
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Climate of Change, Teacher Attributes and Readiness for Change in Selected Schools in China

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| ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the School Climate in selected schools in China, focusing on teachers' self-efficacy and professional satisfaction. The research used descriptive-correlational and correlation methods to analyze the school climate in terms of professional development, evaluation feedback, and participation in decision-making. The findings showed that respondents had a positive perception of teachers' pedagogical skills, high perception of the school climate towards evaluation feedback, and high perception of the school climate towards decision-making. The study also revealed that teachers' satisfaction should be continually enhanced by school authorities, who should practice effective management principles, maintain good communication, and pay attention to the development of school infrastructure. Fair evaluation of teachers' performance, skills, and qualifications, as well as fair promotion policies, should be based on fair promotion policies. Additionally, the school authority should create opportunities for continuous professional development training to increase self-confidence and teaching quality.

| KEYWORDS

School climate, Professional development, Evaluation feedback, Participation in Decision making, Teacher self-efficacy, Job accomplishment, Skill development on the job, Social interaction with students, parents and colleagues, and Coping with job stress

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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Introduction

Farooqi MTK (2018) highlights the importance of school climate in educational organizations, as it influences the behavior and feelings of teachers and students. School climate is a composite of the mediating variables that intervene between organizational structure, leadership style, and teacher performance and satisfaction. It is crucial for principals to develop a supportive, welcoming, and positive role towards teachers, showing genuine concern and support.

Sahin (2019) further emphasizes the link between school climate and teacher attitude and behavior. Effective principals develop a collective commitment among their staff and foster a collaborative work environment. School leaders establish and consistently uphold school norms, provide opportunities for teacher leadership, and conduct rigorous screening processes for vacant teaching positions.

Over the past decade, education reformers have focused on raising teacher quality, as it has a significant impact on student outcomes and teacher effectiveness. School climate can promote rapid improvement and extend professional growth through formal and informal opportunities for on-the-job learning. Meaningful peer collaboration helps develop teachers' skills, facilitate open feedback, and strengthen collegial relationships.

Increasing school climate is essential for increasing a teacher's job satisfaction and productivity within a school. A positive school climate enhances effective teaching and better student performance. However, if teachers perceive their work climate as challenging, they may be emotionally exhausted and struggle to attend to the needs and interests of students.

School Climate

Schneider and Burke's (2016) research on school climate has significantly influenced the study's problem, design, and methodology. School climate is the perception of events, activities, and methods of interaction in an organization, which are expected, regulated, and supported. It determines school efficiency and creates conditions for students and teachers to work and learn effectively. A positive school climate is essential for students' emotional and behavioral outcomes, including adaptive psychosocial adjustment, mental health outcomes, and self-esteem. It also influences students' behavior, such as rates of bullying and aggression. School climate perception has been found to affect students' academic achievement. A safe and supportive learning environment is largely based on the quality of relationships between students, parents, school personnel, and the community. Factors such as family relationships, school environment, neighborhood people, and the broader cultural context also influence children's behaviors. School climate can have a positive influence on the learning environment by yielding favorable educational and psychological outcomes for students and school personnel, or it may become a significant barrier to learning by preventing optimal learning and development.

Teachers' Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is a crucial aspect of educational success, with Bandura's (2018) proposal suggesting that it includes two aspects: general sense of certain behaviors leading to certain outcomes and personal teaching efficacy. Poole (2018) found a positive relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and important school outcomes, such as student achievement gains and successful school change efforts.

Efficacy is an internal convictions to perform tasks with an estimation of desired outcomes, with four sources of influence: mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal/social persuasions, and physiological or affective states. It is an important affective factor that boosts job performance and a strong militating factor against attrition and absenteeism. Teacher self-efficacy, which refers to the beliefs that teachers have of their ability to enact certain teaching behavior that influences students' educational outcomes, plays a key role in influencing important academic outcomes and well-being in the working environment.

School climate is equally beneficial not only to teachers but also to students' behavior, approaches to learning, total well-being, and improved achievement. Perry (2019) examined the relationship between teachers' efficacy and the climate within their schools, measuring three variables: teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction.

Teachers with high efficacy were found to spend more time in whole group instruction, monitoring and checking seat-work, and spending considerably more time in lesson preparation. High self-efficacy scores may help teachers' retention decisions and have a preventive role against burnout syndrome, facilitating teachers' well-being and resilience.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed at determining the school climate through teachers self - efficacy and professional satisfaction in selected Selected schools in China

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following question:

1. What is the school climate in selected schools in China along the following?
 - 1.1. Professional development;
 - 1.2. Evaluation feedback; and
 - 1.3 Participation in Decision making?

- 2.What is the level of teacher self-efficacy in selected selected schools in China in terms of:
 - 2.1. job accomplishment;
 - 2.2. skill development on the job;
 - 2.3 social interaction with students, parents, and colleagues; and
 - 3.4 coping with job stress?

3. What is the level of professional satisfaction of teachers in selected schools in China?
4. Is there a significant relationship between school climate and teachers' level of professional satisfaction?
5. Is there a significant relationship between school climate and level of teacher self-efficacy?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' level of professional satisfaction and level of teacher self-efficacy?
7. Based from the findings what action plan can be proposed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy and professional satisfaction?

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive-correlational method to describe the current situation and analyze data about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, trends, and cause-effect relationships. Correlational research investigates the arrangement of factors and the nature of the relationship between two or more variables.

Participants and Sampling

The study used primary and secondary sources to analyze the School Climate: Teachers Self-Efficacy and Professional Satisfaction in selected schools in China for the 2023-2024 school year. It focused on 200 out of 800 teachers, analyzing articles, books, internet, journals, and scholarly works.

Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used a self-constructed questionnaire to determine School Climate: Teachers Self-Efficacy and Professional Satisfaction in selected schools in China. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, covering School Climate, Teachers Self-Efficacy, and Professional Satisfaction. The questionnaire underwent face and content validation by a 3-member panel, and was then approved by the adviser and distributed online. The tool was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. The survey questionnaire was used to assess respondents' perceptions of School Climate. The researcher obtained permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd China and informed the principal of selected elementary schools. The questionnaires were collected, organized, presented, analyzed, and interpreted. Statistical tools included weighted mean and Pearson's r for determining the relationship between School Climate and Teachers Self-Efficacy and Professional Satisfaction.

Results and Discussions

The study focuses on the school climate in selected public elementary schools in China, specifically in terms of professional development. The findings support Vanblaere et.al's (2016) research, which suggests that a positive school climate can create a learning environment by helping teachers identify their development needs, encouraging experimentation, finding and allocating resources to support teachers' learning, and enhancing the implementation of new learning. A positive school climate contributes to effective teaching and learning, genuine communication, both within and outside the school, and specific professional development for teachers, administrators, and staff to increase their knowledge and skills.

The study also examines the school climate towards evaluation feedback. The respondents had a high perception of the school climate towards evaluation feedback, with an average weighted mean of 3.47. The study found that the higher the perception of the school climate towards evaluation feedback, the higher the evaluation feedback.

The findings suggest that a positive school climate can contribute to effective teaching and learning, as well as genuine communication, both within and outside the school. The school climate also plays a crucial role in the evaluation process, with a clear definition of good teaching, an understanding of the purpose of the evaluation, and a multiple-approach to measurement being utilized. Overall, the study highlights the importance of a positive school climate for effective professional development and student achievement.

The study supports Yulia (2016) and Fitriana (2016)'s findings that there is a significant relationship between school climate and evaluation feedback for teachers. Lidyawati (2016) found a positive and significant relationship between school climate and teacher performance. Teacher performance can be influenced by the school environment or climate in which they are assigned. The study found that respondents had high perceptions of the School Climate towards participation in decision-making.

Moos (2018) believed that the human environment, including the ecological environment, organizational structure, and organizational climate, will have an impact on individual and group behavior. Teachers' professional behaviors, such as improving professional skills, cooperation with colleagues, commitment to students, and decision-making, are closely connected to the school climate. Teachers' actual participation in all areas of decision-making was negatively correlated with work alienation and positively correlated with their perceptions of the school's climate.

The dimensions of school climate affected were those regarding leadership and collegiality rather than student discipline issues. The strongest predictor of both alienation and perceived school climate was teacher's participation in decision-making about teachers' issues. The average weighted mean of 3.49 revealed that respondents had high perceptions of School Climate in regards to participating in decision-making, indicating that teachers were more inclined to make decisions through a favorable school climate followed by professional development and evaluation feedback.

The study by Moos (2018) supports the idea that human environment, including ecological and organizational climate, impacts individual and group behavior. Teachers' professional behaviors, such as improvement of professional development, commitment to students, and decision-making, are influenced by the surrounding environment and climate they feel. In China, teachers' self-efficacy towards job accomplishment was found to be very high, with an average weighted mean of 3.58.

Trentham et al. (2018) found that teachers' sense of efficacy is related to their satisfaction with their profession and job accomplishment. High self-efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in affecting and sustaining their commitment to school and job accomplishment. Teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs are likely to perform better than those with low self-efficacy beliefs because they implement didactic innovations in the classroom and use classroom management approaches and adequate teaching methods that encourage students' autonomy and reduce custodial control.

In terms of skill development on the job, teachers with high self-efficacy were more likely to perform better than those with low self-efficacy beliefs. They demonstrated strong disciplinary knowledge and clear learning objectives, frequently monitored student behavior, provided regular and prompt feedback to students' learning needs, and developed instructional materials aligned with competencies.

The study by McMaster (2019) found that teachers' efficacy significantly influences their skills development. Four professional development formats were examined, including Bandura's sources of efficacy. All four programs contributed to improving teachers' efficacy, but the specific programs were not related to the likelihood of teachers using the learned strategies. However, the format that included a mastery experience and follow-up coaching for using the new strategy was found to increase teachers' efficacy levels.

The study also found that teachers had high perceptions of their self-efficacy in social interactions with students, parents, and colleagues. This indicates that higher self-efficacy levels resulted in better social interaction with students, parents, and colleagues.

Collier (2018) suggested that teacher self-efficacy may be enhanced through the simple act of caring, as it shows four important insights about teacher behaviors and beliefs. A caring classroom environment can increase teacher self-efficacy, as students are more willing and motivated to learn and succeed. Involving parents in classroom activities can also increase teacher self-efficacy.

Fry's (2018) study found that integrating parental involvement in classroom activities fostered a strong parent-teacher relationship and increased student achievement. This enhanced teacher self-efficacy is one reason why a teacher continued to work in the field of education.

In terms of coping with job stress, the study found that high self-efficacy levels resulted in better job performance and better job satisfaction. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of fostering positive relationships and promoting self-efficacy among teachers in the educational sector.

Self-efficacy is a personal resource that protects teachers from job strain and burnout, making it a major source of motivation and commitment in all aspects of teaching. High self-efficacy is consistent with better planning and organization, a higher tendency to try out new approaches, and a lower likelihood of teacher burnout.

In China, teachers' self-efficacy has gained importance in schools due to its implications for skill development, job accomplishment, and students' academic achievement. Research has shown that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy experience higher levels of job satisfaction, lower levels of job-related stress, and face less difficulties in dealing with students' misbehaviors.

The level of professional satisfaction of teachers in selected schools in China is also high, with indicators such as formulated policies, continuous professional development training, fair promotion policies, attention to school infrastructure development, good communication with teachers, and the practice of effective management principles for the betterment of teachers.

The study by Amzat et al. (2017) found that teacher satisfaction is crucial for better teaching performance, with excellent teachers having low satisfaction in terms of personal growth and supervision. The study examined the relationship between innovative school climate, knowledge sharing, work engagement, and knowledge creation activities among high school teachers in Korea. The results indicated that a creative school climate positively influences teachers' knowledge sharing and work engagement, and affects the outcome variable, teachers' knowledge creation practices.

The study also found a significant relationship between school climate and teachers' self-efficacy, with higher school climates indicating higher levels of self-efficacy. This supports Carstens (2018)' research that teachers believe they can enact certain teaching behaviors that influence students' educational outcomes. A conducive and inclusive school climate free of hostility and bullying enhances teachers' job satisfaction, boosts self-efficacy, improves teacher-student relationships, reduces attrition and burnout, and improves the learning experience of students.

Kundu (2018)'s findings emphasize the importance of a multifaceted mixture of interactions, standards, and morals in influencing performances. High levels of teachers' self-efficacy indicate that they are in favor of continuous development of professional requirements, which bring job satisfaction. Task self-efficacy was related indirectly to job accomplishment, life satisfaction, social interaction, and coping with stress.

The plan proposed is to sustain the positive perception of School Climate towards teachers' self-efficacy and professional satisfaction in selected schools in China through planning and preparation of activities, series of seminars on professional development skills, demonstration, and evaluation of the plan.

Conclusion

The study found that respondents had high perceptions of the school climate in selected public elementary schools in China. They had high perceptions of professional development, evaluation feedback, decision-making, job accomplishment, skill development, social interaction, coping with job stress, and professional satisfaction. The higher the school climate, the higher teachers' self-efficacy. The study suggests that comprehensive implementation of the action plan to determine the School Climate is necessary to sustain teachers' satisfaction and improve their professional development. The findings suggest that addressing these aspects can lead to better educational outcomes.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby endorsed on the findings and result of the study:

1. The school climate should promote teachers' professional development through regular activities, fostering an environment conducive to their performance, and fair staff appraisals to sustain their growth.
2. The school climate should improve evaluation feedback by defining good teaching, understanding the purpose of evaluation (information gathering, accountability, improvement), determining whether it's formative or summative, identifying stakeholders, and using a multiple-approach to measurement.

3. The school climate should promote active teacher participation in decision-making, with school leaders providing support, allowing regular ideas exchange, and valuing employees as valuable partners in decision-making. Teachers' opinions should be considered in important decisions.
4. The school climate should focus on teacher professional development, evaluation feedback, and their involvement in decision-making to maintain a positive perception of the school environment.
5. Enhancing teachers' self-efficacy towards job accomplishment can be achieved by integrating technology, creating a positive learning environment, promoting creative learning, using competency-focused strategies, and demonstrating mastery of lessons.
6. Teacher self-efficacy should be enhanced through effective instruction, diverse materials, prompt feedback, regular assessment, and adjustments to student needs, demonstrating strong disciplinary knowledge, clear learning objectives, and established rules.
7. Enhance student-parent relationships, maintain classroom order, build rapport, establish open communication, and recognize experienced colleagues' skills to foster a positive learning environment.
8. Enhancing self-efficacy in coping with job stress requires managing tasks, preparing for teaching, creating stress relief spaces, improving teacher well-being, and developing support groups and mentors.
9. Teachers' self-efficacy should be enhanced by focusing on job accomplishment, skill development, social interaction, and coping with job stress, aiming to maintain a high perception.
10. School authorities should enhance teacher professional satisfaction through effective management, good communication, and infrastructure development. Fair evaluation of performance, fair promotion policies, honorable remuneration, health, safety, and security, and opportunities for continuous professional development training are crucial for teacher satisfaction and teaching quality.

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