A Psychological Study on School Organizational Climate in Relation to Teachers' Job Satisfaction among Primary School Teachers in Northern Jiangsu, China

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Abstract:- This study explores the relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction among primary school teachers in northern Jiangsu, China. The theoretical underpinning of this study is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Halpin, as well as Croft's School Organizational Climate Theory. This is a descriptive correlation study, conducted in northern Jiangsu, China, covering the districts of Huai'an, Yangzhou, and Xuzhou. The instrument used for data collection was a survey in the form of a structured questionnaire. The responses of 234 participants were recorded, which contain information on gender, age, level of education, teacher experience, and school location. This data was then analysed quantitatively. The results indicated that a democratic and people-oriented climate in schools can improve teachers' job satisfaction. Adequate support for teachers, sufficient school resources, harmonious interpersonal relationships, and a moderate workload can boost and maintain teachers' job satisfaction at a high level. This would in turn improve teachers' teaching ability and effectively promote the development of schools psychologically. This study then proposes several recommendations to school administrations and teachers on how to improve the level of teachers' job satisfaction through the creation and maintenance of a positive school organizational climate.

Introduction:-

Teachers are extremely important for school development. They play a critical role in shaping the academic and personal growth of their students, and their impact can be felt both in the short term and the long term. Ensuring the stability and development of the teaching team is the key to improving the quality of education and teaching. It is also vital to support the achievement of high-quality, balanced, and sustainable development of education. Song (2020) has revealed that teachers are the foundation for the development of education and act as the key to improving its quality. These would in turn make education satisfactory to the general people. The existence of supporting and positive elements in schools such as a healthy and positive school climate (especially a democratic management system), a reasonable performance appraisal, and a positive relationship between colleagues and leadership can make teachers believe in their influence in the school. Consequently, teachers would be more confident in generating their own initiatives, a feature that would positively affect teachers' professional identity and job satisfaction.

Teachers' job satisfaction refers to their overall feelings and opinions about their occupations and job conditions. Identifying the factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction will not only have a positive effect on their teaching quality and professional identity but will also have a positive effect on student's academic achievement and educational satisfaction. Pan and Qin (2006) asserted that a school organizational climate covers four aspects, namely school management, teaching, learning, and interpersonal climate. They further mentioned that these aspects comprise the factors that affect teachers' job satisfaction.

In recent years, the problem of dissatisfaction with work among primary school teachers in China has become increasingly prominent. More importantly, the negative impacts of this issue have been gradually spreading to the entire educational sector. The decline in the quality of education as well as the increasing number of teachers complaining of high job stress and low job satisfaction has attracted the attention of the general society. This is a manifestation that the job dissatisfaction problem is now well noticeable outside of the education domain, into the entire fabric of society.

Xu and Zhang (2011) found that with the recent implementation and continuous intensification of education reforms, primary school teachers find themselves encountering new challenges and pressures in the teaching process. This makes them gradually feel a decrease in job satisfaction which then leads to a drop in

motivation. In the past, there were very few in-depth studies on school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction. In order to fill this knowledge gap, this study attempts to examine the level of school organizational climate and the level of teachers' job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Jiangsu Province, China. At the same time, this study determines the relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction.

Literature Review:-
Teachers' Job Satisfaction:-

Teachers' job satisfaction may be defined as the overall feelings and opinions of teachers about their jobs and occupations, as well as working conditions It is an important factor in the overall success of schools and student outcomes. When teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and effective in their teaching. Teachers' job satisfaction is a complex issue that can be influenced by a variety of factors. Schools that prioritize creating a positive and supportive work environment for their teachers are more likely to see higher levels of job satisfaction and better outcomes for their students. In 1935, Hoppock published an in-depth study of job satisfaction, aptly named "Job Satisfaction". This publication marked the beginning of the systematic study of the topic in the history of psychology. He first proposed the concept of job satisfaction, where he believed that this element affects the physical and psychological development of teachers. Since then, job satisfaction has become a regular topic of discussion among scholars. In his study, job satisfaction refers to the responses of teachers related to their prevalent working situation and condition.

Job satisfaction is a complex concept based on three aspects: cognition, emotion, and behavioural orientation. The factors that influence teachers' job satisfaction are mostly internal, such as job achievement, desire, and career development. Other important external factors include administrative management and interpersonal relationships, which defects would usually contribute to teachers' dissatisfaction (Holdway, 1978). Negative factors would have more obvious effects on teachers' job satisfaction than positive ones. For example, a dysfunctional school organizational structure – one that requires teachers to submissively obey as well as unassertively respond to the school rules and regulations – would bring down the general level of job satisfaction amongst teachers at a rate faster than any positive factors could do to reverse the impact.

On a different note, the Two-Factor Theory was proposed by Herzberg (1964), an American psychologist in the 1960s. The theory asserts that people's job motivation and enthusiasm are mainly driven by two factors: motivators (performance achievement, recognition, job status, etc.) and hygiene factors (salary, policies and rules, supervisor relationship, safety, etc.). The theory suggests that only motivators can bring about job satisfaction, while hygiene factors may only eliminate employees' dissatisfaction at work (without having the ability to entice satisfaction). In other words, the theory suggests that in order to boost employees' enthusiasm at work, employers need to ensure the continued existence of motivators. Using this in the context of the education sector, improving primary school teachers' job satisfaction involves not only the fulfillment of hygiene factors to eliminate dissatisfaction but more importantly, the provision of appropriate motivating factors to stimulate teachers' potential and job motivation.

In a similar vein, Maslow (1943) proposed the Need Hierarchy Theory in his famous book, "The Theory of Human Motivation". He divided human needs into five levels (in ascending order from low to high), namely physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, respect needs, and self-actualization needs. He opined that the purpose of human behaviour is to satisfy these needs in successive sequences, and only after a lower level has been satisfied does one progress to another level of need. Moreover, Holdway (1978) found that the factors that influence teachers' job satisfaction are mostly internal in nature, such as the desire for job achievement and career development. Some external factors, such as administrative management and interpersonal relationships, however, are most influential on teachers' dissatisfaction.

Jiang (2006) found that the overall satisfaction of primary school teachers in Jiangsu Province was at the medium level. Among several factors influencing teachers' satisfaction in the Province was the 'colleagues' factor which represents the most important factor, followed by the 'students' factor, while the least important ones are 'dedication' and 'return'. On the other side of the coin, among the factors influencing teachers' dissatisfaction are the contribution of pay and return is the largest, which shows that it has the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction. Besides that, teachers' dissatisfaction is also affected by leadership and management factors. This is because since most of the school leadership and management in the Province are still relatively close-minded, there exist some defects in the overall management system involving the employment and promotion mechanisms.

Furthermore, the higher teacher's expectations of education are the higher their job satisfaction. On top of that, the researcher discovered that education expectation improves job satisfaction through the perception of stronger government guarantees as an indirect variable. In other words, this shows that teachers with higher

educational expectations will be in a better position to gain stronger government guarantees, effectively leading to major improvements in their job satisfaction. At the same time, teachers with low educational expectations will also improve their job satisfaction to a large extent, if the level of government protection is high.

Besides that, Wang and Xu (2021) found that there is a very significant positive correlation between teachers' job satisfaction and their sense of organizational support. Furthermore, they found that there is a very significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and professional pressure. Lastly, the researchers also found that there is a very significant relationship between teachers' sense of organizational support and professional pressure.

School Organizational Climate:-

Halpin and Croft (1963) were the first to introduce the concept of 'organizational climate' into the study of schools. They compared schools with individuals and pointed out that school climate is to schools as personality is to individuals. Individuals need to form good and complete personalities to grow in a healthy manner. Similarly, schools also need to create a benign and healthy school climate for them to develop and grow. Wang (2016) stated that 'school organizational climate' may be defined as the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, as well as organizational climate directly and indirectly experienced by teachers. A good school organizational climate produces a relatively durable and stable environment that influences and fosters teachers' behaviour. Moreover, Yin, Li, Zhang, and Guo (2019) found that school organizational climate and colleague relations may have a significant negative impact on rural teachers' willingness to move. That is to say that the better the school's organizational climate and colleague relations are, the lower the willingness of rural teachers to relocate or move. The positive and supportive climate present in a school will affect teachers' job satisfaction and motivation to teach (Yin, Li, Zhang, & Guo, 2019). However, the stricter the schools' administrative management of teachers (a sign of a defunct school organizational climate), the stronger the teachers' tendency to resign (Wei & Tong, 2020).

Halpin and Croft (1963) introduced the famous Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) by compiling and discussing relevant literature through personal investigation and research. A school organizational climate is described from the behavioural characteristics of principals and teachers. These characteristics include eight different but related dimensions, four of which are related to principals' behaviour (aloofness, consideration, thrust, and production). The other four represent the characteristics of teachers' behaviour, including disengagement, intimacy, esprit, and hindrance. The interaction of these eight levels may categorize a school's organizational climate into six different types. They are open climate, autonomous climate, controlled climate, familiar climate, paternal climate, and close climate. Each school organizational climate type is a continuum, and the two ends of the continuum are opened and closed, respectively.

Wang (2016), who revisited the above theory found that a typical school organizational climate includes six levels. The first three levels describe the principal's behaviour, while the last three describe teachers' behaviour. The principal's behavioural level includes supportive behaviour, instructional behaviour, and restrictive behaviour. Supportive behaviour refers to the principal's care and support, as well as constructive criticisms of teachers. Instructional behaviour, on the other hand, refers to the principal's strict implementation of the school's organizational tasks and stern supervision of teachers' behaviour. Furthermore, restricted behaviour refers to the principal's assignment of tasks that affects the teaching job. On the other hand, teachers' behaviour levels include assertive behaviour, affinity behaviour, and alienation behaviour. Assisting behaviour refers to the actions taken by teachers in support of each other in pursuit of academic and professional knowledge. Meanwhile, affinity behaviour refers to teachers' on-the-job closeness with each other, each of them trusting and understanding each other, creating a harmonious workplace. Lastly, alienating behaviour refers to teachers being critical of their schools and colleagues, a set of actions that negatively affect their job performance.

Moreover, Wei and Tong (2020) found that in the context of a school organizational climate, stricter administrative management of teachers will entice stronger tendencies among teachers to resign. This demonstrates that the schools' learning climate and resignation tendency exhibit a significant negative correlation with each other.

Relationship between School Organizational Climate and Teachers' Job Satisfaction:-

Zhang and Wang (2001) analysed the relationship between a principal's leadership behaviour and the job satisfaction of primary school teachers. They found that a principal's caring and considerate behaviour has a highly significant positive correlation with all levels of teachers' job satisfaction. Other dimensions such as satisfaction

with teaching, principals, and colleagues, as well as promotion recognition are all significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction. However, teachers' satisfaction with job income is not.

Pan and Qin (2006) found that a school's organizational climate is negatively correlated with adverse material conditions, unattractive salary packages, and poor leadership management factors. In addition, an unsupportive learning climate, deteriorating teaching material conditions, as well as poor management, teaching, and interpersonal climate are also negatively correlated. The researchers also found that salary, management climate, teaching climate, and learning climate are significantly negatively correlated with leadership management.

He, Li, and Mu (2018) found that school organizational climate is the main factor that affects teachers' job satisfaction. A healthy and positive school organizational climate, especially in the form of positive relationships with colleagues and leaders can make teachers believe in their influence in the schools. This would in turn induce higher job enthusiasm which would ultimately positively affect teachers' careers. Likewise, job recognition and a supportive climate are also some of the other important factors that enhance teachers' job satisfaction. Organizational variables such as the location of the school, the school type, and the nature of the school, both facilitating and hindering school organizational structures have a significant predictive effect on teachers' job satisfaction. Additionally, it is also found that school management rigor has a significant negative correlation with teachers' job satisfaction. A similar negative correlation has also been found between stress levels and teachers' job satisfaction.

Method:-
Research Design:-

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction. The research uses a quantitative co-relational design and answers the research questions through data analyses. A quantitative questionnaire was distributed to selected respondents via an online platform for data collection. The independent variable in this study is the school's organizational climate, while the dependent variable is teachers' job satisfaction.

Population and sampling:-

According to the Chinese Ministry of Education, there are 6 primary schools in the northern regions of Jiangsu Province, with a total of 612 teachers (Ministry of Education, 2019). This forms the population of this study. Since it is impractical and impossible to obtain data from the entire population, a smaller sample has been chosen for convenience, taking into account the appropriate sample size needed to obtain a valid conclusion. The final sample includes a total of 234 teachers.

Instrumentation:-

A questionnaire is an effective data collection tool consisting of a series of questions that ask individuals to provide useful information on a given topic. The self-built questionnaire is divided into three sections: the first section focuses on demographic information. This includes respondents' background information such as gender, age, level of education, teaching experience, and school location. These items help in describing the overall characteristics of the respondents in more detail. The questionnaire then proceeds with questions that are intended to measure the school's organizational climate in the second section. Finally, the third section contains questions that measure the degree of teachers' job satisfaction.

Results and Discussion:-

The main purpose of the present research is to investigate the relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Northern Jiangsu. The discussion will be cleaved into three parts. The first part explores the level of the school's organizational climate. This is then followed by the finding on the level of teachers' job satisfaction collected through the survey. The final part contains the discussion and findings for the correlation analyses. A variety of statistical analysis methods were employed including descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

In order to describe the respondents' demographics, school organizational climate, and teachers' job satisfaction variables, descriptive statistics like frequency (F), mean (M), and standard deviation (SD) were utilized. Additionally, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the relationship

between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction. SPSS 26.0, the statistical software, was used for the general statistical analysis conducted as part of this study.

Table 1.1: Level of School Organizational Climate (n=234)

Level	Frequency	%	M	SD
School organizational climate			3.52	.82
Low	7	3		
Moderate	132	56.4		
High	95	40.4		

Table 1.1 displays the respondents' perception of the level of school organizational climate in their respective schools. The overall mean is 3.52 and the standard deviation is 0.82. The mean value is moderate, indicating the fact that the school organizational climate is perceived as relatively good by the teachers selected for this study. In other words, most respondents (who were primary school teachers) were, in general, satisfied with their school organizational climates. This observation is further strengthened by the fact that more than 95% of surveyed teachers have a moderate and high perception level of the above variable.

Table 1.2 : Level of Teachers' Job Satisfaction (n=234)

Level	Frequency	%	M	SD
Teachers' job satisfaction			3.75	.80
Low				
Moderate	95	40.5		
High	139	59.4		

From Table 1.2, it may be seen that the overall mean of teachers' job satisfaction is 3.75, with a standard deviation of 0.80. This relatively high mean value indicates that – without considering other factors – most surveyed teachers believe that the teaching profession is satisfying and is able to realize their personal values and potential. It may also be observed that most respondents (primary school teachers in Northern Jiangsu) are satisfied with their job. This is because more than 99% of them reported either a moderate or a high level of job satisfaction.

Table 1.3: Pearson correlation coefficients of relationships between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction (n=234)

	Y	X
Teachers' job satisfaction (Y)		
School organizational climate (X)	.504**	

The table above (Table 1.3) exhibits the results of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test. The table indicates that there is a high, positive, and significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and school organizational climate. A people-oriented organizational climate has the strongest significant and positive medium correlation coefficients ($r = .487$, $p = .00$). Meanwhile, the school democracy dimension returns medium correlation coefficients, which are both positive and significant ($r = .387$, $p = .00$). It can be concluded that the overall result revealed that there was a significant, positive, and high relationship between the overall schools' organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction ($r = .504$, $p = .00$). In other words, teachers' job satisfaction may be enhanced with the improvement of school organizational climate. The nature of a teacher's job – a profession that requires the teachers to have a high level of knowledge and be able to work relatively independently – implies that teacher cooperation (a positive co-worker factor) is among the most important contributor to job satisfaction.

Discussion:-

The organizational climate plays an important role in promoting positive school development (Wei & Tong, 2020). This study's finding that school organization climate is positively correlated with teachers' job satisfaction is consistent with Pan (2001) who found that teachers believe that schools are good at supporting personal development and providing pathways as well as platforms for development. Good schools usually listen to teachers' opinions and ideas regarding policy development as well as harbour the ability to leverage them as leaders in the process.

One of the central dimensions of a good school organizational climate is school democracy. The existence of school democracy should be guaranteed by an overarching governing mechanism (Pan, 2001). Moreover, the features of a democratic school system should include democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision (Zhang & Mao, 2020). At the school management level, a democratic school improves teachers' adherence to the school-level leadership team through two-way discussions in a collective deliberation system. This forms the backbone of the school's democracy. To foster democratic ideals, there are certain features that must exist within the collective discussions. Firstly, the content of the discussion should be focused. The focus of the collective discussion is to take the issues most concerning to the faculty members and staff (Pan, 2006), such as school expenditure, bonus, welfare distribution, faculty appointment methods, cadre promotion, job appointment, evaluation of excellence, and school property contracting and leasing (Sun & Chu, 2017). Secondly, all procedures regarding the collective discussion must be standardized. This includes procedures to select members of the discussion, up to the decision-making process involved. To begin with, the process to choose teachers' representatives who can participate in the collective discussion must take into account all aspects, not only the existing hierarchy within the departments but also the representativeness across all faculties (Xu & Zhang, 2011). On top of that, the entire selection process must be relatively stable and not arbitrary. Besides that, when a school issues an important administrative regulation, in addition to the principal's full deliberation in advance to discuss and solicit opinions among the school's top management, the draft of the regulation must also be submitted to the school's teachers' congress for discussion and deliberation (Zhang & Mao, 2020). Only those approved by the teachers' congress can be put into practice and should be discarded otherwise (Yin & Li, 2019). This practice is not only a concentrated expression of the very fundamental foundation of the school's democratic system, but it also lays a bedrock for a platform for public opinion to be collected and petitioned to the principal and the top management (Sun & Chu, 2017).

People-oriented school organizational climate significantly positively affects the school's democratic participation and plays a role in the relationship between principals and the schools as democratic institutions (Wang & Zhang, 2020). The establishment of a culture of democratic participation is required to go beyond setting up superficial democratic structures and processes and to achieve true democratic participation (Sun & Chu, 2017). In school management, Xu and Zhang (2011) suggested that a trusting and supportive management culture should be established, coupled with harmonious cadre-mass relationships, as well as teacher-student and home-school relationships. All of these would be central to the provision of democratic school management, climate, and culture.

According to the above research results, it may be observed that the surveyed primary school teachers were generally satisfied with their responsibilities, with 'teacher cooperation' (the interpersonal relationship aspect) being the component they are most satisfied with. On the other side of the coin, the main source of dissatisfaction among the surveyed teachers is the lack of school support. This observation is largely consistent with previous research results. An explanation of the above may be two-fold. On the one hand, as the general society has increasingly been paying more attention to education, the status of teachers has been greatly improved. On the other hand, the teaching profession is more stable vis-à-vis other professions (Wang & Xu, 2021), hence most teachers tend to be more satisfied with their work. Nonetheless, despite the fact that most schools have progressively been improving the provision of support for teachers and their personal development, most teachers do not have enough time for self-improvement and to attend to their personal needs due to the overwhelmingly many teaching and routine management work (Wang & Xu, 2021). In addition, the workload of primary school teachers is usually very heavy. This may result in teachers having stronger

subjectivity to school support and recognition, as well as, to a certain extent, reducing the job satisfaction level of junior high school teachers.

School resources can significantly affect the initial level and rate of growth of teachers' job satisfaction (Chang, Guo & Wang, 2020). "School resources" may bring about numerous advantages for teachers. To begin with, school resources provide teachers with opportunities to socialize and improve their teaching abilities. More effective socialization acts as not only an effective way for teachers to communicate their own goals and learn the teaching knowledge and skills of others (Jiang & Yao, 2021), but also as an important platform for practicing selection, optimization, and compensation strategies. Secondly, a fair and safe school climate ensures that teachers are not influenced by any adverse external environment when assessing their job satisfaction.

In addition to the above, teacher cooperation also plays an important role in improving teachers' job satisfaction. Previous studies have pointed out that promoting teacher professional development through cooperation is beneficial to the development of schools and the improvement of students' achievement (Song, 2020). By promoting teacher cooperation, teachers can continue to develop their teaching skills as well as their professional knowledge. This may in turn encourage teachers to realize the true value of the teaching profession in the process (Xu & Zhang, 2011), ultimately boosting their job satisfaction. Therefore, it is highly recommended that school management teams encourage any cooperative and professional development activities among teachers. This is to encourage teachers to continuously be satisfied in their professional development process, as well as have a stronger sense of school and professional belonging (He & Li, 2018). Ultimately, this would positively affect teachers' attitudes and views on work.

Some primary school teachers, however, believe that their workload is not justified by the salaries they receive. This is further compounded by the fact that there is a lack of targeted guidance for young teachers to plan their career growth and development. Most existing training is scattered, not systematic, and does not actually meet the teachers' in-class needs. It is, therefore, necessary for schools to start supporting teachers in this respect from multiple aspects including improving their salaries, enhancing their work confidence (Jiang, 2006), establishing and improving performance appraisal as well as professional title promotion, putting in place proper reward and punishment incentives, set up training and other guarantee mechanisms, understand and grasp the real needs of teachers, communicate and provide appropriate help plan, pay attention to their psychological changes, as well as help and guide them to establish a sense of professional identity. All of the above organizational support would ultimately enhance the teachers' job satisfaction.

Besides that, the study result showed that school organizational climate was significantly positively correlated with the total score of job satisfaction. This finding is largely in agreement with Sun and Chu (2017). This shows that if the overall climate of the school is positive, in the sense that the principal supervises and manages the daily teaching work of teachers in a supportive and effective manner (Zhang & Mao, 2020), considers the needs of teachers in decision-making, actively supports and encourages teachers' teaching, praises teachers' achievements in a timely manner (Xu & Zhang, 2011), and listens to their opinions humbly, avoid excessive administrative chores affecting teaching (Wang, 2016), and at the same time face the practical difficulties of teachers, teachers have good interpersonal relationships, unity, cooperation in teaching, and care for each other in life, then teachers will experience more physical and mental pleasure (Pan, 2004), effectively boosting their job satisfaction levels in the process.

Conclusion:-

This study has enhanced our understanding of school organizational climate and its relationship with primary school teachers' job satisfaction in Northern Jiangsu. The findings suggest that the relationship between the above two variables of interest is overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, it is also discovered that the surveyed primary school teachers are currently highly satisfied with their jobs. This may in turn play an important role in promoting a good school climate. Besides that, a democratic management model for schools gives teachers more room for development. Taking teachers as the center of policy development, their true needs may be fulfilled, granting them more possibilities to develop their own teaching abilities and improve their teaching techniques. This will effectively allow students to get access to better quality education.

Apart from that, schools' support for teachers' work, the existence of good peer relationships, the provision of high-quality school resources, and reasonable amounts of work assignments seem to contribute to improving teachers' job satisfaction. The findings of this study may not only further help in understanding the

relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction but also assist in providing insights into the factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction from an all-around perspective.

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