahara– particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo, research reveals that great expansion in terms of access to education has been witnessed since 1999 (Africa – America Institute, 2015; UNESCO, 2012a; Kruijer, 2010; The World Bank, 2005; USAID, 2001). However, despite this quantitative expansion, the number of out-of-school children remains high in Sub-Saharan Africa. children – of which 8.8 million for Nigeria alone were unenrolled in school. To solve the problem linked to Education for All, in some countries, contract teachers and unqualified teachers have been referred to (USAID, 2001: 12). According to The Africa – America Institute (2015), “in

2012 the average pupil/teacher ratio in primary schools was 42.1” (p. 11), and so, in order to achieve the Universal Primary Education (UPE) there is need of one million additional teachers. Besides, about education in Africa, research also notes the fact that quality improvement is not generally keeping pace with access to education (Friedman et al., 2016; UN-ECOSOC, 2011; USAID, 2001). Because any educational system quality cannot go beyond the quality of its teachers (OECD, 2010: 4), the first problem with Sub-Saharan education pertains to teaching quality. Good quality learning conditions have not been created for classrooms (USAID, 2001: 4), ways of attracting the best teachers are missing, teacher education is not improved so as all students can learn, good teachers are not allocated where needed, nor are there any incentives to retain the best ones (UNESCO, 2014a; OECD, 2013c). The basics are not yet learnt at the completion of primary by most children (SCAMEQ III, 2007 cited in Friedman et al, 2016: 27), nor are educational facilities/resources available, or suitable access to basic services (sanitation, water supply, or electricity) in educational settings made possible. So, for example, the Sub-Saharan countries average classroom size varied between 26 to 67 in 2012; 11 pupils shared a textbook (or 13 for a mathematics one) in Cameroon, 1.8 for textbooks (or 1.9 for mathematics) in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and 67 percent of DRC primary schools had no drinkable water. In a nutshell, education quality concerns all education systems, since it does not make sense to give access without ensuring that learning is effectively taking place (USAID, 2001: 4). For Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly for the Democratic Republic of Congo, the way is still too long; however, though “African educational system stands at crossroads” (Africa – America Institute, 2015: 11) moving forward is still possible.

The following part deals with the learning environment, one of the key factors to education outcomes (UNESCO, 2012a: 1); and how it is understood by researchers and how it relates to teaching quality will be considered herewith.

2.2 Learning climate and quality teaching.

The learning climate is essential for any teaching/learning activity to effectively take place, otherwise stakeholders are dissatisfied with school and the teaching/learning outcomes are likely to be hypothetical. Researchers do not share the same opinions about learning climate. Differing meanings and terminologies have been given to the concepts. For some, it is synonymous with learning or classroom environment (PISA, 2016; Cheryan et al., 2014; Opdenakker & Minnaert, 2011; Speekenbrink & Shanks, 2010) or “conditions of learning”, “school/classroom climate”, “school classroom culture”, “organisational climate of schools” (UNESCO, 2012b: 12-3), and for some others the notion is larger than the classroom (OECD, 2013; Hannah, 2013; Scheerens, 2004). Its polysemy is rendered in both the physical and psychological/social senses it bears (Scheerens, 2004: 43). On the one hand, the physical and symbolic concept of learning climate includes elements such as wall art and décor, arrangement of desks in the classroom, the general organisation of the classroom, lighting, noise, air quality, heating, acoustics, accessibility, temperature, the setting itself of the school or classroom (Cheryan et al., 2014; Hannah, 2013).

Referring to this, students are socio-economically advantaged or disadvantaged (OECD, 2016: 4) as the learning environment is connected to available financial and material resources. The classroom is thus said to be orderly, welcoming, inviting, safe or – to the opposite –

unwelcoming, unsafe and exclusionary, while the school buildings can be comfortable or inadequate and the general ambiance might be favourable to learning or not, due to evident classroom design, facilities or symbolic objects (Cheryan et al., 2014; Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013).

On the other hand, the learning climate consideration reflects how both students and teachers feel about their school each day (Tableman & Herron, 2014; UNESCO, 2012b; Cohen et al., 2009). It relates to establishing a positive, caring, social, emotional, cooperative, warm, friendly and responsive atmosphere within the school and especially the classroom to the extent that positive and strong relationships develop between students and staff, or among students themselves (Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013; Hannah, 2013; Reyes et al., 2012). This second conception of learning climate promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem for students and staff, thus it reflects among other aspects the nature of interactions among the school community, trust, morale, diversity and welcome to all cultures, respect and value within the school, warmth, help provision on how to learn, students' progress monitoring, support in competence building, and results assessment and communication (Tableman & Herron, 2004; OECD, 2013c; Opdenakker & Minnaert, 2011; Hattie, 2009).

The quality of the relationships between the school and the class members as well as the teaching conditions are emphasized herewith, and the teacher plays a modelling and promoting role (Dean et al., 2012; Opdenakker & Minnaert, 2011; Dronkers, 2010). In other words, thanks to positive climate, the school community feels valued and is able to pursue the school's mission safely. Disciplinary elements, different relationships among stakeholders, conditions of labour and other facilities, establishing and maintaining a

positive, welcoming and supportive atmosphere that allows classroom learning to effectively take place are fundamental to any reflection on school climate. The important concepts to understanding this concept of classroom climate include care, control, challenge, safety and cohesion among learners, communicated expectations, and orderliness (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Hattie, 2009). As noted by Loukas (2007: 1), the classroom climate is a physical, social, affective, socio-emotional and academic environment. It is not only welcoming and conducive to learning, but promotes communication and interaction, together with a sense of belonging and self-esteem as well (Read et al., 2015: 35).

Besides, research reveals that when the classroom's emotional climate changes, not only is the quality of life at school enhanced for both students and staff, but also do students' outcomes change. Learning is made possible, teachers are effective and intrinsic motivation for classroom learning and teaching overt (Read et al., 2015; Reyes et al., 2012; Adelman & Taylor, s.a: 3). When effective teaching and learning occur, quality education is envisaged, because teachers have been able to help learners develop their knowledge and gain life skills (Idialu, 2013; Killen, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; Dembelé & Gauthier, 2004). This requires that learners participate in their own learning as do teachers in learning about their teaching action (OECD, 2013c; Hattie, 2009).

In fact, according to the social constructivist theory of learning and teaching, knowledge and skills are acquired through active participation of learners, the learning process being intrinsically considered interactive (UNESCO, 2005: 32). Because, in practice, the learners' prior knowledge works as foundation for the new one, learning becomes

active (Amineh & and Asl, 2015: 10), that is, through what the learner does and not what the teacher does for him/her (Tyler, 1949 cited in Biggs & Tang, 2011; 16). Learning occurs when people are engaged in social activities (Kim, 2001: 3), active involvement of learners is thus determining (Gray, 1997 cited in Amineh & Asl, 2015: 11). The classroom learning climate is thus associated with great teaching, making one of its six components (Coe et al., 2014; Klieme, 2012; State of NSW, 2003). In fact, establishing and maintaining a positive environment that facilitates learning is the primary intent of classroom climate (Adelman and Taylor, s.a: 2). A positive climate promotes not only the students' engagement, but also gives room for quality school life mixed with satisfaction about the school and its various activities. Ipso facto, the toxicity or hostility of the learning climate brings about repulse and disengagement, thus leading to poor achievements (Shernoff, 2013: 3).

Students' engagement is vital in fostering academic achievement, as it makes the learners not only attentive, interested and motivated to learn, but also willing to participate in classroom activities (Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Marks, 2000), Skinner & Belmont, 1993 –all cited in Reyes et al., 2012: 1). In other words, motivation is central for students' achievements improvement (CEP, 2017; Gregory, 2017; Ames, 2000). Because to be motivated has to do with being “moved to do something“(Ryan & Deci, 2000, cited in Gidera et al., 2015: 13), and motivation refers to the reasons that underlie people's behaviours (Guay et al., 2010, cited in Lai, 2011: 2), the teacher's role is to look for ways of maintaining it across the learning process (Larkin, 2010: 5). So, learners are not only engaged and connected to classroom activities, but also willing to participate, for achievements. This point of view is shared by Freiberg and Stein (1999) cited in Magneil et al. (2009),

who qualify the school climate as the “heart and soul of the school and the essence of the school that draws teachers and students to love the school and to want to be part of it.”(p. 75).

As for quality teaching, researchers relate it to providing excellent teaching for all students (Ayonmike, 2015; UNESCO, 2014b; Idialu, 2013; OECD, 2011). Its foundation lies in teacher professional development, so as to bring about change (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014: 6). With it, the teachers’ behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions change for the better; that is, teachers are trained in order to “become better teachers” (Guskey, 2002: 382). Good learning climate is one of the factors that foster the changes intended for any school to happen, so as students reach better outcomes (The World Bank, 2005: 75).

2.3 Ways of fostering good learning climate

According to research, and based on educational quality, a certain number of aspects are to be considered when reflecting on a classroom learning climate, especially concerning its socio-emotional or psychological dimension. They include respect, justice, laughing or humour, high expectations, responsibility and standards of assessment (Goss & Sonnemann, 2017: 8; Scheerens, 2004). In a succinct but clear way this section considers the central aspects of each of the ways stated above, including corresponding behaviours of teacher and its connection to students’ achievements (OECD, 2013a; OECD, 2013b).

2.3.1 Respect

Respect is fundamental concept at school as it is elsewhere. The stakeholders need treating one another with respect in any educational environment. This has nothing to do

with acting with dread or fear within the classroom setting, but the value mutually given to everybody for what they are as individuals. According to Scheerens (2004: 42), showing respect in a classroom setting proceeds from the belief that all persons matter and so are worth respecting. He goes on pointing out that a good learning climate is first of all a question of good internal relationships among stakeholders, especially between teacher and learners (p.11). On his behalf, Raz (2001, cited in Davis, 2008: 812) opines that respecting people has nothing to do with feelings, emotions or beliefs; it is rather a way of conducting oneself towards the object of respect. The teacher, in order to help students learn, should create a climate of mutual respect in the classroom. Such a climate is criticism-free, exempt of nicknaming and intolerance. Instead, because of respect, the teacher addresses learners as human beings, so do the learners towards him/her and also among themselves. Obviously, it is a huge difference for the teaching and learning process if the teacher replaces every critical and judgmental expression with a positive and caring one. Both students and their teacher grow like one community, and their interrelations become tightened, as boredom and loneliness are overcome, mutual help established and value recognized despite social status (Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013; Davis, 2008). Caring attitudes result from respect, and this demonstrates the teacher's knowledge. Eric Garner (2012: 35) supports this point of view when he says that students understand how much a teacher knows only when they know how much he/she cares. Thanks to respect, students are supportive among themselves, and likely to learn best if learning takes place in a collaborative, caring and friendly environment.

2.3.2 Justice

Within most of the classroom settings, favouritism, inequality, partiality and inequity are evident. For a school-teacher, being fair, impartial and just with students is getting rid of such negative behaviours, so as to create a cohesive and supportive climate for all. Implementing justice in the classroom is not far from the UNESCO's vision of making education accessible for all (UNESCO, 2000; UNESCO, 2005, UNESCO, 2015). If UNESCO and international treaties emphasize on accessing education to all, justice in the classroom is about making education really accessible to all in a fair way, thus marking a different step. This idea is supported by Bornstein and Wiener (2014: 31), who think that justice relies on three principles, equality, equity and need. In other words, teachers should treat the students the way they wished they were treated themselves, with empathy. The support that teachers can provide include helping students develop organisational skills, and relevant learning strategies, so as to fully gain independence and self-confidence in learning. According to UNESCO (2000: 75), educationists should make sure that no child is denied learning opportunities because of his or her gender, cultural or religious beliefs or any other factors such as age, marital status, sex, socioeconomic status or political belief. The school should be a social entity, where even the marginalized find room and space to talk (Hoffman, 2000: 1). Treating learners fairly in the classroom/school setting stands for avoiding favouritism, prejudices and useless misunderstandings.

It implies equity and empathy towards all learners in responding to their behavioural, socioemotional and learning needs (Bornstein and Wiener, 2014; Andere, 2013). According to the U.S. Department of Education

(2014: 5) the aspect of justice is about recognizing and respecting the learners' rights, administering discipline without discrimination, and establishing fairness as a core value. Schools should be egalitarian institutions, where students are provided with equal educational aids/resources, respect and recognition, power, love, care, and solidarity (Lynch & Baker, 2016; Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013). So, dialogue, democratization of teacher-student relationships, student involvement in school organisation, and inclusion are some of the concepts that account for such environment (Cole, 2006; Allodi, 2010). Students, however, do not have the same needs, so equity is required in order to build a fairer society, and reduce educational costs for the marginalized/disadvantaged or those who display few basic skills. One way of achieving equity at school is directing resources to the students with the greatest needs or low performing/disadvantaged schools (OECD, 2012; OECD, 2008; OECD, 2007).

2.3.3 Standards of assessment

Together with giving particular attention to the school leadership, the acquisition of basic skills, an orderly and safe school climate and high expectations of learner performance as well as assessing the students' progress frequently makes a school be effective (UNESCO, 2012b; Scheerens, 2004). Assessment is made for a variety of reasons, namely to make sure that the intended segment learning outcomes are being met, to provide feedback to the learners on their learning so as to help them perform better, to support learning with appropriate guidance, to inform about the attained level, and evaluate to which extent learning has been effective (O'Farrell, s.a: 3). Still assessment norms should be transparent to enhance student learning. According to O'Farrell (s.a.), this means

that “both students and staff are clear on what students are expected to do, the circumstances in which they are asked to do it and how the marks are going to be awarded” (p. 16). On their behalf, Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003: 324) opine that what matters most about classroom assessment is grading and standardized testing. Therefore the teacher should let the learners know about tests in advance, and the criteria pertained to them. If students are acquainted with the assessment criteria, this helps them to know what assessment is aiming for, or identify where they fell short, and so decide for deeper learning in order to meet the requirements. This means that aspects such as efforts, motivation, ability, and attitudes should not be taken into account, since they are not easy to measure, thus biasing the assessment transparency rule (Stiggins et al., 1989 cited in Zhang and Burry-Stock, 2003: 324). By its nature, assessment is summative in schools, but in order to help students improve their learning, giving feedback on what they can do better is important; this is the formative aspect of assessment, which addresses the learning process and outcomes (Educational Testing Service, 2013; Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2012; Shepard, 2000). Summative assessment takes place periodically so as to know what students know and what they do not, whereas formative assessment makes part of the teaching-learning process (Wyatt-Smith & Klenowski, 2014: 167).

2.3.4 Responsibility

Responsible citizens are required for any nation; otherwise no development is likely to result from education. Education aims at helping people be mature, responsible for their families, themselves, society, actions, and freedom. So, according to McDowall State School (2013), it implies, at differing levels, “obedience, care for how one’s actions

and attitudes affect others, discipline and service” (p. 2). In order to be well achieving in the classroom as well as in life, research shows that students need not only to be treated responsibly by the teacher, but also helped in working responsibly (CETT, 2011; Vavrus, et al., 2011; Evertson, Poole, and the IRIS Center, 2003; UNESCO, 1998). This means that students are responsible of their own learning (Cam & Oruç, 2014: 6); they are trained to be responsible in the future by accomplishing some responsibilities in the meantime, especially at school. Weimer (2002 cited in Cam & Oruç, 2014: 6) thinks that, for teachers, this is a way of sharing power with students. This requires not only that the teacher should assure, through various class works, that all students are able to apply the knowledge acquired, and thus develop the competences needed, but also he/she models the desired outcome, creates supportive climate and gives appropriate responsibilities or tasks to students (Evertson, Poole, and the IRIS Center, 2003: 1). In other words, the teacher is a role model, or better, his/her example is the best teacher (McDowall State School, 2013; Lumpkin, 2008). Students should take responsibility and complete the work assigned to them. In a nutshell, apart from the skills and knowledge they are meant to acquire at school, students are supposed to learn to behave responsibly. This can be shown in a number of the educator’s behaviours. Among them are involving learners in decision-making and implementation, encouraging and enabling participation in planning different classroom/school activities and taking part in the school leadership (OECD, 2013a: 116). The learning climate accounts for responsibility of both teachers and students, in that it builds rapport, brings about satisfaction and engagement through the positive relationships established within the school community (Baker-Eveleth et al., 2011: 39).

2.3.5 Laughing and humour

Research shows that humour is important in a variety of contexts, namely welfare work, nursing, health sciences, and education (Moran and Hughes, 2006; Vuorela, 2005). From the learning climate perspective, research emphasizes that there is connection between laughing and humour in the classroom and student learning. For example, a laughter or a smile are considered social and human signals expressing joy and excitement, that help students relax and listen attentively to the teacher, who by referring to humour shows that he/she is human and able to get in contact with others (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011; Shammi & Stuss, 1999; Sev'er & Ungar, 1997). Carver (2013: 30) opines that humour, which got in the pedagogical debate in 1970s, though being neglected at first for its funny aspect, is now associated with enjoyment and learning appreciation of a lesson's content in a classroom. Humour, though often overlooked, nourishes familial and/or educational relationships, and enhances academic excellence for students. In addition, humour is pertained to cognitive development (Guo et al., 2011; Jewell, 2005). Van Wyk (2011: 118) notes, however, that humour or laughing has nothing to do with comedy and jokes and amusement – which seem to be rather negative and funny. Humour in the teaching/learning process instead aims at creating a positive learning environment within the classroom and at reinforcing the relationship between teacher and students.

In connection with learning, referring to laughing/humour with people means communicating with people as to get their attention meanwhile reducing the tension within the classroom setting; and if any errors occur, they are dealt with in a human but compassionate manner (Azizinezhad

& Hashemi, 2011; Moran & Hughes, 2006). In other words, understanding is promoted, attention and interest are increased, and motivation, as well as productive attitudes towards learning, is strengthened. It is, however, important to distinguish between laughing with and laughing at people. The latter is counter-productive to teaching and learning, and so may hurt and create distance, whereas the former is positive and favourable to students' experiences and progress (James, 2001: 4). Allowing laughter and using humour in classes have nothing to do with being comedian. The main teacher's concern is to make the learning process easier, for with it, students' learning interest and enjoyment are increased, and relax, comfort and tension reduction gained (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011: 2094). However, guidance and evidence on how to practically use humour/laughing in the classroom is still lacking (Carver, 2013; Moran & Hughes, 2006).

2.3.6 High expectations

To expect the best from students, the teacher should fully engage them in the learning process. This means that he/she should have enough confidence in their ability to learn, despite the behaviours they may display, on the one hand. On the other, it is his/her responsibility to cultivate such positive attitude in the learners for effective learning achievements. The role of the teacher in fostering the learner's engagement, motivation and self-confidence is not to be neglected (OECD, 2013a: 105). Research shows that in this context not only are high expectations of a teacher challenging, but also when they are communicated to all, and, if encouragement and recognition of taking risks in learning follow, achievement happens in the classroom (Government of Ontario, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Killen, 2009; Reynolds, s.a). So, teachers should educate

learners to have high expectations for their own improved performance, as well (Hannover Research, 2012: 8).

According to the State of NSW (2003: 2), the teacher should not be content with the number of students participating in the lesson, but rather with the number of those participating in challenging work. In this respect, the teacher's expectations should be communicated not only to students, but also to their parents (Hannover research 2012; Alford, s.a). For example, he advises that students should be told what it takes to get an A or B on a quiz or examination, and that F work is not to be accepted. Students need to hear from the teacher messages like "you can do it" or "let's try and see how well you can do it" (Carson, 1992: 47), a proof of his/her trust in their ability. High expectations engage teachers in willing to make all learners be successful, through praises, rewards and encouragements; so setting objectives and having them known to the learners, together with providing feedback on how these objectives are being met is very important (Dean et al., 2012; Government of Ontario, 2010; Scheerens, 2004). In short, by having high expectations of the learners, the teacher sets no limits to their potential, thus proving that he/she believes every trainee can be successful, progress or come to great achievements no matter his/her status. In accordance with Salvin's "Success for All" programme (1999), and the "Zero tolerance to failure" by Anderson and Pellicer, all cited in Scheerens (2004: 42), high expectations account for effective schooling (Killen, 2009; Walker, 2008); and this is what a positive learning climate intends to provide.

2.4 Effects of the learning climate on students' achievements

As said above, research shows that the learning climate impacts greatly the students' achievements (Goss & Sonnemann, 2017: 20; OECD, 2013c). When added to having a competent teacher, and student home background, a safe and secure classroom climate enables greatly students to learn (Frank & Rosén, 2017: 3). Safe relationships, together with a safe teaching climate and a feeling free from threat in the activities that take place at school have been found to be important for students learning (Garbarino, et al., 1992 cited in Frank & Rosén, 2017: 1). Besides, having high expectations of the students' work and emphasizing on the school's learning goals have been found to be in correlation with high student achievements (Hattie, 2009; Goddard et al., 2000; Griffith, 2000; Snow et al., 1998; Hallinger & Murphey, 1987; Brooker et al., 1979 –all cited in Frank & Rosén, 2017: 1). According to Loukas (2007: 1), quality learning climate is advantageous for all students, particularly to the learners at risk. In fact, with respect to it, student cohesiveness, teacher support, student real involvement and participation in school life, task orientation and connectedness to school, wellbeing, cooperation, justice, and equity are tangible to the extent that all stakeholders feel good with their school (UNESCO, 2012b: 35). On the one hand, students' learning outcomes are improved by positive learning climate (Reyes et al., 2012; OECD, 2009; Macneil et al., 2009; Loukas, 2007). According to OECD (2004) cited in OECD (2009: 39), the PISA data analysis showed that higher levels of student achievement correlate with positive school climate.

In fact, because of co-operative learning, group cohesion, respect, social support, mutual encouragements, and

learning communities such a climate fosters in the classroom (Marzano, 2007, and Ghazi, 2003, both cited by Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013: 53), students are attached to their school and consequently to the teacher, that dropouts and truancy are minimized, learning and success are overt. A positive classroom climate determines a lot the classroom behaviour and learning (Adelman and Taylor, s.a: 2). Thus, the learning setting becomes a “good” one (UNESCO, 2012b: 9). On the other hand, negative classroom climate bears negative effects on the students’ results. Such ill results are sustained by mocking, criticizing, bullying, and all kinds of disciplinary problems in a school setting (Chinelo & Ogbah, 2013: 54). For example, it has been reported that most of the students, to get the teacher’s attention, become disruptive (Hannah, 2013: 4), an attitude which would be avoided if the learning/teaching climate was supportive, safe, collaborative, conducive and welcoming. Because a system education quality is assessed in relation with the extent to which it meets the students learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2012a; The World Bank, 2005; Rose et al., 2003), a positive climate is worth establishing and maintaining for every classroom.

2.5 Conclusion

Literature provides a lot of knowledge about the issue of learning climate. The concept refers both to physical elements such and socio-emotional/psychological ones; however, to benefit students, the classroom climate is intended to be supportive, caring, inviting, secure, orderly, conducive to learning and not far from the one they experience at home. The teacher’s behaviours are determining in setting such climate. This requires him/her not only to make sure that there is mutual respect, justice in the classroom setting, but also he/she should expect

the best from his/her students, refer to humour and/or laughing to maintain a climate free of stress and anxiety, be transparent in assessing their results and work, and involve students in the classroom activities to help learn responsibility. As positive student achievements correlate with positive classroom climate, establishing such climate in the classroom accounts for educational quality.

3

METHODOLOGY

Since the research question of this study is associated with the understanding of the processes of vocational education quality improvement, the study has been conceptualized as a controlled intervention followed by a small research. Firstly, the methodology of the intervention is briefly described, and secondly, the research design is presented. A brief conclusion ends the chapter.

3.1 Intervention: A training seminar on good learning climate

As for the intervention required out of the principles adopted by IMPEQ as a methodological approach, I decided to conduct a training seminar for short-term vocational teachers on good learning climate. This helped me to raise awareness among the participating teachers about quality teaching, especially giving some hints on the teacher's behaviours within the classroom for learner's achievements. The issues of quality education and quality teaching have been left apart so far in regard to this sub-system. As shown in chapter one, setting a good learning climate in the classroom is a great challenge for vocational schools/institutions in the Democratic Republic of Congo. As a matter of fact, learner dropouts, truancy and absenteeism have been observed on a regular basis in

these institutions, thus biasing education for all, and quality teaching. To overcome this challenge, it is necessary to build the teachers' capacities concerning quality teaching criteria, particularly with regard to good learning climate. In other words, teachers should get opportunities to learn themselves in order to change perspectives, and help their students learn fully (Shulman, s.a; Thomasian, 2013). With my intervention, I wanted to give an example on how this challenge could be met and how effective teaching and learning for all can be enhanced. The intervention is a suitable method for situations in which one wants to know how a change could take place. It has to be developed by the person conducting it (here, trainer) according to the criteria of the teaching quality discourse in order to serve as a model (IICBA, 2005: 2). The idea behind is that trained teachers will, by this means, experience good quality teaching, that they can integrate in their daily profession. Besides, the process of the intervention itself needs to be documented in order to lead to transparency and to allow for an added value for the conceptual discourse (such a documentation is provided in chapter four).

Building the teaching staff's capacity is a necessity since pre-service training only accounts for a kind of introduction to the teaching profession, without ensuring participants to be complete teachers. An efficient and effective teacher is the result of experience on the one hand, and on-going in-service training on the other (IICBA, 2005: 1). For most of the short-term vocational teachers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, not only pre-service training is lacking, but also on-the job training is scarce – if not missing. Vocational teachers are mostly teacher-amateurs, craftsmen and women, with no pedagogical background. A teacher-training like this one is opportune, so as to ascertain that teaching is done the way it should be.

As shown in chapter two, the learning climate is an important factor in improving teaching quality. The objective of the intervention has therefore been to contribute to the improvement of education quality – however small this contribution may be. But in order to strategically reach this goal, it was indispensable to operationalize the great theme of quality into smaller steps. It is not possible to deal with all the teaching quality criteria within a short and limited time framework. Therefore, I focused on the indicators of good learning climate. In the conclusion chapter, especially at the level of perspectives and recommendations, I show that a small intervention like this one can be included in a systematic approach. In order to reach that level, and so change the concepts of learning and teaching in the vocational institutions, it was important that the training confronts vocational trainers (instructors or teachers) with their proper practices, and eventually with the mediocre results of their practices. Practically, I led them to perceive the alternatives demonstrated in the training workshop. Then, I made them predict the changes which are likely to occur in educational quality linked with the acquired knowledge and new techniques in regard to the objective of improving the teaching quality in our zone of intervention.

Due to the intervention, the following topic was addressed: Good learning climate in the classroom. The workshop on good learning climate intended to meet the following objectives: (a) vocational teachers get an overview on educational quality, (b) vocational teachers get an overview about the six teaching quality criteria (Coe et al., 2014: 2-3), (c) vocational teachers get awareness about the extent to which positive relationships at school foster learners' achievements, (d) teachers comprehend their unique role in developing the learner's skills and competences, (e) they learn and see how things work about the indicators

of good learning climate in a classroom, and (f) they are familiar with setting a good learning climate in their respective classrooms. In order to positively influence these teachers and help them change perspectives, it was worth considering this community of workshop participants as a *classroom*, take all of them as full *learners*, and train them in accordance with the criterion (topic) at hand. In fact, it has been proved that teachers naturally teach the way they were taught, and mostly not according to the guidance they got on how to teach (Lortie, 1975 cited in Meyer, 2013: 3). In this perspective, vocational trainers would not be trained on good learning climate only – that should be just giving information on the topic, but also, they experienced good learning climate themselves. The training conductor therefore applied good learning climate indicators in the training. In other words, good learning climate was both the topic of the training and the method referred to for the training.

Therefore, in my position as school head and in agreement with the local education authority in charge of vocational training, I decided to gather vocational teachers from four vocational training centres in eastern part of the country for a two day workshop in order for them to discover the deficit of their teaching quality, the underlying causes and the means to change this situation. I referred to techniques that are globally known as being efficient to improve the conditions and consequently the results in their particular professional environment. The training workshop aimed at vocational trainers, mostly those who have no pedagogical background, in the hall of one of the vocational training centres of the area.

Priority was given to these non-pedagogical staff members for the training because, I assumed, they are

the most likely to cause problems to students in regard to learning climate, not knowing how to behave with trainees for learning achievements. For sustainability sake, the training lasted two days, so as to cover the material at hand. Vocational trainers got an overview on the education quality framework and on quality teaching criteria, before they were introduced to indicators of good learning climate. On each day evaluation was done so as to check to which extent the participants have been acquiring new knowledge. In a nutshell, the intervention has been a discovery and a fascinating experience for many. Many realized that leading the learners to participate in their own learning process, and building a learning climate based on respect, justice, responsibility, laughing, high expectations, and transparent standards of assessment is important for the learners' achievements. The participating teachers did not only learn about good learning climate, but they also *witnessed* good learning climate. Thus, the knowledge they came out with was more empirical than scientific: they lived or experienced a good learning climate in a class setting.

3.2 Research methods

Two commonly known approaches are referred to in regard to research in education, that is, qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Creswell, 2012: 1). I am presenting herewith, in a few words, the qualitative approach to research as it applies to the study at hand. Among the numerous methods in qualitative approach, I chose to work with observation. In this chapter I will shortly state why I chose it as a means of data collection concerning the question of good learning climate in the classroom. Going into details, I will describe observation and show what is to be observed in connection with learning climate;

I will describe the method of analysis, then conclude by the problems and the limitations encountered during the data collection.

3.2.1 Qualitative approach

Researchers, without contradicting one another, view qualitative research in differing terms. For example, qualitative research is defined as the one conducted in the natural setting of a phenomenon, in order to understand how people make sense of a reality (Owen, 2013; Creswell, 12; Abawi, 2008). In the same perspective, Holloway (1997 cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 11) says that “qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live”. From these definitions, it is clear that understanding a social behaviour or human problem from different perspectives, seeking to interpret the social reality of individual people, groups of persons and/or cultures, together with their behaviours and experiences, is the common goal of qualitative researchers. So, to conduct research, here, means to examine a phenomenon in the natural environment, and provide its interpretation in context.

Thus, qualitative researchers use texts, documents, words, and field notes. Because, it deals with how people view their world, qualitative research is likely to be subjective, in contrast to quantitative research, which aims at establishing a cause-effect relationship between phenomena, hence its objectivity (Creswell, 2012: 626). In fact, in researching a phenomenon qualitatively, one comes up with data, which are not possible to measure using quantitative terms – numbers and statistics. Quality is thus taken as a “measure of relative value” (Dey, 2003:

11). What is important is the meaning or the understanding people have about a given reality (Cooper & White, 2012: 2). Researching in the natural setting may not be necessarily the case for quantitative researcher, who may get data even from remote participants, using questionnaires, for example. So, I chose qualitative research approach, as it fits better with what I wanted to investigate. My research aimed at understanding and figuring out to which extent the trained teachers implement good learning climate in their respective classrooms. This could not be done referring to quantitative approach, since I had to see and testify to the behaviours of the trained teachers in practicing good learning climate in their natural setting. This would help me understand them and their diverse situation so far as the learning climate is concerned.

3.2.2 Method of data collection: Observation

Let us now talk about the observation as the method I used and the reasons why I chose it. Observing how trained vocational teachers behave in the classroom and use the knowledge acquired on good learning climate fostering factors, required of me to be present at the research site. Since teaching is founded on interaction and relationships, the learners' behaviour are also of interest to me. In order to have a holistic view on this phenomenon, I studied the trained vocational teachers and students in their natural milieu, which is the classroom. Then only could I understand them and their specific circumstances, and how they actually behave to foster or hinder learning achievements. Besides, in observing both instructors and students, I had not only the opportunity of recording information as it occurs in the classroom setting, but also I have been a witness of the actual behaviour, and could infer the view of teachers or students who might have

been unable to verbalize their ideas in an interview setting, for example. According to research, observation as a scientific method is systematic, and it consists of collecting data or information “by observing people and places at a research site” (Creswell, 2012: 213). In this perspective, the researcher is likely to be limited to those sites he/she accesses, and may encounter a lot of difficulties, including building rapport with individuals. They may find him/her an outsider, and consequently may hide some important information. So, the observer should behave in a way that he/she not only gets permission to study the site or people, but also play his/her role without disturbing the setting. Research shows that two different roles may be played by the observer, that is either as participant observer or non-participant observer (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Creswell, 2012). On the one hand, the first role is played if the researcher partakes in the activities that occur at the research setting; he/she is involved in them as all the participants.

This allows for opportunities to experience the participants' views of their world, however, with the difficulty of taking notes while participating. On the other hand, the researcher may choose to play the second role for not being familiar enough with the site and its people to take part in their activities. He/she then acts as someone who visits a place and records notes from outside the group, without being involved in the participants' activities. This position sets him/her apart from the very experiences of the participants. A non-participant observer does not interfere with the setting too much; from the outside he/she has the possibility of looking at what is happening, as he/she gets a better view from there (Creswell, 2012; Bell, 2005). In this perspective, and considering the above difficulties, I chose to be a non-participant observer. In

fact, after getting permission to enter a classroom from the school head, without disturbing the setting, I had to sit in the classroom to observe what they were actually doing in regard to learning climate, without taking part in the class activities. In fact, my presence as a stranger in the classroom was not perceived as a disturbing factor for the learning climate; nor did it generate any change of behaviour from both the learners and teachers sides. Such a stand helped me to observe and record for subsequent analysis.

While observing, I set my attention on a variety of behaviours. The nature and quality of interactions between instructor and vocational students was central to my observation. In fact, “students’ daily experiences in the classroom, with teachers and peers, have the greatest influence on how much they are able to learn” (Stuhlman, M. at al., 2016: 2). In my observations, I wanted to see whether instructors and students respect each other, maintain positive relationships with each other and enjoy being together in the classroom, on the one hand. On the other hand, my attention was drawn to teachers in order to know to which extent they value students’ ideas and opinions, care about vocational students, provide constructive feedback and support, and – as the setting of research was a vocational training centre – offer them opportunities for practice.

From the observations, teachers implemented well three indicators – *responsibility*, *laughing* and *justice*, and still faced difficulties in three others – *respect*, *high expectations* and *transparent standards of assessment*. Questions are put to trainees regardless of their social status, trainees participate in the learning process, and a humour-laughing climate is set in classroom, whereas efforts need to be done in greeting trainees before class starts, giving

correction for misbehaviour done and providing equal teaching facilities to trainees.

3.2.3 The Sample

So far as this sub-section is concerned, it presents the sample and sampling procedures referred to for my study, and the reasons for such a choice. In a qualitative study, the objective is to get a profound understanding of a phenomenon, rather than generalizing to a population. Qualitative researchers thus use a variety of sampling approaches. These include maximal variation sampling, purposeful sampling, critical sampling, extreme case sampling, homogeneous sampling, opportunistic sampling, theory or concept sampling, typical sampling, confirming and/or disconfirming sampling, and snowball sampling (Creswell, 2012: 207-9). For my study, the sampling was purposeful. That is, I selected the most fitting and productive vocational teachers, contrary to quantitative inquiry in which random sampling fits better.

In fact, the vocational instructors and students observed were those that I thought would help me understand good learning climate setting in vocational training centres. So I selected them intentionally, assuming that they would provide me with the needed information, thanks to the characteristics they had. To implement that observation, I chose four vocational teachers: Teacher One (T1), Teacher Two (T2), Teacher Three (T3) and Teacher Four (T4), corresponding to four classes from one of the participating institutions. A lesson per selected teacher, or four in all, were observed. Lessons, to be eligible for my research, had to be taught by vocational instructors who had attended the teacher training on good learning climate. These vocational teachers were mainly those who did not

attend any teacher training college, but had been taken as instructors for their being talented or well performing in their workshops. The lesson subjects had to be technical and not overall, as they aim at developing abilities or skills in the learners. Not only did they have to be action-oriented, but also they required the instructor to invest much time and guidance in the recipient skill acquisition, an eloquent sign of careful attention and responsibility. These included lessons about dressmaking, electricity and mechanics, all this being part of vocational training in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Table 1 sums up information about the study sample.

Table 1: The sample

Teacher	Sex	Class of observation	Qualification	Lesson subject
T1	M	Automobile electricity	Degree in Electronics	Electricity for vehicle
T2	M	General electricity	Craftsman / electrician	Mechanics notions
T3	M	Bricklaying	Craftsman / Mason	"Devise and estimation"
T4	F	Dressmaking	Craftswoman / seamstress	Sewing a skirt

As for the data at hand, they have been collected using an observation guide (see appendix 3), on which I had to write comments relating to what happens in the classroom in regard to the teacher's or the students' behaviours, especially the ones pertained to the verifiers or keys of good learning climate described therein. These comments were rated in the corresponding cell as Non applicable (for a behaviour which was not observed because it did not happen during observation), To no degree (because it happened but teacher/trainee did not notice it and consequently did not respond), To a low

degree, To a moderate degree or To a high degree for observed behaviours within the time given to observation in a classroom. In reality, some aspects would invoke a yes / no scale, thus making it to be difficult to measure for objectivity as in quantitative research. Qualitative research dealing with how people view their world – and not with a measurable phenomenon (Creswell, 2012; Bell, 2005), the keys or codes (here ‘numbers’) used in the rating column have nothing to do with real numbers or statistics, but rather they express my general appreciation for the quality of the point or behaviour concerned, in a relative/subjective way (Creswell, 2012; Dey, 2003; Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). In the general comments column, some shorthand notes taken on the field provide further light on the rating. As a non-participant observer, I did not live the experience of learning climate as such. Instead I have been somewhat external to the classroom activities.

In order to prepare the data for further steps, I had to read and reflect on every observational data sheet when the observation session was over, trying to see the link between the comments and the corresponding rate, identifying the recurring keys and then transfer the code on the draft of the summarizing data table. This made me have a general view of the observation session, and then of all data, to the extent that major ideas had already emerged. Subsequently, I had to think over and over about what such data would mean for the context of vocational training learning climate, thus making up my very first thoughts about the data collating steps and their interpretation or analysis. In brief, the observational data preparation took place while the data collection was still going on. Both activities, even together with the first step in data analysis, occurred almost simultaneously, and in an iterative way.

3.2.4 Method of data analysis: Thematic analysis

The method I used in analysing my data, and the reasons why I selected it are presented herein, based on factual research knowledge. As Creswell (2012) puts it, “there is no single, accepted approach to analysing qualitative data, although several guidelines exist for this process [...]; it is an eclectic process” (p. 238). In other words, it is possible that some aspects of a certain approach are referred to when analysing or interpreting data using another approach. Interconnectivity among data analysis approaches is always observed for qualitative data. In order to analyse the observational data gathered in classrooms about learning climate, I used thematic analysis.

This basic approach does not only reflect reality, but also looks for the general meaning of information through an iterative handling of the data. According to it, the researcher relies on intuition and good sense, rather than sticking to hard rules of analysis. In its connection with storytelling, it analyses how participants use words and/or stories to interpret their world. Words, language, text speech, and signs are the basics of human communication or discourse. Interactions and communication in general are the foundation of discourse analysis. In brief, using this thematic approach to my data analysis, I related my data to the different indicators of good learning climate in a repetitive way. While observing the interactions or relationships between teachers and students, or students and students in the classroom, I was looking for patterns or themes, and I had to interpret them in the light of the available literature. As my field notes mainly consisted of words, jottings or comments about attitudes and behaviours, I found thematic analysis fitting my data analysis. In order to alleviate the analysis, codes have been assigned to

the observed behaviours. An unobserved behaviour is identified as 1-Not applicable if I got no opportunity of observing it, or 2-To no degree if the teacher / the students bypassed the opportunity of displaying a behaviour, though it were there. If a behaviour occurred and was therefore observed, the level of observation is labelled as 3-To a low degree, 4-To a moderate degree, or 4-To a high degree.

3.2.5 Problems encountered

Most of the time, no research activities are run smoothly; in my case, I faced some issues though tiny while conducting research on good learning climate. Firstly, in the Democratic Republic of Congo short-term vocational training centres, due to lack of organisation of the sub-system, class visit is not compulsory and, therefore, it does not take place. So, both the teachers and trainees found in the researcher an outsider, or worse, an intruder, despite the introduction done by the school head. As said in the Introduction chapter, short-term vocational training is run by churches, NGOs or individual people, thus it sometimes functions far from the regulations as set by the education system policymakers. Furthermore, because of some internal organisation, a single teacher may run a class the whole school day long.

So, it was not possible for me to observe certain behaviours, especially those that currently occur at class start (for example, greeting the trainees, stating the instructional sequence goals in advance), for probably they had taken place before I got in. As for the limits of the data presented herewith, they just fit the four teachers observed in general, though peculiarities have been observed on their account. So, from these data, it is not possible to infer and conclude that good learning climate is implemented that

way in the whole eastern part of the country, or the whole school visited. However, they provide a general view on the intervention conducted, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the observed vocational teachers in regard to good learning climate implementation. That has been but a first step in setting good learning climate at school, further in-service teacher training still being to foresee.

In conclusion, the study has been a small qualitative research allowing for a preliminary knowledge on how short-term vocational trainers understand the learning climate concept, as it is implemented in their respective classrooms. Therefore, the findings displayed herein are not to be generalized to the whole city, province or country. In a sense, the results reveal in a rather subjective way the point of view about the observed phenomenon by the researcher. They would probably be displayed otherwise if somebody else has conducted the research. Patterns, similarities, themes, strengths and weaknesses have emerged from the researcher's observation. Nevertheless, a foundation on which to build for further teacher capacities building, and therefore for quality development in this sector of the national education, is however in place; therefore, there is no need of inventing a new wheel is displaced.

4

THE INTERVENTION: THE TRAINING ON GOOD LEARNING CLIMATE

The learning climate is a factor worth considering for quality education as it proves to be one of the six components of *great teaching* (Coe et al., 2014: 2-3). However, the teacher remains the vital factor so as to establish and maintain such an environment, for learning achievement and quality improvement (UNESCO, 2005; Scheerens, 2014). His/her pre-service training and in-service training account a lot for such capacity building that he/she may be empowered to fulfil well that goal. Herewith, I am going to deal with the controlled intervention I did for short-term vocational trainers, as I announced it in chapter three. I decided to do, as an intervention, a training workshop for short-term vocational teachers on good learning climate. The training workshop took place on 9-10 February 2017 in one of the vocational schools, in the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. 56 people in all from four different training centres – namely four vocational school heads and 52 other people, including the local vocational training authority, participated in the training. In the following sub-chapters, firstly, the objectives of the training are stated, then the didactical planning – which

gives synthetic but precise information on how the training was organized – is dealt with, before further details are provided in the development of the training section.

4.1 The objectives of the training

As the state of research shows it, a positive learning climate is very important in a classroom/school so as learning can effectively take place, and achievements be observable. What goes on in the classroom is vital to help learners and teachers – in short, the entire school community – enjoy school life and feel well about it. Establishing and maintaining a supportive, caring, welcoming, climate and conducive to learning within a school/classroom is thus crucial for teaching quality improvement. The generic concept of classroom climate bears either physical, socioemotional or psychological meaning, but what counts most is the type of relationships between teachers and learners, or learners among themselves. Empathy, mutual respect, high expectations, mutual encouragement, socioemotional support, transparency in assessment matters, justice and equity are such key characteristics that provide the school community with satisfaction and better feeling about their school or classroom. In order to help some eastern Democratic Republic of Congo vocational trainers realize to which extent classroom climate matters in improving educational quality – and implement it within the classroom settings, an in-service teacher training was run for them, as stated above.

With the training workshop, I wanted to reach six objectives, as follows. Firstly, in opposition to quantity or mere access to education, vocational teachers got an overview on the International discourse relating to quality education and its importance. Secondly, participating teachers got

an overview on the six quality teaching criteria within the educational discourse, namely efficient classroom management, good learning climate, high cognitive activation by complex tasks, effective repetition, individual support and clear structured content. Thirdly, teachers reflected their unique role as key-factor in the quality discourse, as learning achievements and outcomes depend a lot on how they manage and behave in the classroom setting. Fourthly, teachers reflected the importance of positive relationships teacher-trainee or trainee-trainee in enhancing learning achievements, and fifthly, they had to witness and experience how things work with good learning climate indicators implementation for a change of belief. Last, they were to go and implement good learning climate in their respective classrooms for sustainability of the knowledge that they acquired from the training. In short, by the end of the training, the participating teachers should be able to set and implement good learning climate in their classrooms, for student achievements, based on the material given in the intervention.

In fact, as said in chapter one, short-term vocational training in the Democratic Republic of Congo puts emphasis on inclusivity of education – or better, access to all, rather than quality – as it aims at providing a second chance to dropouts from primary or secondary school, illiterates and unemployed youth and adults. Contrary to this quantitative perspective on education, quality would still be lacking, thus annihilating the education action, so far as the country development is concerned. New dropouts, truancy and class skipping have always been observed, mainly because of ill learning climate, and unprepared workforce. Thus, learning achievements and competences are missing for trainees and quality biased. To develop quality within any educational system, building the teacher's capacities

through in-service teacher training plays a tremendous role. So, training on good learning climate as a first step in vocational trainers' building capacities process is worth organizing, as it is likely to solve this problem, though in part.

4.2 The didactical planning

In order to run a teacher training efficiently and effectively, a didactical planning is very important. The didactical planning (see appendix 4) states not only the main steps I had to go through while running the training, but also it presents the different methodological approaches referred to. In this section, we are concerned with the didactics of the training and the concept of good learning climate for both training content or material and training approach, before dealing with the didactical planning itself.

4.2.1 The didactics of the training: an implementation of good learning climate

While I conducted the training, I referred to active and participatory approach as crucial to good quality teaching. I did not just group participants, but I had to identify ways of making everybody being actively involved in the knowledge acquisition. These methods allow for not only a combination of giving inputs with practices and reflection, but also they foster communities of practice. So group work and activities that bring participants together were emphasized, of course after individual reflection – because participation is at different levels, and feedback was provided for. Because, the training aimed at helping the teachers to be effective in their daily tasks, practice was of great value so as to experience good learning climate within a classroom setting. As the training focused on good learning climate, all had to happen in a good learning climate; that is why

good learning climate indicators were followed in running the training. Giving inputs on good learning climate was less important than acting or experiencing good learning climate itself, since implementation and change of belief were the ultimate goals of the training. In other words, notions relating to respect, laughing, responsibility, high expectations, transparency in standards of assessments, and justice were to be practically observed on my side, so as to give a role model of good learning climate implementation.

4.2.2 *The didactical planning of the training*

So far as the very didactical planning is concerned, the training opened on a note reflecting differing ways in which adults learn before highlighting, first of all, the educational quality framework, from which the learning/teaching input within the process factor was stressed upon. Then, came a general view on the six quality teaching indicators, namely efficient classroom management, clarity in subject knowledge and structure, effective forms of repetition, high cognitive activation by tasks, individual support, and good learning climate, a choice indicator due its importance with reference to the training subject material. A systematic analysis of the verifiers of a good learning climate followed, stressing on respect, high expectations, laughing, justice, transparent standards of assessment, and responsibility among other characteristics.

Sequences committed to reflection, feedbacks, relaxation, distressing activities (referred to as ice-breakers here), devotion and food also found room on the didactical planning, together with moments of participant self-evaluation, evaluation of the teacher and of the training. As the didactical planning shows it, different techniques

relating to participatory approach implementation, and steps through which every training sequence goes, are mentioned in the “how” column, whereas the corresponding teaching aids or material, the main actors in the sequence, the sequential duration are provided for every unit or sub-unit. In order to proceed with the training session while having a general view about the amount of time from the start of the work day to the unit at hand, column “total time” gives the time a unit presentation ought not to go beyond. A certain amount of time was also dedicated to summing up the training, the important announcements relating to behaviour within the training, the discussion of important issues such as the idea of professional learning communities and quality through networking, before certification, a family photograph and farewell closed the didactical planning.

4.3 The development of the training workshop

In order to meet the objectives stated above, referring to the different techniques and teaching aids described in the didactical planning, I encouraged the participants to generate knowledge by themselves, as quality teaching requires that learners should construct their own knowledge (Echazarra et al, 2016; Biggs and Tang, 2011). This means that, instead of giving the impression that I am the only one information provider, I played rather the role of a facilitator in knowledge acquisition, meanwhile behaving as role model of good learning climate setting, using a task-based approach. I could just encourage the participants’ participation in different learning activities, whether individual or choral, and provide a constructive feedback on what they did, and on how they should do it better (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Crosby, 2000). This strategy set was suitable to the first four training purposes.

To make participants witness and experience good learning climate, I had them look at a French educational fascinating movie, at the end of which I listened to their impressions. All this would produce positive effects on the participating teachers, so as they decide by themselves on a new way of doing things (Hightower et al, 2011). Because, the intervention also aimed at implementation, for sustainability sake and quality development attempt in their respective classrooms/schools, not only the notion of professional learning communities was introduced, but also putting into immediate practice the knowledge acquired was emphasized. In a nutshell, I had to make sure all participants are both learning actively (Le Donné et al. 2016: 8) and would practise the notion of quality teaching in general, of good learning climate in particular, once back in their schools. Thus, follow-up activities were announced as the training ended; they were then conducted in their schools so as to ensure they are applying the notion learned, and provide responses to questions they would raise on the spot.

As said above, learning for all participants was my main concern. That is why for example, noticing that a number of vocational participating teachers were not able to understand French, I used local languages (Kiswahili and Luyira) at leisure, though my preparation was done in French. Nevertheless, as there were a great number of participants, going through the classical *individual work - pair work – group work* and *plenary procedure* for every sequence, I rather was flexible sometimes and skip one step, lest I wasted time – a sign of creativity (Echazarra et al., 2016: 102).

As a conclusion, the intervention did not only introduce the participating vocational teachers to quality education and quality teaching, so as to activate their thirst for it, but also it empowered them for setting good learning climate in their classrooms. As it was a controlled intervention, it was necessary for me to come to their classrooms for research on how they implement what they acquired from the teacher training. The chapter that follows deals in details with the findings of my investigation.

5

FINDINGS

As said in chapter three, the intervention on good learning climate was intended to be controlled; therefore, this section is dedicated to the results. To get an idea of the learning climate in the classroom setting, I referred to non-participant observation of four lessons in one of the four participating vocational training centres in which I conducted my study. I did not take part into the classroom activities but, using the observation guide I had designed for observation sake, I played a rather passive role writing down only my observations. Thematic analysis was applied for the data interpretation; through careful reading and re-reading of the field-notes, I looked for patterns or similarities, without following rigorous rules of analysis. The themes identified function as mere “organizing categories” of data (Bukari, 2015: 53). Herewith, observational data are described first for each lesson; then, they are synthesized as results in the summary sub-section.

5.1 Data description

This part presents, in a descriptive way, different findings of my observation. All of the data are presented in the table below: indicators, items codes and items description columns, the rating for the observations appear in four other columns. The last column is dedicated to the observed items corresponding mean scores. First, I describe every observation based on to the learning climate verifiers or items regardless of the indicators, then, only am I describing the indicators in connection with the former.

Table 2: Observational data

Indicators	Item code	Item description	Obs.1	Obs.2	Obs.3	Obs.4	Mean
Respect (1)	1.1	trainees' attention to teacher instruction	5	4	4	5	4.5
	1.2	Teacher greeting trainees before class starts	2	1	1	1	0.5
	1.3	Teacher calling responding trainee by name	2	2	2	2	2
	1.4	Free interaction among trainees	4	4	4	5	4.3
	1.5	Mutual help among trainees in solving issues	3	2	2	2	2.3
	1.6	Teacher giving correction for misbehaviour	2	1	1	1	0.5
Responsibility (2)	2.1	Responsibilities held by trainees	4	2	2	1	2.0
	2.2	Work acceptance by trainees	4	4	3	5	4
	2.3	Trainees' devotion to work	5	4	3	5	4.3
	2.4	Trainees' time on work	5	4	3	4	4
Justice (3)	3.1	Weak trainees responses appreciation	3	2	2	3	2.5
	3.2	Teacher providence of individual support	3	2	2	3	2.5
	3.3	Equal teaching facilities share by teacher	1	1	1	1	-
	3.4	Putting questions to all regardless status	5	5	5	5	5

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High expectations (4)	4.1	Reinforcement of trainee's engagement with praises	2	2	3	2	2.3
	4.2	Prior objective statement by teacher	4	1	2	2	2.0
	4.3	Teacher encouragement for work/step done	2	2	2	5	2.8
	4.4	Teacher overt talk about the trainees success	2	2	2	2	2
	4.5	Teacher giving constructive feedback	2	2	2	2	2
	4.6	Overt willing expression for trainees success	2	1	2	2	1.5
Transparent standards of assessment (5)	5.1	Clear explanation of marking criteria	1	1	1	5	1.3
	5.2	Trainees following instructions relating to work	1	1	1	5	1.3
Laughing/humour (6)	6.1	Teacher's smile	4	2	4	4	3.5
	6.2	Teacher's laughter	4	2	2	4	3
	6.3	Teacher's facial expressions	4	2	4	5	3.8
	6.4	Teacher use of icebreakers	2	2	2	4	2.5
		Total (1-score left apart)	62	41	47	69	2.2
		Teacher's individual mean	2.5	1.6	1.9	2.8	

Source: Author

The table above sums up the field notes from the observation guides corresponding to the four observations I conducted. While observing, I used a scale the components of which being 1- Not applicable, 2- To no degree, 3- To a low degree, 4- To a moderate degree, and 5- To a high degree. When calculating the mean score, I did not take into account the *1- Not applicable* rating, since I had no opportunities of observing the aspects to which they refer. The non-applicability annihilates then the

1-rating, rendering it to zero in the mean score calculation. This is due mainly to the fact that, for the targeted school, according to its regulations, an instructor teaches a classroom the whole school day long. So, I could get in long after the class had started, and thus find no room of observing about certain aspects that appear, however, on my observation guide.

Concerning observation number one, aspects relating to the attention given to the teacher's instruction by trainees, the trainees' devotion to the work given, the time trainees spend on the work, the way in which the teacher puts questions to all trainees regardless of their social status were highly well implemented. In addition, free interaction among trainees, having trainees hold some responsibilities at school, the work acceptance by the latter, prior objective statement by the teacher, the teacher's smile, laughter and welcoming facial expression were well implemented, as well, thus joining in to make up the teacher's strong points, together with the preceding aspects, on the one hand. On the other hand, the teacher's weak spots included greeting trainees before the lesson starts, calling the responding trainees by name, giving correction for misbehaviour, reinforcing the trainees' engagement by praises and encouraging them for step/work done, talking overtly about their success, providing them with constructive feedback, willing overtly their success and using icebreakers. He/she was also still struggling with having trainees help one another in solving some issues they were confronted with, as well as appreciating responses from weak trainees, and providing trainees with the support they need. In summary, this first observation displayed a mean score of 2.5. So far as the second observation is concerned, only putting questions to trainees regardless of their social status was highly well implemented, followed by the trainees' attention

to the teacher's instruction, the free trainees' interaction among themselves, the trainees' work acceptance, devotion to work and time spent on it. These six aspects were therefore the second teacher's strong points. On the other hand, the teacher experienced difficulties in implementing a series of aspects, namely those relating to his/her calling the responding trainees by name, mutual help among trainees in solving issues, responsibilities held by trainees, weak trainees responses appreciation, his/her providing trainees with individual support, reinforcement of trainees' engagement by praises, his/her encouraging trainees for step/work done, teacher overt talk about the trainees' success, giving constructive feedback, his/her smiling, laughing, welcoming facial expression and use of icebreakers. All these 13 aspects constituted the teacher's weak spots. The observation mean score was 1.6.

As for the third observation, it displays the following information. Putting questions to all trainees regardless their social status was the only one aspect highly well implemented. Then followed the trainees' attention to the teacher's instruction, the free interaction of trainees among themselves, the teacher's smile and facial expression, which were well implemented, too. Together with putting questions to trainees, they made up the teacher's strong points, whereas he/she experienced difficulties in implementing a lot of other aspects which, no doubt, were his/her weak spots. The latter included the teacher calling responding trainees by name, mutual help among trainees in solving some issues, responsibilities held by trainees, work acceptance by trainees and their devotion to it, the time trainees spent on work, appreciating responses from weak trainees, providing trainees with individual support, reinforcing trainees' engagement with praises, prior objective statement, the teacher's encouragement

for work/step done, overt talk about the trainees' success, constructive feedback, overt willing expression for trainees' success, laughter, and use of icebreakers. Taken as a whole, this observation displayed a mean score of 1.9.

The fourth and last class observation presented the situation as follows. On the one hand, were highly well implemented the items relating to the attention given by trainees to the teacher's instruction, free interaction among trainees, work acceptance by trainees and their being devoted to it, putting questions to all trainees regardless their social status, the teacher's encouragement for work/step done, the teacher's giving clear explanation on marking criteria, the extent to which followed the teacher's instructions relating to work at hand, and the teacher's welcoming facial expressions. Were also fairly well implemented in this fourth observation the aspects pertained to the trainees' time on work, the teacher's smile, the teacher's laughter, and his/her use of icebreakers, thus coming to a total of 13 positive and/or strong points on the teacher's behalf. Difficulties were, however, experienced in implementing another set of behaviours, namely calling the responding trainees by name, mutual help among trainees in solving some issues, appreciating responses from weak trainees, providing trainees with individual support, reinforcing trainees' engagement with praises, the teacher's prior objective statement, his/her overt talk about the trainees' success, his/her giving constructive feedback, and overt willing expression for the trainees' success. As a whole, it displayed a mean score of 2.8.

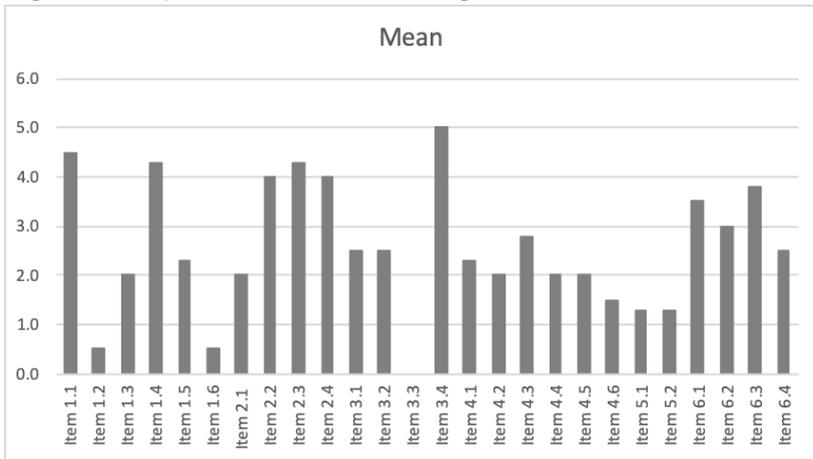
The observational data from the four observations show that the different aspects observed were not implemented in the same way by the four teachers. Nevertheless, calling the responding trainees by name, putting questions to trainees

regardless of their social status, the teacher's overt talk about the trainees' success and his/her giving constructive feedback display same rating in all four classes, whether as strength or weakness. Putting questions to all trainees, regardless of their social status (item 3.4), was highly well implemented by the four teachers observed. The behaviours relating to the students' attention to the teacher instruction (item 1.1), free trainees interaction among themselves (item 1.4), work acceptance by trainees (item 2.2), trainees' devotion to work and the time spent on it (items 2.3 and 2.4), weak trainees responses appreciation by the teacher (item 3.1), the teacher's providence of individual support (item 3.2), teacher's encouragement for the step/work done (item 4.3), teacher's smile (item 6.1), teacher's laughter (item 6.2), teacher's facial expression (item 6.3) and use of icebreakers (item 6.4) display a mean of 2.5 or more, and thus have been generally well implemented by the observed teachers. All of these 13 items, considered together, make up strengths for these vocational trainers, on the one hand.

On the other hand, the behaviours relating to the teacher's greeting his/her trainees before the class starts (item 1.2) and his/her correcting trainees for done misbehaviour (item 1.6) have the lowest lean score (0.5) – one observation having been rated 2 (*To no degree*), and the three others 1 (*Not applicable*, which is taken as naught in the mean score calculation), and thus they are implemented the least. They are followed by behaviours pertaining to the teacher's calling the responding trainees by name (item 1.3), his/her making trainees help one another in solving certain issues (item 1.5), the responsibilities held by trainees (item 2.1), the praises so as to reinforce the students' engagement (item 4.1), statement of the instructional goals before class starts (item 4.2), the teacher's overt talk about the trainees'

success (item 4.4), the clear willing to see them achieve (item 4.6), the feedback provision (item 4.5), and both items under transparent standards of assessment (Items 5.1 and 5.2). They make constitute real challenges for the trainers observed so far as implementing good learning climate in the classroom is concerned. The graph below gives further light on this data description, showing the extent to which every item was observed.

Figure 1 : Implementation of learning climate verifiers

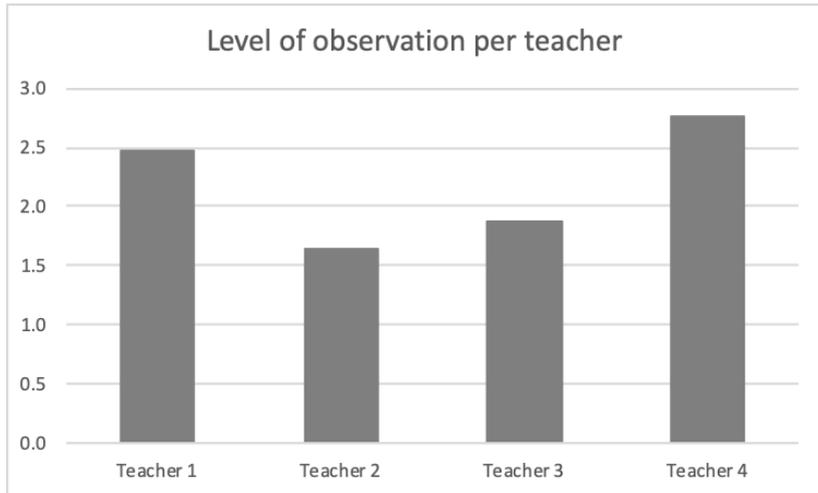


Source: Author

This graph shows clearly that the highest mean occurred about putting questions to trainees regardless of their social status (item 3.4), whereas both greeting trainees before class starts (item 1.2) and giving correction for misbehaviour done (item 1.6) display the lowest mean (0.5), equal teaching facilities by the teacher (item 3.3) being left apart for not being observed. About the individual observations, the respective mean scores are 2.5, 1.6, 1.9, and 2.8. Considering a mean value of 2.5 and above as average, the first and fourth teachers implemented good

learning climate better than the second and third ones, as shown in the following graph.

Figure 2: Learning climate implementation by teachers



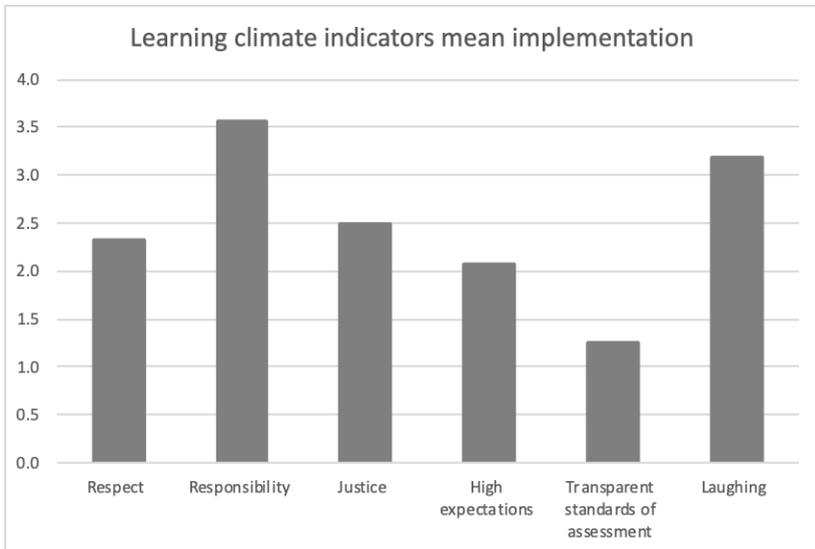
Source: Author

This graph reveals that the fourth teacher had the highest implementation rate in regard to the others, followed by teacher number one. The second had the lowest rate in terms of good learning climate implementation in the classroom. Besides, the general level of implementation was not very high, as none of the observed teachers reached even a 3.0 mean score.

When considering the observed individual indicators of good learning climate within a classroom, their mean scores show that *responsibility* prevailed and is thus on top of all with a mean of 3.6. *Laughing/humour* and *justice* join with respectively a mean of 3.2, and 2.5. In this respect, these three indicators make up strong points for the observed vocational trainers, on the one hand. On the other hand,

respect (2.3 mean), *high expectations* (2.1 mean value) and *transparent standards of assessment* (1.3 mean) are the least implemented by all the observed teachers, thus making up real challenges, so far as good learning climate practising activities in the classroom are concerned. The indicators display an overall mean of 2.5, which means that good learning climate was implemented *to a moderate degree* in the observed classrooms. Figure 3 below shows clearly this description at the indicators level.

Figure 3: Learning climate indicators mean implementation



Source: Author

As shown in graph above, the observed teachers implemented well three indicators – *responsibility*, *laughing* and *justice*, and still faced difficulties in three others – *respect*, *high expectations* and *transparent standards of assessment*.

In view of the whole data set, six main categorizing themes are displayed throughout these findings. These are, in their turn, subdivided into sub-themes, according to the items they comprise. They are, first, *respect in the classroom* – with the sub-themes trainees' attention, prior greetings, naming respondents, trainees' free interaction, trainees' mutual help, and misbehaviour correction, second, *trainees' responsibility*, which comprises trainees' task, task acceptance, work on task, and task spent on task. Third, *justice in the classroom*, which includes responses appreciation, individual support providence, teaching facilities, and equal questioning, and fourth, *teacher's high expectations for trainees' achievement*, which considers prior objectives statement, encouragement for work done, belief in trainees' capacity, constructive feedback, overt willing trainees' success. The two last themes shown in the findings are respectively *transparency of assessment standards* – which looks at assessment criteria explanation and work instruction, and *laughing/humour*, in which the teacher's smile, laughter, facial expression and use of icebreakers function as sub-themes, as well.

In a nutshell, the class observations showed that certain aspects of good learning climate are being well implemented. Nevertheless, trained short-term vocational teachers are not yet on good track in implementing some other aspects. From both the observed aspects and the implementing teachers, it is clear that good learning climate is being implemented on a regular basis by trained instructors. This is how my observational data are presented in general.

In the following section, I am going to sum up the findings and present them as results.

5.2 Summary of results

From the data presented above, two main results are displayed. Here, they are dealt with into details, together with an analytical view as to why it happened that way.

5.2.1 Good implementation of some learning climate aspects

The implemented aspects relate on one side to the teacher, and to the trainees on the other side. On the teacher's account, there are eight aspects, that is, the way in which the teachers who conducted the lessons I observed put questions to trainees regardless of their social status, how the teacher appreciated responses from weak trainees, how he/she provided individual support to trainees who needed it most, the encouragement he/she provided the trainees with for the work/step done, the teacher's smile, laughter, welcoming facial expression, and his/her using icebreakers to create a stress free climate for students. So far as the trainees' part is concerned, the attention they gave to the teacher's instruction, the freedom they displayed in interacting among themselves, (d) their acceptance of work given by the teacher, how they worked on the task given by the teacher and the time they spent on it, five aspects in all, were well implemented, too.

As to searching to know why it was easier for teachers to implement the forehead mentioned aspects, I found two main reasons, as follows.

a) The importance of the teaching process

Vocational training is directly related to work, as it prepares the workforce. Thus it cannot be learnt only theoretically, but rather practice and teaching aids manipulation are

emphasized therein. Frequently, the teacher had to get into relationships with students, through contact and questions/answers, as to show them what to do, or how something has been done. By the same way interactions developed among trainees, and between teacher and trainees show that a good learning climate was observable.

b) The importance of students' intrinsic motivation

The vocational students within the classrooms observed were adults and/or young boys and ladies, who are seeking for a second chance of being employed or self-employed. They had reflected enough before joining a vocational training school. Their motivation accounted a lot for *responsibility* learning climate indicator implementation, to the extent that even if the teacher seemed not to do his/her part, they kept on trying hard. Their motivation made them act responsibly within the classroom setting, a proof of engagement in their learning.

5.2.2 Failed implementation of some learning climate aspects

Though the above sub-point shows that trained short-term vocational teachers were already on the way of implementing certain aspects of good learning climate in their classroom, still they faced a lot of difficulties in putting into practice some others. Their difficulties are faced in attempts of implementing behaviours relating to *respect*, *high expectations* of the trainees' work and *transparent standards of assessment*. What is curious about the behaviours that account for these weaknesses is that all of them are around the teacher. Besides, they all pertain to innovation introduced in the teaching/learning domain, and the teaching methodology ever known by these vocational instructors. As for the reason why they did not implement

these aspects well, I found that they resisted change. From the intervention, they learned about new teacher's habits and attitudes that they found as contradicting what was commonly done. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo context, traditional pedagogy does not require of teachers to greet trainees before a class starts –in primary and secondary schools, it is however a regulation for trainees to stand up and greet the teacher who gets in their classroom, nor does it allow praising students, or speaking overtly of their success. The learner is low, and the teacher superior; so, there is no need to show respect to a learner, or to have high expectations of him, or to be transparent about his/her assessment, the trained teachers would say. So, the three troublesome indicators and their learning climate supporting attitudes as raised above are mere weaknesses. They require to be revisited for mastery so that good learning climate can be fully implemented in the classroom.

In brief, by implementing good learning climate in the classroom, the trained short-term vocational teachers observed have revealed both their strengths and weaknesses. They have showed a great deal of implementation about *responsibility, laughing, and justice*, contrary to *respect, high expectations and transparent standards of assessment* where less positive behaviours have been displayed. No doubt, some miscellaneous slight good points did show up in regard to those aspects, but not at an acceptable degree. Good learning climate was observed *to a moderate degree* in these classes; and its implementation proved rather good for the observed vocational trainers, a sign that the intervention in which they participated was worth attending. Still a lot of items are to be improved so as to attain quality education in general, teaching quality in particular. The teaching process, the

vocational trainees' motivation, and resistance to change were found as explicative notes on these somewhat paradoxical results. Ways forward and recommendations provided in the conclusion chapter shed further light on what can be done exactly.

In the chapter that follows, the findings on good learning climate in the classroom as presented herewith will be discussed in the light of the available literature and

6

DISCUSSION

In the following reflections, I am going to discuss the findings in the context of the scientific discourse on educational quality, or better, the results of chapters 4 and 5 are going to be reflected in the light of the discourse as presented in the second chapter.

This study has been trying to answer the question of knowing how well trained short-term vocational teachers implement good learning climate in their classrooms. Thus, apart from considering what good learning climate really means, the undertaken research looked for ways to understand to which extent it matters for trainees' achievements, and tried to identify the challenges trained vocational instructors face when implementing it in their respective classrooms. In order to get the point, and looking at the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, vocational instructors were trained on good learning climate before my observation came in.

To start with, I recall the most important aspects of my intervention. The intervention was based on the concept of good learning climate building capacities for short-term vocational trainers. During the intervention, I tried to harmonize the content of the training workshop with its overall intent by respecting good teaching criteria, especially *good learning climate*. Therefore, in the didactical plan of

the training, I paid special attention to the seminar climate or atmosphere – in the training workshop I acted like a real teacher and the participants as real trainees – by building positive relationships with participants. This means that, as far as it depended on me, I not only treated them with respect, justice, responsibility, and high expectations, but also I referred to humour/laughing fostering attitudes at leisure, and I would like to be as clear as possible in giving instructions. The development of the seminar showed that good learning climate was determining for trainees' achievements, as they feel comfortable with their school/classroom activities. Instead of learning about good learning climate, participants experienced it in a certain way. At seeing how it works, they decided by themselves of its importance for practice within the educational setting.

As for my research, based on chapter five, two main findings are to be highlighted. They are good implementation of some learning climate aspects, on one side, and unsuccessful implementation of some others, on the other side. These two results are overall, as they show up at first look on the findings described above. When looking at what lies behind the aspects, which were well implemented and which ones were not, three (reflexive) results emerge, with regard to the first steps short-term vocational instructors have made in implementing good learning climate in their classrooms.

6.1 The importance of the teaching process

The aspects relating to *responsibility*, *laughing* and *justice* were implemented successfully, together with a set of observable behaviours, thanks to the approach and methods used. For the vocational classrooms, not only the theory, but mainly the manipulation of teaching

facilities/visual aids, demonstration/experiment, and a lot of guidance from the teacher, followed by even trial and error from the learner were observed. This resulted in active participation of trainees, intensive interactions, thus giving an idea of good relationships teacher-trainees, and trainees among themselves. In fact, based on the social constructivist theory of learning/teaching pointed out in chapter two, learners construct their own knowledge when they participate, interact and are involved in the teaching/learning process (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Bates, 2015; UNESCO, 2005; Kim, 2001). Most of the time classroom observation focuses on the teacher subject matter mastery, or teacher allocation on teacher certificate/diploma, but the teaching procedures and strategies he/she uses account for a lot for the trainee's outcomes. So, how to teach a subject is more important than what to teach in education quality (Hattie, 2009; Crosby, 2000). Acquiring knowledge on how to effectively teach through in-service teacher training is one way to develop, and meet this standard.

6.2 The importance of the students' motivation

Short-term vocational training targets at unemployed adults and youth, mostly dropouts from the formal education system, with a certain maturity. Most of them, having dropped out of school for long, come back into the education system with a strong decision, determination and intrinsic motivation. For being intrinsically motivated and/or externally motivated by the teacher, trainees displayed good behaviours in regard to good learning climate, especially concerning the *responsibility* aspect. The more trainees are motivated, the more they are engaged, act responsibly within the school/classroom setting, and are likely to learn. This assumption confirms, as specified in chapter two, that student intrinsic motivation enhances

learning a lot (Read et al., 2015; Reyes et al., 2012). The teacher's role is, thus, to help maintain that motivation through praises, encouragement, constructive feedback, so as students keep engaged in the learning activities, for their achievements (Larkin, 2010: 5). That is why Terrel H. Bell (cited in Ames, 2000, p. 409) said, "There are three things to remember about education. The first one is motivation. The second one is motivation. The third one is motivation" (p. 409). In summary, no matter how smart the teacher may be, or the school, if the students are not motivated, the difficulties of improving the learning achievements stay. Teachers therefore have to emphasize on this aspect, both at the intrinsic and the external levels, for teaching quality improvement.

6.3 The teachers' resistance to change

The short-term vocational teachers observed acquired, by attending the intervention, some knowledge about good learning climate. Despite the enthusiasm they showed afterwards, from the observation I conducted, still they did not implement some learning climate indicators, namely *high expectations*, *respect* and *transparent standards of assessment*. Teacher's behaviours such as calling respondents by name, greeting the trainees before an instructional sequence starts, encouraging trainees for work done, giving constructive feedback, providing individual support, using constantly praises as a reinforcement of students' positive action, and assessing the trainees' progress – among other attitudes, have proved difficult to implement. So, non-implementing a certain behaviour does not mean that there is something lacking in knowledge, but that teacher did not try to do/practice it during the observed classrooms activities. That denotes resistance to change on the teacher's behalf. No doubt, as shown in chapter

five, these behaviours are innovative and challenging about running a classroom. Besides, the training workshop did not aim at seeing the participating teachers implement fully all the factors of good learning climate. In fact, change is a difficult process for education practitioners, or better, it moves on gradually; so it takes a lot of time, and looks for effort from the practitioners (Guskey, 2002: 386). The teacher's resistance to change lies under numerous factors, namely the uncertainty there is about the success of new methods (Lortie, 1975, cited in Guskey, 2002: id.). Thus, teachers are not ready to get rid of the former practices, beliefs, and behaviours built across many years. Yet, this does not justify lack of implementation. Because teacher professional development activities aim at improving the teaching career through action undertaking, trying – not rejecting, and frequent practices of innovation, together with feedback from the teacher trainer, account a lot for ultimate success. In fact, together with initial teacher training to enter the profession, research emphasizes the importance of building the teacher's capacities through ongoing teacher training sessions (Walberg, 1991, cited in UNESCO, 2005: 67).

Regular training helps “maintain and strengthen the teacher's professionalism through their professional lives” (Lipowsky & Rzejak, 2015: 28). For quality sake, it is even advisable that preparing teachers for the teaching career starts with the selection or recruitment of those who are ready to enter teacher training (UNESCO, 2005: 117), then only can they be given the job. When the knowledge acquired from in-service teacher training is practiced within the classroom setting, effective teaching/learning takes place, and the learner outcomes are positively impacted (Coe et al., 2014: 13). However, because contexts and situations are different, it is not possible for an innovative

technique to be implemented in a uniform way (Firestone and Corbett, 1987; Fulan, 1985; Huberman & Miles, 1984, all cited in Guskey, 2002: 387). Nevertheless, ways of making the teachers enrol for professional development, and engage in real implementation of the intended change are essential for quality education.

In conclusion, building the teachers' capacities is essential so as to be well-performing in the teaching profession; it requires that the acquired knowledge therein be put into practice. Not only should teachers' empowering sessions be held on a regular basis, and in diverse ways, to reach learning for all within a school, but also practice and ongoing feedback from the teacher trainer are a necessity. As for the short-term vocational training sub-system of the Democratic Republic of Congo – of which the majority of teachers are lacking in pedagogical skills, it relies on its teachers' professional development so as to meet the requirements of quality education.

7

CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, I am going to summarize the results in a way of answering the questions discussed herewith, first. Then, some recommendations in regard to the findings, first in regard to the practice, then to research.

My research focused on how good learning climate is implemented by trained teachers in short-term vocational training, and the discovery of the challenges relating to its implementation. Many researchers have shown that the learning climate is a challenge in the Democratic Republic of Congo schools, consequently in its short-term vocational training (République Démocratique du Congo, 2015; The World Bank, 2005; République Démocratique du Congo, 2002). As pointed out in the first chapter, the national education system has been confronted with a lot of challenges, namely high repetition rates, high levels of dropouts, together with poor quality classrooms and limited availability of textbooks (Bashir, 2009; The World Bank, 2005).

Some of these shortcomings are partly explained by the lack of a conducive and welcoming learning environment, which negatively impacts educational quality (Idialu, 2013; Killen, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; Dembelé & Gauthier, 2004). Therefore, knowing what good learning climate is, and why it is worth considering for research were

explored beforehand. Differing terminologies convey the learning climate meanings, all of which converging to the feeling that the school community, especially the teachers and learners, has about school (Magneil et al., 2009; “Classroom and learning”, 2004). Besides, together with presenting an overview on education quality, different ways of fostering a good learning climate – respect, justice, high expectations, responsibility, transparent standards of assessment, and laughing/humour, and the effects of the learning climate on students’ achievements were analyzed in the second chapter. In the methodology chapter, I focused on the intervention done to short-term vocational teachers, before describing the qualitative approach to research, the observation as data collection method, since I had to study teachers in their natural setting – the classroom. The sample, thematic analysis as method of data analysis, and the problems encountered while researching were also dealt with in this part. Prior to the short survey whose findings are presented in chapter five, I conducted a training workshop on good learning climate with a group of short-term vocational instructors and some school heads. How this worked is presented in chapter four, whereas in chapter six I have discussed the main results from the findings trying to link them to the discourse on educational quality.

With this study I was able to show that good learning climate is being implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo vocational training to some extent. The general level of implementation is not yet very high, but a foundation is already set. *Responsibility, justice and laughing/humour* are the main achievements of the observed teachers, specifically due to the teaching approach referred to, and the trainees’ motivation. In fact, vocational education being occupation-oriented in this country, and thus more practical

than theoretical, this makes both trainees and instructors participate and interact to a great deal, thence the facility in carrying out these learning climate fostering behaviours. On the other hand, my observations have shown that short-term vocational trainers still experience a lot of challenges in implementing *respect, high expectations, and transparent standards of assessment*. This is mainly due to resisting change on the teacher's behalf. Based on my results with regard to good learning climate implementation, and in reference to quality education, which emphasizes learning for all, I would like to suggest the following, first for the praxis in the field, and second for further studies in the education science.

a) In regard to the praxis in the field

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, quality education is recognized as being at the heart of the country development (IMF, 2007: 48). With respect to this research on good learning climate, the teacher's behaviours within the classroom setting remain fundamental, so as trainees can develop better achievements (Cohen, 2009: 196). Emphasis has been put on the effective teacher, as being the one who is able to engage all the students in the classroom different learning activities, by creating a good learning environment (Coe et al., 2014: 3). He/she influences the learning process more than does any other factor, as he/she plays a rather modelling role (Dean et al., 2012; Opdenakker & Minnaert, 2011; Dronkers, 2010).

My findings have shown that teachers, after they have been trained, can apply new approaches in their teaching career. Besides, the student's motivation plays an important role in the learning process. That is why, with respect to the field of practice, I recommend: (a) the Democratic Republic of

Congo government, and non-governmental organisations interested in education should provide in-service teacher training on good learning climate to all teachers; (b) a teacher training should be run on how to effectively motivate learners for engagement in learning and better outcomes. (c) The school heads and teacher trainers should be organizing follow-up activities as to make sure progress in the competence built is taking place.

b) In regard to the educational science

Based on the findings of my research, I would recommend that further studies be undertaken on a variety of subjects. These include: (a) to explore the reasons why some trained teachers do not implement what they have acquired as knowledge from a teacher training, (b) to identify key elements as to how to set good learning climate in an inclusive classroom, and (c) the relation there is between family environment and learning climate in regard with the learner's achievements.

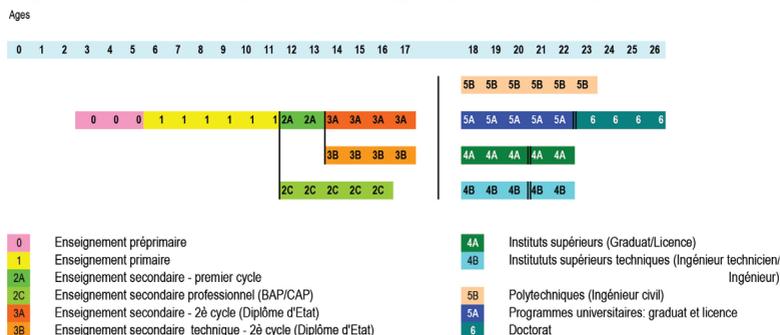
To terminate, "classroom climate is a major determiner of classroom behaviour and learning, understanding how to establish and maintain a positive classroom climate is [...] basic to improving schools" (Adelman & Taylor, s.a: 2), thus no educationist should bypass the importance of good learning climate in the pursuit of educational excellence. Vocational training, being most of the time related to poverty alleviation, and consequently to any nation development through employability of vocational recipients, it should be organized in a qualitative way, as should any other sector of the educational system. In fact, the "quality of education [...] has an influence upon the speed with which societies can be richer and the extent to which individuals can improve their own productivity and incomes" (UNESCO,

2005: 43). Quality education is thus very important, and setting good learning climate in the classroom accounts for its improvement within the educational system. Should teachers apply its principles, the teaching/learning process is attractive and tremendous results are experienced for all education system stakeholders.

APPENDIX

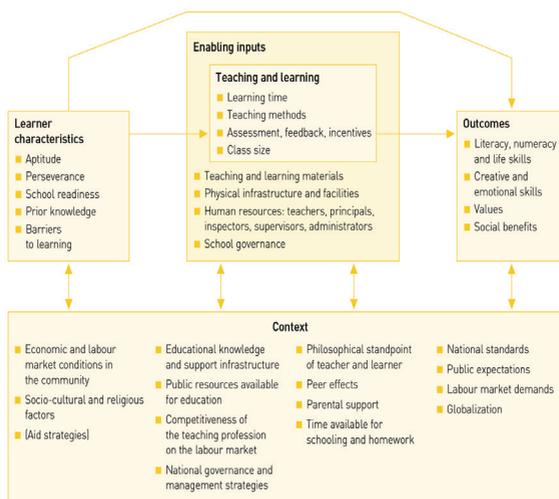
I. Structure of the Democratic Republic of Congo educational system

Diagramme 1 : Structure du système éducatif congolais (selon ISCED 1997)



Source: République Démocratique du Congo (2014a: 19)

II. A framework for understanding education quality



Source : UNESCO (2005: 36). Education for All. Quality imperative.

III. Observation guide

Keys: 1- Not applicable, 2- To no degree, 3- To a low degree, 4- To a moderate degree, 5- To a high degree

School/Teacher code:		
Date:	Subject:	Time in: Time out:
Class level:		Number of trainees:
Sex/trainer:	Male	
ASPECTS OF LEARNING CLIMATE: TO OBSERVE	General comments	Rating
RESPECT		
Trainees are attentive to the teacher instruction		
Teacher greets the trainees before starting the lesson		
The teacher calls every responding trainee by name		
Trainees interact freely among themselves		
Trainees help one another in solving issues / work given		
Teacher gives correction to trainees for misbehaviour, without rebuking		
RESPONSIBILITY		
Trainees hold responsibilities in class (eg. Keeping the classroom key, bringing in teaching aids, cleaning chalkboard)		
Students accept work given to them by the trainer		
Students work on the work given by the trainer		
Students are on task until the end of instructional period / work		
JUSTICE		
The teacher appreciates the weak trainees' responses with more emphasis		
The teacher provides individual support to trainees who need it		

The teacher gives equal teaching facilities to trainees		
Teacher puts questions to all trainees, regardless social status		
HIGH EXPECTATIONS		Rating
Teachers reinforces student engagement in current work with praises		
Teacher states the objectives of teaching sequence to trainees		
Teacher encourages trainees for the work/step done		
Teacher tells clearly the trainees that they can make it		
Teacher gives constructive feedback to trainees		
Teacher tells trainees that he/she wants them to succeed		
TRANSPARENT STANDARDS OF ASSESSMENT		
Teacher explains the criteria relating to work marking		
Trainees follow the teacher's instructions relating to work to do		
LAUGHING / HUMOUR		
The teacher smiles		
Teacher laughs with trainees		
Teacher's facial expression is welcoming		
Teacher uses icebreakers		

Adapted from: Knoff (2011). Evaluating classroom climate, safety, and classroom management using brief classroom pp.3-9.

Observer: _____ Date and
Signature _____

IV. Didactical planning

Topic: Short-term vocational teacher training on good learning climate for quality teaching

Place: 1 Vocational training centre, DR-C. **Date:** 9-10 February 2017 **Time:** 07.50-16.00 (Each day)

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
	LCD Projector and all other materials brought in the hall; tables arrangement (8), and chairs around (40)		2 ladies from receiving school	20	08.10
Morning devotion & prayer			Chaplain	10	08.20
Welcome, participants introduction, schedule and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Welcome word" by the Centre Director; - Introduction of participants in normal way (Name, school, title) + "technical" presentation (1st name written on paper and placed in front of oneself); - giving out of day's schedule to all; - giving out sheets of papers for individual expectations; - group conduct regulations (posted); - time-keeper selection 	Worksheets Printed copies of programme	Trainer Centre Director Participants	Welc. 5 Intrd. 10 Exp. 5	08.40
Unit 1: Introductory unit : How do adults learn (Ways and conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants (Vocational teachers) brainstorm on the kind of people they train (adults, youth, dropout from primary and secondary schools, etc.) and reflect individually ways and conditions of adults' learning. (Interest, respect, participation, etc.) - Brainstorming & Individual work, - A summarizing/mind-map of ideas is built together and posted on noticeboard. 	Worksheets Flipcharts	Participants Centre Director	IW 10 MM 10	09.00

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Unit 2: Educational quality/Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of educational quality, aspects of educational quality (Framework): context, learner characteristics, process, inputs, outputs/ outcomes, - Teacher splits the education quality framework in parts (Learner, teacher, outputs, etc. And gives a part to every group. They put them in good order, and then reflect which part is most important in educating people) → Education Quality Framework puzzle → discussion in school group (Teacher presented as vital factor) 	Image (Coffee machine) Ppp	Trainer Participants	Ppp. 20 Disc. 10	09.30
Icebreakers			S & E	05	09.35

Good Learning Climate In Vocational Training

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Unit 3: Educational quality/What have you learned: (-a)	<p>- Reflection of what happens in your school (individually): based on the education quality framework, (What can be identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Context » Learner characteristics » Process, » Inputs » Output » Outcomes) » Then compare your work as a school, Write your findings on a flipchart, <p>then participants from each school present/post on wall their findings; participants stand up and go from flipchart to flipchart reading and learning from others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Individual reflection → School group discussion & presentation, → Gallery visit 	Worksheets Flipcharts	Groups secretaries & participants Trainer	IW10 SGD 10 Pres.5 Gall. 10	10.10
Unit 3. Educational quality/What have you learned : (-b) Synthesis and plenary	<p>- Plenary discussion : participants freely talk of what they learned from the gallery visits above, may ask questions to any group, answer is provided (by the group members or so), they show where they still need more light, etc.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainer provides feedback, - a summing up flipchart is built progressively 	Flipcharts	Participants Trainer	30	10.40
Icebreakers and tea-break			2 waiters	20	11.00

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Unit 4. Quality teaching criteria	<p>- 6 tables of experts will be organized, as there are 6 criteria of teaching quality.</p> <p>- Every table gets a text (prepared beforehand by trainer) of its own related to a criterion. These criteria are :</p> <p>(a) Efficient classroom management, (b) Subject knowledge and structure, (c) Effective forms of repetition, (d) Good learning climate, (e) Individual support, (f) High cognitive activation by tasks.</p> <p>Participants read the texts given, comprehend them and explain them to every newcomer in the new group, as after every 6 minutes, one of the participants changes group. At end, 6 people from the 6 initially formed groups (tables) form a group with all the 6 texts. A summarizing flipchart including all topics is made up and presented by the 6 experts together. → Expert table (6 in all)</p>	<p>Worksheets Photo (of teacher giving individual support /video) Flipchart</p>	<p>1 IMPEQ Student Participants</p>	<p>ET 30 Pres. 30</p>	12.00
Lunch and break			2 waiters	60	13.00

Good Learning Climate In Vocational Training

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Unit 5. Teaching quality criteria (repetition and discussion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching quality criteria discussion (Efficient classroom management, subject knowledge and structure, effective forms of repetition, good learning climate, individual support, high cognitive activation by tasks): Advantages of each, reasons, relation to vocational learner achievement. - Participant discuss all the criteria with colleague, then on the table → Peer-discussion, discussion in group & plenary - Feedback of trainer 	Worksheets Notebooks	Participants Trainer	Pd. 15 DG.45 Plen.20 Fdb. 10	14.30
Unit 6. Good learning climate indicators – first part.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants discuss all the 3 in groups : Respect, laughing, responsibility (what they mean for education, importance, practical tips and verifiers) → Individual work → Discussion in pair → Discussion in group → Presentation in plenary → Feedback from trainer 	Worksheets Flipcharts	Trainer Participants	IW.10 D.P. 10. D.Gr.20 Pln.20 Fdb.10	15.40
Evaluation of 1st day training, suggestions, Announcements (End of first day)	Using emoticons, participants show how they feel about the training and training steps covered. Give their point of view. → Flashback	Evaluation sheets	S & Insertion Participants	20	16.00
	2nd day : Friday, 10 February 2017				
Arrival of participants at the training site & Breakfast				20	08.10
Morning devotion and prayer			Chaplain	10	08.20

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Greetings, on-boarding and Review on previous material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants shake hands with each other and ask news of home, - Review on Educational quality, quality teaching criteria → Peer exchange/ discussion → Questions/answers 	Worksheets Flipcharts	Participants	Greet.5 Rev.15	08.40
Unit 7. Good learning climate indicators – second part.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead-in: Video watch on „Les outils de communication – Le feedback“ - Participants discuss on table: High expectations, feedback and communication: All three topics relate, in that they are connected to teacher's WORDS in encouraging learners. - Participants observe the video, then say/ discuss how the teacher uses words addressing pupils, decide on the class climate and ow this enhances or hinders learner's achievement. → Discussion in groups (on table) → Trainer feedback, 	Video & images Flipchart(on Communication)	Trainer Participants	Vid: 10 GD.40 Fdb.10	09.40
Ice-breakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of picture (negative communication, 4 messages from one mouth) 	Image (on communication)	1 lady Trainer	10	09.50

Good Learning Climate In Vocational Training

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Unit 8. Good learning climate indicators – third part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainer puts flipchart on 2 tables corresponding to 2 topics: (Justice, and transparent standards of assessment). - Participants write on them in turn → Silent discussion → Flipchart are posted → Reading of what participants have written as comments on these topics → Trainer feedback 	Flipchart	1 IMPEQ Student	Tour 20 Read.30 Fdb.10	10.50
Tea-break			2 waiters	10	11.00
Unit 9. Good learning climate indicators – implementation and discussion (How to)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video watch on Français 1ère année collège -les temps du récit- le passé simple" → Individual work (Identification of good learning climate verifiers, and why) → Flashlight : participants (nobody is obliged to) talk of what they have observed in the video, in relation with good learning climate 	Worksheets/ Notebooks Flipchart	Participants	60	12.00
Training summary	<p>Key points to keep from the training are addressed in a succinct way, with the help of all:</p> <p>How adults people learn Educational quality framework Quality teaching criteria and indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → handouts are given out, if any 	Flipchart	Participants	20	12.20

What	How Pay attention to this!	Material	Who	How long	Total time
Training evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Individual evaluation using competence sheet (emoticons/symbol) → Thermometer → Flashlight 	Printed sheets	Participants	20	12.40
Announcements/ Final dispositions, Certification, final prayer and farewell.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share of idea of professional learning communities, - Networking and need of seeing how this works in schools, (so need of Tel. Numbers and/or e-mail addresses of all participants) - Participation certificates award - "Event Word" of participants - Vocational trainers Family picture 	List of participants to fill	Centre Director Trainer	20	13.00
Break, lunch And departure			2 waiters	60	14.00

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Abstract

This book considers the way education is presented to short-term vocational trainees, to ascertain they are learning. Its central theme is educational quality in this country in general and especially in the vocational sub-system. In fact, in sub-Saharan Africa, out-of-school youth and adults are offered a second chance education through non-formal short courses. This helps meet the goals of Education for All on the one hand, and in a way to respond to the persistent unemployment problem on the other. An in-service teacher training was conducted to update the teachers' knowledge on good learning climate. As a result, trained teachers proved to be able to implement several indicators of good learning climate. Evidence is that change is gradual, and great issues have small beginnings. Adaptability of teaching to vocational trainees presumably tired of learning due to former ill learning climate in their past school experiences, building on their inner motivation to organize courses, and seeking ways of keeping them motivated the whole learning period long, and following the requirements of quality teaching, namely of good learning climate as presented in this book, likely lead to great success.

Ce livre traite de la façon dont l'éducation est présentée aux jeunes et adultes en formation en métiers, savoir s'assurer qu'ils apprennent réellement. Tout y tourne autour de l'éducation de qualité, qui est en vogue actuellement. Au fait, en Afrique sub-saharienne, une éducation de seconde chance, à travers une formation professionnelle de courte durée est organisée pour jeunes et adultes hors-de-l'école pour qu'ils expérimentent la joie de finir des études et ainsi accèdent au travail. Cela

s'inscrit dans les objectifs de l'Education Pour Tous d'un côté et la réponse au problème de manque d'emploi de l'autre [slogan de l'UNESCO]. Un premier pas vers le changement a été marqué, du fait que les formateurs mettent en œuvre un bon nombre d'indicateurs d'un bon climat d'apprentissage. L'évidence est que le changement est progressif. Adapter son enseignement à une cible découragée compte tenu de l'expérience antérieure en matière de climat d'apprentissage, bâtir l'enseignement sur la motivation intrinsèque de départ, entrevoir régulièrement des voies et moyens de les garder motivés au cours du processus de formation, et se conformer aux prescriptions de l'enseignement de qualité, dont ceux du bon climat d'apprentissage tels que présentés ici, conduira certainement au succès.

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*Printed by PROGRAPH LTD
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