

THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND THEIR RETENTION IN HUIMIN WENCHANG HIGH SCHOOL, SHANDONG PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract: This research sought to study the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and their retention in Huimin Wenchang High School in Binzhou City, Shandong Province, China. To this end, the study assessed teachers' perceptions of the school's climate and their level of needs, using the mean and standard deviation for descriptive and quantitative analysis. Finally, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis analyzes and evaluates the relationship between these two variables. It was conducted in the 2020 academic year, with 48 full-time teachers participating and a return rate of 100% in the total target population of 48 teachers. Statistics showed that the significance of Pearson's correlation coefficient is .000, and R-value is .849. The results showed that Huimin Wenchang High School teachers in Binzhou City, Shandong Province, had high awareness and positive attitudes towards the school atmosphere. And there is a strong positive correlation between the teacher retention rate and the teacher's perceptions of the teacher's organizational climate.

Keywords: teachers' perceptions, organizational climate, retention

Introduction

Teacher retention has been the subject of many studies for nearly ten years. Still, current data shows that 33.5% of teachers who choose to leave the profession within the first three years is still unacceptably high in China (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). Jinping (2018) shows that education has prospered in the country, and if the foundation of education is strong, then the country is strong. China attaches great importance to education and the profession of teachers. Such a vicious circle will inevitably lead to

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difficulties in schools' development (Wang & Berger, 2010). Without an excellent organizational climate, attracting more talents to stay is impossible because the environment will affect people. It determines the working environment that may make teachers satisfied or dissatisfied. Since satisfaction determines or affects teachers' efficiency, the school's organizational climate may be directly related to teachers' efficiency and performance, which will impact teachers' retention. To determine the reform or management plan, school administrators need to understand the impact of organizational climate on the retention of teachers within the organization and teachers' perceptions of the organizational climate. The organizational climate needs to be improved, and the organization's quality needs to strengthen. Under the current situation, teacher retention has become the most concerned issue for school administrators. High-level talents will face more job opportunities, higher salaries, a better working environment, and better personal development. The researcher asked the school principal and human resource managers before the study. They found that Wenchang high school also had teacher retention problems, especially teachers under thirty-five who did not stay after the internship. School administrators speculated that the teachers who did not leave might have low job satisfaction, and job satisfaction is affected by the organizational climate and personal emotions. Therefore, the researcher tried to consider theories and other valuable research viewpoints in other organizations to study the organization's organizational climate and teachers' situation. The research expects to provide some reference information for the organization's current teacher retention issues and some feasible solutions for promoting organization teachers' development.

It showed the organization and its contribution to improving members' conditions and work when the environment is ignorant or unwise. It proved that high-level teachers are exhausted and unhappy. The organization's atmosphere has inevitable value when trying to change the low-satisfaction and low-level organizational atmosphere. Murillo and Becerra pointed out that the organizational climate affects performance and students' and teachers' achievements and well-being. Waruwu (2015) conducted a study and found a significant correlation between the following aspects: organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction. The research results show that organizational climate positively impacts teachers' job satisfaction. The more positive it is, the higher the teacher's job satisfaction.

Research Objectives

The research objectives were as follows,

1. To determine the level of organizational climate in Huimin Wenchang high school.

2. To determine the teachers' retention level in Huimin Wenchang high school.
3. To determine the relationship between organizational climate and Huimin Wenchang high school retention.

Literature Review

Organization climate

Organizational climate is "the general basic hypothetical model that organizations learn when solving their external adaptation and internal integration problems." This model has worked well enough to be considered adequate (Schein et al., 1989, p. 18). Fouts (2004) supported Stringer (1968)'s concept and pointed out that organizational climate is a model developed in social psychology and administrative management to describe employees' psychological and social experiences. Pareek (2007) pointed out that organizational climate is "the organization's perceived attributes and subsystems." In summary, Litwin and Stringer (1968) proposed the concept of organizational climate. In this research, Stringer's organizational climate theory was used as a fundamental theory to support the research on teachers' views on their working environment. Stringer and his colleagues found that employees' job satisfaction and motivation are affected by organizational climate, measured by a series of essential attributes. Therefore, they determined the organizational climate sub-dimensions as structure, responsibility, risk, reward and recognition, enthusiasm and support, and conflict (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). Stringer (2002) developed his organizational climate tool based on previous research results and factor analysis reports, mainly based on measurements and the number of items per component (Hersen, 2004). Stringer acknowledged that specific dimensions of climate have a predictable effect on incentive behavior and can be measured and managed by those responsible for organizational performance. And it is best to use six different sub-dimensions to describe and measure climate. These six dimensions include structure, standards, responsibilities, rewards and recognition, support, and commitment.

Retention of Teachers

Teacher retention refers to teachers' ability to continue to work for the organization after joining the organization. Each organization invests time and money in training new teachers to prepare materials for the organization and make them comparable to existing teachers. When teachers leave after training, the organization will be at a loss. The problem of teacher retention has existed before. Retention of teachers had become a problem in the 1980s and 1990s. There is evidence that the teaching profession has failed to keep pace with other disciplines competing for talent. The teaching profession

needs people with both academic qualifications and professional abilities. The problem of teacher retention has become the most challenging problem for many urban organization educators (Waddell, 2010). Organizations lose about one-fifth of their teachers in high-poverty areas worldwide yearly (Ingersoll, 2001). The low teacher retention rate will cause students to learn from inexperienced teachers without adequate mentors or support. Organizations with a poorly organized atmosphere further contribute to the problem of low teacher retention rates.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Teacher Needs

Maslow (1954) proposed in his article "Theory of Human Motivation" that conceptual hierarchy needs a psychological theory. He insisted that human needs have multiple levels. Maslow (1954) pointed out that the hierarchy of needs can be regarded as human because some needs are more important than others and must be fulfilled first. Maslow (1954) believed that the five basic human needs would impact human power: physiological needs, Safety needs, love and belonging needs, self-esteem needs, self-realization, and self-realization needs.

These five requirements are like a pyramid model, from low to high, but the order varies. When a particular need is relatively satisfied, it will develop to a higher level, and pursuing a higher demand will become the driving force of behavior. For example, physiological requirements must be reached before safety requirements are triggered, and safety requirements must be attained before other higher requirements are initiated.

Organization Climate and Teacher's Retention

There are few research results on the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational climate and its retention, so the researcher introduced the research results on retention and organizational climate.

It showed the organization and its contribution to improving members' conditions and work when the environment is ignorant or unwise. It proved that high-level teachers are exhausted and unhappy. When trying to change the low- satisfaction and low-level organizational atmosphere, the organization's atmosphere has inevitable value.

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Conceptual Framework

The figure below illustrates the conceptual framework of the research. This research aims to study the relationship between teachers' views at school towards the organizational climate and its retention. One of the main variables is the teacher's perceptions of the organizational climate; the other primary variable is the teacher retention rate. Teachers' understanding of organizational climate is based on Stringer's organizational climate theory. Teachers' retention is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

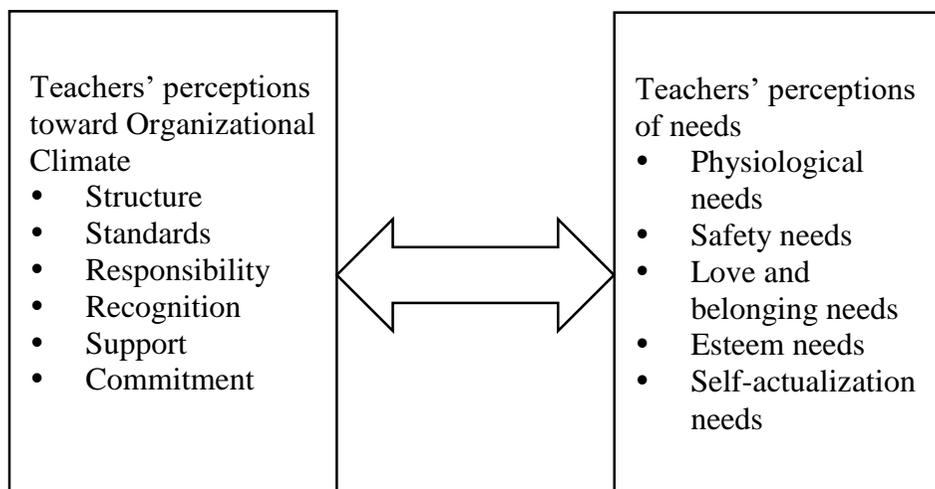


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

Method

The study is a quantitative study using the purpose is to discover the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the organizational climate and retention. A questionnaire was used as a primary instrument to investigate research questions 1, 2, and 3. Permission from the director of Huimin Wenchang high School was requested verbally in June 2020 and granted after the meeting. The questionnaires were distributed to all 48 Huimin Wenchang high school teachers one month after passing the thesis proposal. The survey was conducted with the help of the staff members and collected shortly after.

Findings/Results

Research objective one was to determine the level of organizational climate in Huimin Wenchang High School. According to the data, the highest score of teachers' perceptions of organizational climate is 4.52, which comes from the structure, and is at a high level within the interpretation range of 3.51 - 4.50. The lowest score of 4.30 comes from recognition, at a high level. The average value of responsibility is 4.45. The committed average is 4.20, and the

supported average score is 4.44. All are at a high level. Finally, the total average of teachers' perceptions of organizational climate is 4.3, which is high.

Table 1. *Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of organizational climate in Huimin Wenchang High School. (n=48)*

Organizational climate	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Structure	4.52	0.57	Very High
Standard	4.39	0.89	High
Responsibility	4.45	0.79	High
Recognition	4.30	1.06	High
Support	4.44	0.90	High
Commitment	4.20	0.80	High
Total	4.39	0.84	

Research objective two was to determine the level of teachers' retention in Huimin Wenchang High School. According to the results of data analysis, the total average value of teacher retention is 4.18. These five demands are all at a high level. The data shows that the teacher's retention score is lower than the teachers' perceptions of organizational climate. Teachers in the target school have the highest attitude towards self-actualization needs, with a score of 4.53. The average physiological needs scored 3.65, which is the lowest. The level of love and belonging needs is higher, with a score of 4.13. The average score for safety needs is 4.10, which is a relatively high level. And esteem needs, the score is 4.50, which is also high.

Table 2. *Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of Teachers' retention in Huimin Wenchang High School. (n=48)*

Teachers' retention	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Physiological needs	3.65	1.20	High
Safety needs	4.10	1.09	High
Love and belonging needs	4.13	0.96	High
Esteem needs	4.50	0.81	Very High
Self-actualization needs	4.53	0.76	Very High
Total	4.18	0.91	

Research Objective three of the research study was to determine the relationship between teacher retention and teachers' perceptions of an organizational climate in Huimin Wenchang High School. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the two variables. In general, Pearson Correlation showed that sig. (2- tailed) between teachers' perceptions toward organizational climate and their retention was .001, and the R-value was .849. Therefore, this study's hypothesis was

accepted, which meant a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational climate and their retention in Huimin Wenchang High School, Binzhou city, Shandong Province, China.

Table 3. *Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Teachers' Perceptions towards Organizational Climate and Their Retention in Huimin Wenchang High School. (n=48)*

	Needs	Conclusion
Pearson Correlation	.849**	Significant positive relationship
perceptions Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
N	48	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

This study's result revealed that the teachers at Huimin Wenchang High School had positive perceptions of the organizational climate. Their perceptions were also determined as being at a high level, so the target school must be able to retain among their teachers. The teachers also had a positive insight regarding structure since it was also at a high level. It indicated that they clearly understand the administrator role within the institution and the goals set for them, which they must achieve. This also reflects that the leadership was viewed positively by them in achieving the established goals. As stated by Freinerg (1999), school climate represents the heart and soul of the school in which its essence leads all stakeholders to appreciate it. It embodies the lasting quality of the school as described and experienced by its stakeholders, who directly affect their behavior within it (Hoy et al., 1998). As supported in Shuanglong's (2016) study, teachers in a good organizational climate could help meet their self-actualization. Shuanglong (2016) also found that personal factors and the organizational climate affect teachers' professional development. School organizational climate is an essential element for teachers' professional development. Under the conditions of a good school organization climate, teachers can receive care and support from the school, prompting them to be more willing to participate in professional development activities and improve teacher retention. Similarly, Collie (2012) also showed that the organizational climate directly impacted teachers' job satisfaction. A democratic and supported organizational climate could increase teachers' professional self-identity, reduce job burnout, and reduce the number of teachers leaving the school.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003a) researched Public Schools in Massachusetts and pointed out that 22% of teachers who switched to teach in other schools admitted that they did not receive adequate school support. Another 22%

expressed roughly the same feelings. Overall, recognizing school management support has become the most crucial predictor of teacher retention.

The relationship of teachers' perceptions towards organizational climate and their retention in Huimin Wenchang High School, Binzhou city, Shandong Province, China. The organizational environment was unhealthy in a secondary school in the Klang district, Selangor, Malaysia, from previous studies by Selamat, Samsu, and Kamalu (2013) confirmed the impact of organizational climate. The result of prior studies described that organizational climate affected teachers' job performance. The study by Qian, Jiang, and Ruan (2007) also supported this result and confirmed that schools' organizational climate affected teachers' development. Teachers working in Huimin Wenchang High School got the highest structure and self-actualization needs scores. According to the score, teachers in the school had a positive attitude toward their responsibilities. And teachers kept a satisfying attitude toward esteem needs in Huimin Wenchang High School. Most of the teachers in the school were satisfied with the esteem of other teachers and students. Johnson and Birkeland (2003b) claimed that to improve teachers' retention, schools should establish an orderly environment to keep an excellent organizational climate, which meant that teachers could get respect from other teachers, administrators, and students.

According to this study, there was a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational climate and retention. The organizational environment was unhealthy in a secondary school in the Klang district, Selangor, Malaysia, from previous studies by Selamat, Samsu, and Kamalu (2013) confirmed the impact of organizational climate. The result of prior studies described that organizational climate affected teachers' job performance. The study by Qian, Jiang, and Ruan (2007) also supported this result and confirmed that schools' organizational climate affected teachers' development. Teachers working in Huimin Wenchang High School got the highest structure and self-actualization needs scores. According to the score, teachers in the school had a positive attitude toward their responsibilities. And teachers kept a satisfying attitude toward esteem needs in Huimin Wenchang High School. Most of the teachers in the school were satisfied with the esteem of other teachers and students. Johnson and Birkeland (2003b) claimed that to improve teachers' retention, schools should establish an orderly environment to maintain an excellent organizational climate, which meant that teachers could get respect from other teachers, administrators, and students.

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