

**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
GRADE NINE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD THE SCHOOL
CLIMATE AND THEIR SATISFACTION IN THE XINGYI NO.1
SECONDARY SCHOOL, GUIZHOU, CHINA**

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Abstract: The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the grade nine students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction in the Xingyi.No.1 Secondary School, Guizhou of China. In this study, the researcher used a quantitative research method. The study surveyed totally 200 ninth grade of students from four classes in the Xingyi No.1 Secondary School. In this research, for the perception of school climate, the concept of school climate by Haynes, Emmons & Comer (2002) was used and for the satisfaction part, Maslow's Theory (1943) was used. Firstly, assessed the students' perception toward the school climate and their level of satisfaction, then tested the relationship between the school climate and their satisfaction. Mean and the Standard Deviations were used to test the students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction; Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to test the relationship between the school climate and their satisfaction. The results of this study showed that the level of students' perception toward school climate was high, however, the students had negative perception in some dimensions of the school climate in the Xingyi No.1 Secondary School. And the level of students' satisfaction was high. According to the Pearson-Moment Correlation Analysis, there was a weak positive significant relationship between the grade nine students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction in the school. And students had negative perception in some dimensions of the

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school climate at the selected school.

Keywords: Students' perception; School climate; Students' satisfaction

Introduction

The school is considered as a special educational organization where climate has same influence on it. The school climate is a popular topic discussed internationally during recent years because it affects the school through many types of aspects, such as the teachers' teaching style, the principals' leadership style and the student' performance as well. From this it can be regarded as an essential part of the school's quality. For this purpose, many researches are currently focusing on the school climate with the students' perception from their satisfaction.

In fact, many studies have also focused on the principals' leadership style and even the attitude of students toward their school. While this assists the researcher to be convinced that the school climate is one of the crucial factors that affect the school mostly, the students as the major group within the school, is an important group of people that requires understanding of their attitude and perception toward the school leadership – which is important, to satisfy their needs.

Some studies shown that the school climate or environment is one of the crucial parts that can impact the school's effectiveness, as well as the students' academic performance and their satisfaction. According to the Osterman (2000), the school climate is the main key to nourish the students' sense of belonging in the school, which has a positive impact on the students' satisfaction if it relates to their results of the students' academic performance and their social development.

In China, there is a phenomenon that the school cares more about the students' academic performance but less about the potential issues in the school itself (Zhang, 2016). The school must know what is needed to understand the students' real needs; and so, the school climate could become the breakout-point. In marked contrast, a school climate in which the students feel unhappy and uncomfortable to learn and remain, are likely to affect the students' satisfaction and lead to negative academic achievement (Watson, 2001).

The positive school climate affects the school positively, which also has a positive influence on the students' development, even their parents. (Han.2013). Thus, this study is to find the relationship between the school climate and the students' satisfaction in Xingyi. No.1 secondary school, Guizhou of China.

Research Objectives:

There are three research objectives in this study:

1. To identify the level of the grade nine students' perception towards the school climate in the XingYi NO.1 Secondary School.
2. To identify the level of the grade nine students' satisfaction in the XingYi NO.1 Secondary School.
3. To determine the relationship between the school climate and students' Satisfaction in the XingYi NO.1 Secondary School.

Conceptual Framework

This study aimed to identify the grade nine students' perception toward the school's climate and their satisfaction in XingYi NO.1 secondary school of Guizhou, China. The students' perception towards school climate was based on Haynes and Emmons School Climate Theory. Students' satisfaction was based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The following figure was the illustration of the conceptual framework of the study.

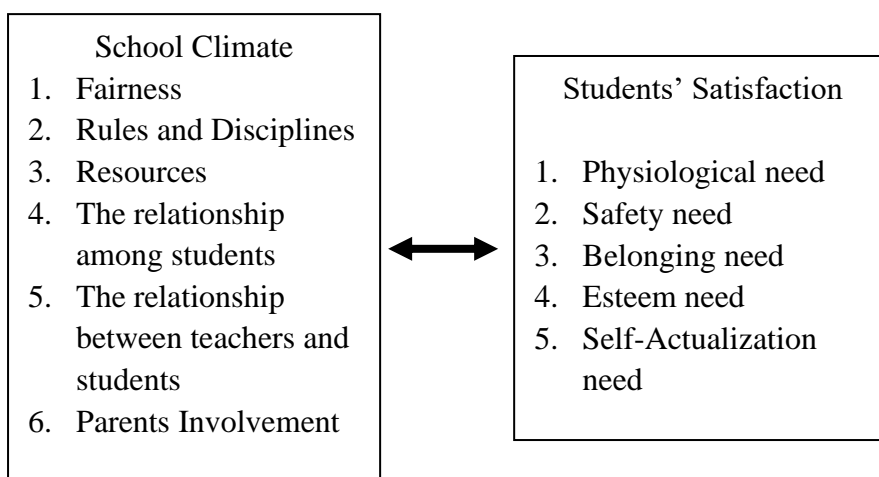


Figure1. Conceptual Framework of this Study

Literature Review

School Climate

The school climate consists of attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that underline the instructional practices, the level of academic achievement and the operation of the school in general (McEvoy, & Welker, 2000). The school climate could be described as the heart and soul of the school, which is an essential part of a school that leads the students, teachers, and administrators who are involved in the school, to think positively or have a positive attitude towards the school and to feel good when they are in the school. From the definition of Nation (2007) the school climate is the quality and character of school life, which is based on the person who is involved in the school, which includes the teacher, students, parents where they can share their personal experiences. This is reflected well in the values, goals, school culture, the relationship, learning practice and the school's structure.

Haynes, Emmons & Comer's School Climate & Special Dimensions

Haynes (1991) wrote "climate refers to the prevailing mood or ambience in school, the tone and texture of the school environment. School empowerment seeks to promote a positive, healthy school climate through 1. fostering respectful and supportive human relations. 2. developing and implementing sound academic and social programs. 3. establishing high performance and behavioral standards. 4. maintaining high expectations for all students regardless of race, socioeconomic background or gender. 5. providing needed resources and physical conditions conducive to teaching and learning."

Haynes (1994) stated that school climate refers to quality and consistency of the interaction with the school which impacts students' cognitive and emotional development. In this research, the most recent edition of school climate survey published by Haynes, Emmons, and Comer (2002) was be used.

It referred to six dimensions to improve the school climate:

- 1) Fairness refers to the equal and same treatment with the students within their different status.
- 2) Resources refers to equal student chance and condition to attend into school activities, materials and other educational equipment.
- 3) Social relationship among student refers to the level of caring, respect and

- trust that exists among students in the school.
- 4) Relationship between teachers and students refers to the level of caring, respect and trust that exists between teachers and students in the school.
 - 5) Disciplines and rules refer to the student proper behavior in the school setting and refers to the disciplines from the school that students need to follow.
 - 6) Parent involvement refers to the frequency of students' parent's participant in the school.

Students' Satisfaction

Education as an organization, which is a key part of a country's development. It is easy to understand that students are looked at as special consumers of educational services, the students act as the core consumer in the school, and their satisfaction has become an important part of quality service. For this purpose, the students' satisfaction is crucial to the educational business' success. In a similar way, to understand their students' needs and fulfill them seems to be the most important task.

Maintaining and improving students' satisfaction has been considered an important goal of education and universities (Orpen, 1990). In fact, students' satisfaction of the school could act as a partial means for evaluation. Evaluations of schools should take consideration from the students' thoughts, suggestions and their actions. It is crucial for students to feel good about themselves and the school they study in.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

In this study, the researcher used the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to assess the students' satisfaction. The Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the foundational theory that applies in the management systems of an organization. Maslow's theory has been widely conducted and applied in the study of motivation in organizations such as schools. Needs are categorized into a hierarchy, in which certain needs must be met before others (Maslow, 1943). Lower needs must be satisfied before higher-order needs can be reached. It refers to the 5 level needs that human beings want to satisfy: *physiological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualization needs*.

Research Method

This study was a quantitative research. The survey method was designed in this study and received the data from the population using questionnaires. The researcher aimed to identify the relationship between the grade nine students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction in the XingYi No.1 Secondary School, Guizhou of China in the academic year of 2019. The researcher used descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation to analyze the data in the study. The population was 200 grade nine secondary students from four classes in academic year of 2019 and all of them were given the survey.

There are two parts of the questionnaires: Part one measured the students' perception toward the school climate and the questionnaire utilized was from the Long (2014), School Climate Survey, which was adopted from the Yale Child Study Center (school development program) for school climate survey (Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997). Part two was utilized to measure students' satisfaction based on their five needs. The questionnaire was used from Taormina (2013), which was adopted and developed from Maslow's Five Needs Satisfaction Theory.

Findings

Research Objective One

Table 1 shows the Mean and Standard Deviation of each dimension of school climate perceived by students. The total mean scores of the students' perception of school climate were 3.63, in the scale of 3.51-4.50, which mean students' perception of school climate in in the School were regarded as high. The students' perception toward the relationship between teachers and students got highest score 4.62, however, the dimension of parents' involvement got the lowest score 1.97.

Table 1: *Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of school climate. (n=200)*

School climate	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Order and discipline	3.29	.288	Moderate
Fairness	4.17	.215	High
Parent involvement	1.97	.288	Low
Resource	3.59	.359	High

School climate	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Relationship among students	4.11	.329	High
Relationship between teachers & students	4.62	.222	Very High
Total	3.63	.131	High

Research Objective Two

Table 2 illustrated that the total mean scores and the standard deviations of the level of students' satisfaction. The total mean score was 4.04 in the range scale of 3.51-4.50, which had the level of high. The highest scores (4.38) was from the item safety needs, which had the high level. The lowest scores (3.71) was from the item self-actualization needs, which had the high level.

Table 2: *Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of students' satisfaction. (n=200)*

Students' satisfaction	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Physiological needs	3.96	.324	High
Safety needs	4.38	.266	High
Belongingness needs	3.96	.316	High
Esteem needs	4.195	.201	High
Self-actualization needs	3.71	.269	High
Total	4.04	.123	High

Research Objective Three

Table 3 analyzed the analysis of the relationship between students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction in Xingyi No. 1 Secondary School. The result showed that r value was .384 and Sig. (2-tailed) was .000, which was less than .05; Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted, there was a weak positive significant relationship between the students' perception towards school climate and their satisfaction in the School.

Table 3. *Pearson Product Moment Correlation between students' Perception towards School Climate and Their Satisfaction. (n=200)*

Correlation Test	Students' satisfaction	Conclusion
Students' perceptions toward school climate	Person Correlation .384	There was a significant relationship
	Sig. (2 tailed) .000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

From the results of the research findings, the researcher found that the totally means score of school climate was high (3.63) and it indicated that most students had a positive perception toward the school climate. If the students had a positive perception to their school climate or environment, they would be more likely to be more motivated to achieve their personal academic goal (Fraser, Docker & Fisher, 1998).

In this study, the dimension “the relationship between teachers and students” got the high score 4.62 with a high level of perception. It pointed out that the students and teachers established a warm, caring and positive relationship. If there was no healthy and positive relationship between the teacher and student, the students would be more likely to have serious academic problems in the school (Harmre and Pianta, 2006). However, the research findings of the dimension “parent involvement” got the lowest mean score (1.97). The reports from students pointed that all their parents had less participation with the school and low involvement into their study. The parent involvement was the one of crucial factors that affected their children’ academic development.

The collaboration of parents with the school can lead to increased improvements in both physical and academic performance. That means the school should encourage parents to get involved and help their children to achieve their goal. In another way, helping the school achieve the mission and goals as well (Sapungan 2014).

According to the research findings, the level of students’ satisfaction in the school was high, indicating that the students were satisfied with their school. The level of students’ satisfaction to the school was essential because it affected the students within their psychological well-being, as well as the school engagement, absent rate and some behavior problems (Ainley,1991; Reyes and Jason ,1993).

The study found there was a significant relationship between the students’ perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction with the significant value .000 which was less than .05. Based on the r value was .384, which showed the positive relationship between the students’ perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction was weak.

The current study findings agreed with previous study results obtained by Ja Seng Pan (2018), which showed that there was a significant relationship between the school climate and students' satisfaction. According to the findings of this research, the results indicated that students' perception to the school climate was significantly connected with their satisfaction to the school.

The study of the students' perception toward the school climate and students' satisfaction in China Britain International School in Wuhan was conducted by Long (2014), discovered that the perception of students toward the school climate was in moderate level. From her findings, the parent involvement also got low mean score, compared with this research, the findings of her study supported this current study in some dimensions although the researcher did the study in different school. The results from these two researches all showed that there was a significant relationship between the students' perception toward the school climate and their satisfaction.

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