

A COMPARISON OF TEACHER,
ADMINISTRATOR, STUDENT AND
PARENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL
CLIMATE AT FORT CAMPBELL
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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A COMPARISON OF TEACHER, ADMINISTRATOR,
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CLIMATE AT FORT CAMPBELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

An Abstract
Presented to
Graduate and Research Council
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by
James Gary Stewart

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of the various groups associated with Fort Campbell Junior High School in an attempt to test nine hypotheses postulated by the writer of this paper. The instrument used to test the hypotheses dealing with the climate of the school was the Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile and a demographic data sheet. The instrument yielded information associated with eight different climate factors: Respect, Trust, Morale, Opportunities for Input, Growth, Renewal, Caring and Cohesiveness.

The group targeted for study consisted of 165 students, 125 parents, and 35 teachers.

Questionnaires were completed by the foregoing and returned to the writer, who in turn received assistance from Austin Peay State University computer personnel in running analysis of variance tests on the raw mean scores for all the groups to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the perceptions of the groups for the climate factors involved in the study. With this information, along with tables compiled from the raw mean scores for each group, the writer was able to make determinations and draw conclusions about the hypotheses postulated. Some of the conclusions were based on evidence derived from data which proved to be a significance or on visual examination of the raw data tables. Evidence from analysis of the data seemed to support the following conclusions:

1. Students' perceptions of school climate vary considerably between grade level. Data indicated a more positive perception by females as compared to male students. Male and female perceptions were both more negative at the ninth grade level as compared to the seventh and eighth grade level.
2. Male and female perceptions were not significantly different statistically; however, males were generally more negative than females.
3. Perceptions of climate increased as the distance from the administration increased.
4. Parental perceptions increased positively as their level of formal education increased.

A COMPARISON OF TEACHER, ADMINISTRATOR,
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CLIMATE AT FORT CAMPBELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A Field Study
Presented to
Graduate and Research Council
Austin Peay State University

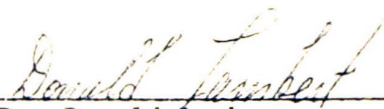
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by
James Gary Stewart

March, 1982

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Field Study written by James Gary Stewart entitled "A Comparison of Teacher, Administrator, Student and Parent Perceptions of the School Climate at Fort Campbell Junior High School." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Education Specialist, with a major in Administration and Supervision.


Dr. Donald Lambert

We have read this field study
and recommend its acceptance:


Dr. Bryan Crutcher


Dr. George Rawlins

Accepted for the
Graduate Council:

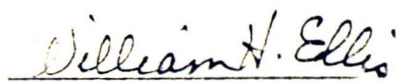

Dr. William H. Ellis

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The American school system has been gradually undergoing a transformation. For decades, it seemed school climate mattered not nearly so much as academic productivity. Over the past few decades, however, numbers of educators have been increasingly concerned over the climate in their particular schools. Prodded by a more professional and concerned group of educators, administrators have been increasingly faced with the dilemma of making the school climate a positive and productive place to work. Therefore, school personnel seem to be evaluating and assessing climate much more closely in order to guarantee constant and continued improvement in the areas of school climate most needed in each situation at that particular time and school.

Fort Campbell Junior High School was a typical junior high in this respect. School personnel wanted to know about the ills related to the school in the area of climate. This study was designed to examine the climate of Fort Campbell Junior High School from the viewpoints or perceptions of administrator, teacher, pupil, and parent. By comparing the different perceptions, a better assessment of what is needed and where it is needed will be available for future plans in changing the school's climate.

The climate of a school is only what those associated with

it perceive it to be in relation to what they feel it should be. As people change, so does the climate and people's perceptions of the climate. These perceptions may be positive or negative, accurate or inaccurate, alike or different.

If a school is to be successful, it must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to fulfill certain basic human needs. An effective, healthy climate cannot be attained, nor can one continue, unless every member of the school is valued and cared about. If there is a healthy school climate, openness prevails, individual members value ideas, and individuals feel cared about, people feel good about their relationships and essentially view the school as a productive place to be, relative to their purpose for being there.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this field study was to examine the attitudes and perceptions of administrators, teachers, students, and parents in the Fort Campbell community for grades 7-9. The study was conducted on the entire teacher population at the junior high level as well as a random sample of students and parents. The study compared the perceptions of school climate at this level and provided data and direction to be used at a later date by the system in preparing a program for improving school climate. Furthermore, the study attempted to test the hypotheses relative to the school's

hierarchy, educational attainment level, certification, years of experience, and male and female respondents.

Results of this study will be shared with the administration and teachers of the school with the sole purpose of enhancing the climate. This study will hopefully serve as a guidepost for Fort Campbell Junior High School in assessing and diagnosing for the climate of the school.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Like all school systems committed to providing the best possible environment in which to work and learn, Fort Campbell Junior High School is likewise committed to the constant assessing, evaluating and diagnosing for remediation for various aspects of the school program and ultimately the climate. Before remediation can take place, however, one must be cognizant of the ills. Herein lies the crux of the matter. This study provided the administration, teachers, students, and parents an opportunity for input in determining what can be done to improve the climate in the Junior High School at Fort Campbell. From this study and its findings, there should be an interest and concern generated for recognizing a need for the improvement in the climate of Fort Campbell Junior High School. In addition, individuals would not only be concerned but would be motivated into some affirmative course of correcting any ills present. It is hoped this study would be used to enhance the program of Fort

Campbell Junior High School and thereby create a viable educational climate.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations for this field study were:

- (1) The percentage of respondents returning the questionnaire was smaller than expected.
- (2) The validity of answers on the questionnaire and personal information sheets could be questioned since the students administered the test to their parents.
- (3) The small number of administrators answering the survey was insufficient to handle statistically.
- (4) The initial ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) Test revealed nonsignificant differences for each climate category considered as separate entities.

STATEMENT OF THE HYPOTHESES

This field study attempted to test certain hypotheses about the climate of Fort Campbell Junior High School. Several of these have undoubtedly been quoted and misused stereotypes of junior high schools over the past many years. The hypotheses this writer attempted to test, in relation to the junior high school at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, were:

(1) There will be no significant difference in the perception of school climate for females and males.

(2) There will be no significant difference between a student's grade level and his/her perception of the school's climate.

(3) There will be no significant difference in the perception of the school's climate for parents, students and teachers.

(4) There will be no significant difference in the perceptions of school's climate for parents and students.

(5) There will be no significant difference in parents' perception of the school climate and the level of education they have acquired.

(6) There will be no significant difference in teachers' perceptions for school climate at different levels of formal professional training.

(7) There will be no significant difference in male and female teachers' perceptions of school climate.

(8) There will be no direct relationship between the distance a member of the school family is from the administration and how he/she perceives the school climate.

(9) There will be no direct relationship between students' grade levels and their perception of school climate.

All the above were tested using the Charles F. Kettering School Climate Profile and additional data from a demographic information sheet. The data from these two instruments were used to run analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests and were analyzed further by examination

on the part of the writer.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

School Climate

This term implies the fusion of those factors which make it possible for all members of the school family or community to work together in a productive and cooperative way to achieve common goals such as academic knowledge, social development, curricula and extra curricular improvement. However, climate can also denote a situation that is entirely the reverse or reciprocal of this. In a positive sense, all factors in a given school situation are combined to make school a satisfying and meaningful place where both adults and youth desire to spend a substantial portion of their time. Negatively, climate denotes a situation that is so unsatisfying and uncomfortable for all members that productivity and human happiness are at an ebb.

Those areas this writer dealt with in determining the climate were: (1) Respect, (2) Trust, (3) Morale, (4) Opportunities for Input, (5) Academic and Social Growth, (6) Cohesiveness, (7) School Renewal, and (8) Caring.

School Community

This term is used in referring to those individuals, male and female students, and parents, who have a vested interest in the

educational process and who work cooperatively toward achieving common goals and attaining individual aspirations. Not to be excluded from this group are teachers and administrators who are most obviously responsible for their contributions to education and for creating the existing climate.

School Family

School Family is to be used hereafter synonymously with School Community.

Perceptions

This term refers to those ideas, stereotypes, attitudes, etc., which individuals have formulated as being truisms due to either experience, past and immediate, good and bad, or to various means of communication, irregardless of its validity.

Respect

This term refers to mutual consideration and esteem on the part of all school personnel, students and parents for the school and what is being done in the name of education.

Trust

This term refers to the implicit faith and moral responsibility placed in the hands of teachers and administrators.

Morale

This term is used for the mental state of all persons associated

with the school and their enthusiasm relative to the learning process.

Opportunity For Input

This term refers to the degree or level at which individuals feel their ideas are accepted and their suggestions are given consideration.

Growth

This term represents the area of continuous academic and social growth. This area applies to students and whether they view the school program as being relevant, to teachers/administrators and their academic pursuits in and out of school and their varied related interests, as well as to parents and the extent to which they are involved in learning activities in the school program.

Cohesiveness

This term refers to the "We" feeling or togetherness of all individuals associated with the school.

School Renewal

This term refers to problem solving within the school and the degree to which innovativeness and creativeness are encouraged in bringing about better learning and living in school.

Caring

This term applies to all persons in and associated with the school. These individuals feel they are cared about as human beings and generally view school as a pleasant, worthwhile place.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Interest in school climate prior to 1960 was almost absent from the concerns of most educational leaders. Those climate concerns were primarily limited to consideration of factors which were usually tangible in nature with any indirect, intangible benefits being either not considered or merely afterthoughts.

School climate awareness could be said to have found its birth place in 1918, with the work of Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education and later in 1938 with the work of Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association.

Even though these two commissions were instrumental in organizing and directing educational thought in the proper direction, a concerted effort for the reform of, or concern for, school climate was not yet evident. During the last two decades, however, advancements have been engineered in several areas of the American Educational Institution. Not only have new designs in buildings been manufactured, but also an array of classroom equipment and supplies have likewise flooded the market all in the name of improving the educational climate. An almost endless number of improvements and advancements in a multiplicity of other areas has also developed, to include everything from scheduling innovations to instructional materials and program management techniques. In spite of all the

efforts expended and the improvements, developments and innovations derived, much of the literature examined seems to indicate many ills still remaining within the educational realm. These ills, many times, appear to be beyond definition or explanation. The list of adverse conditions remains almost endless. Teachers exhibit negativism, apathy, low morale and a lack of trust and confidence in each other and in the school's leadership. Students view school with distrust, are increasingly absent from classes, are steadily becoming more and more passive, have little purpose or direction, are restless, and exhibit a lack of or very little school spirit. Parents are just as disillusioned as anybody. They feel the schools have shunned and neglected them, having little or no use for their thoughts, ideas, suggestions, or feelings. Primarily they are disillusioned because they feel the school is not providing their children with the necessary tools for a suitable livelihood upon reaching adulthood. Schools lack the confidence of parents due to academics as well as the schools' poor learning environments or climate.

On the other side of the issue, however, are those teachers, parents, and students who find what the school does to be very positive and good. Some schools have examined themselves internally and externally, have altered perspectives and thereby changed attitudes and perceptions of the members of the "school family." To all concerned, however, it is the measure of reality of matters at hand. Teachers perceive the schools to be one thing, offering or not offering what is needed or expected in providing the necessary

elements for a healthy environment. The principal perceives the school's climate to be on one plane, while students and parents have developed their own sets of attitudes and perceptions concerning the school's climate which may differ from the principal's.

The key word, therefore, is perception or perceiving. Arthur W. Combs (1962: 68) stated:

How any person behaves at a given moment is a direct expression of the way things seem to him at that moment. People do not behave according to the 'facts' as they seem to an outsider. How each of us behaves at any given moment is a result of how things seem to us. What a person does and what a person learns is thus a product of what is going on in his unique and personal field of awareness. People behave in terms of the personal meanings (perceptions) existing for that moment.

Combs (1962: 68-69) further stated:

Perceptions are the 'stuff of growth,' the basis of intelligent behavior. Therefore, perceptions must take their place as a vital part of the curriculum if knowing is to be effective in the lives of students.

Perceptions are transactions between what the organizational climate really is and the individual's projective distortion of this phenomena. It is assumed that individuals behave and anticipate behavior in terms of their perceptions. W. I. Thomas (Helsel, 1969: 39-44) said "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

Teachers, parents, students and administrators all have their own set of perceptions concerning the climate within a given organization. The perceptions and attitudes of each of these groups differ

and often differ considerably. This is substantiated by the findings of L. M. Brown (1975: 467-473) in his work on "Attitudinal Differences Among Junior High School Students, Teachers and Parents."

Quite often our perceptions are the result of misinformation or distortions by the perceiver in an attempt to communicate emotionally rather than factually what actually exists. Parents are most likely to be the victims of misinformation concerning their school's climate. Bits and pieces of wrong or distorted information can be the cornerstone of irreversible and irreparable perceptions concerning the climate of our educational institutions. George Gallup (1974: 51), in his 1973 "Gallup Polls of Public Attitudes Toward Public Schools," claimed that attitudes, especially those of parents, depends upon the source. Their attitudes, whether from direct experience or secondary, are often biased because of the biased nature of the sources.

Parents' most important source of information is their children from whom is derived considerable knowledge. Parents' attitudes and perceptions are also determined to a large extent by their prior experiences in education. L. M. Brown (1975: 467-473) stated "The longer parents have been out of and away from the school environment, the less negative they seemed to be towards school."

Studies by Marilyn Floyd (1978: 356) in Phi Delta Kappan noted "the more formal education a parent had, the less apt he was to be satisfied." George Gallup (1974: 51) noted, however, in his 1973 Gallup Poll, "the more parents know first hand about schools, the

more favorable are their perceptions of the school." This should be sufficient reason for motivating educational leaders to involve parents in all aspects of the education of their children. The influence children have on their parents should lend credence to ideas of utilizing children as a school's principal source of positive communication.

Students are likewise extremely important components of the school climate. Their perceptions and attitudes are based upon experiences throughout their educational background. Student attitudes are by no means the same or similar through the continuum of education. Attitudes differ from grade level to grade level and even by sex of the individuals. Michael Beck (1977: 73-78), writing in The Elementary School Journal found evidence that "generally speaking, attitudes toward the school curriculum are less positive as grade level increases." This is supported by Dr. S. A. Duchi's (1978: 1214-A) dissertation findings which appear to suggest a decline in positiveness on the part of students' school climate perceptions. Gathman's (1977: 33-37) findings provided additional evidence of these postulates.

The sex of the student is also an important determinant of perception and attitudes relative to school climate. According to Beck (1977: 77-78), girls' attitudes about school were more favorable than boys at all grade levels. Gathman (1977: 33-37), in his article "The Relationship Between Student Sex, Grade Level and Trust of Teachers," and Hamsher (1969: 3086-B), in his doctoral

dissertation stated findings which indicated a greater amount of trust and positiveness on the part of female students toward teachers and school than with their male counterparts.

All the evidence seemed to indicate the importance of positive student involvement in developing a healthy, positive climate. Robert Roth (1979: 119-122), in his article for the National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, claimed the rewards for doing this are enumerable to all concerned. Students who enter school each fall will do so because of the perceptions they have which were transmitted by brothers, sisters, or friends. These perceptions are likewise transmitted to the parents who play an immensely important role in shaping attitudes and perceptions about the school.

Teachers should by no means be excluded from consideration as vital elements in school climate. They are, in fact, the individuals to whom a great deal of the responsibility lies in making the climate what it is. Teachers and students working together in harmony and cooperation have an impact on parent perceptions and attitudes. Teachers are vital in determining the climate within the classroom and thereby promoting a positive or negative image or perception within the student. Glickman (1976: 2534A), writing in his doctoral dissertation, noted how the individual teacher has a significant influence on the climate of the class. The teacher, he continues, has the power either to allow the organizational climate of the school to permeate the classroom or to block it out completely.

Marlys Mitchell (1976: 302-312), in her "Teacher Attitudes," believed "the climate of the classroom is always set by the teacher."

In a study conducted by Schmuck and Van Egmond (Bigelow 1969: 7-8; 57-58) it was shown that the teacher exerts a major influence on the classroom climate. They stated:

The results indicated that the teacher, especially as a social-emotional leader, had an effect on the academic performances of both boys and girls which was independent, to a significant degree, from the effects of parents or peers.

The study also pointed out how classroom climate affects students' academic performance, and how the teacher can and does control the classroom climate.

Bigelow (1969: 53-77), quoting Flanders, Morrison and Brode from a 1968 study on student attitudes, stated findings by Walberg and Anderson (1968) which indicated very high relationships between classroom climate and student achievement in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral areas. Studies conducted by Flanders (Bigelow 1969: 57-58), and Schumck-Van Egmond (Bigelow 1969: 57-58) tended to confirm this hypothesis. It could, therefore, be assumed that changes in classroom climate would be related to improvements in students' academic achievement, according to Eric (Bigelow, 1969: 58).

Teachers, like students and parents, however, were by no means in agreement about school climate. Research indicated differences along lines of personal educational attainment, sex and others. Bazemore's (1976: 5648-A) findings indicated teachers' perceptions of the organization to be related to position, age, and level of

professional preparation. Hunsaker's (1978: 3332-A) findings concurred with Bazemore's in that personal attributes of sex and level of certification influence the respondents' perceptions of organizational climate. Hunsaker continued by citing evidence to indicate females' perceptions of the school to be more positive than were their male counterparts.

In much of the literature, teacher morale tended to be a focal issue in regard to school climate. Harold E. Weiser (1975: 2566-A), in "A Study of the Relationship Between Organizational Climate and Teacher Morale," concluded from his research findings that there is a direct relationship between climate and teacher morale. Mitchell's (1976: 302-312) findings also indicated a positive relationship between the organizational climate and the teacher's desire to stay on the job. Mitchell also noted how teacher attitudes toward his/her job tend to be related to his/her perceptions or attitudes concerning various aspects of the job. Teacher morale is obviously an extremely important element in school climate. Washington and Watson (1976: 4-6), in "Positive Teacher Morale," concurred by adding that teacher morale has a direct reflection on the operation of the school. This, Washington and Watson added, is extremely important since teachers whose basic needs are satisfied tend to constantly strive for fulfillment of higher goals, and their efforts and attitudes overflow and reflect in those with whom they come in contact, namely students and, ultimately, the parent population.

The literature dealt extensively with another person or element

within the school family. This person is the glue in the school climate scheme. He/she provides the leadership in creating the climate which exists in any given situation. Mitchell (1976: 302-312) contended that the principal is the central leader in a school and especially in the area of school climate. The principal, like all the other groups thus far mentioned, has his/her own set of perceptions and attitudes relative to what the school climate actually is. According to findings by Jenkins and Tunney (1975: 1270-A), principals cannot assume that their perception of the school's climate is similar to other members of the school population. Evidence validating this conclusion existed within a great deal of the literature. Duchi (1978: 1214-A) concluded from his findings that administrators appear to have higher perceptions of the school climate than other members of the school family. Smith's (1977: 1170-A) findings also indicated that in an hierarchical arrangement of people connected with a school, the further the person is from the administrator the less positive is his/her perception of the school's climate. Robinson (1976: 5716-A) added also that administrators tend to regard their organizational climate as more open than do their faculties.

It is rather obvious that many people have a vested interest in the school and a vested concern in the climate therein. It is obvious the principal is empowered to make positive or negative changes which certainly affect the climate of the school. Jenkins and Tunney (1975: 1270-A) contended that the implementation of a

series of innovations in schools, however, does not guarantee changes in a school's climate. They went further by noting that even though the principal may be a trained climate leader, a positive school climate is not inevitable nor automatic. They added: "successful change of a school's climate depends on a plan for change as well as training the principal in becoming a school climate leader."

Even though school climate is the responsibility of all members of the school family, the primary responsibility falls on the principal. The principal must recognize the importance of support of all members of the school family. Redfern (1966: 38) believed:

The interpretation of the schools' program to parents whether, directly or indirectly, is a leadership task requiring foresight, integrity, judgment, and insight into human relations. It requires an administrator who is cognizant of the needs of children, parents and teachers, and who is constantly striving to bring about means by which negative or false perceptions are prevented from incubating within the operational and cooperational boundaries of the school family.

An astute principal will recognize the all-important elements at his disposal for fostering the essential communication needed to muster the support and cooperation of parents. Parents see the school through the eyes of their children to a large degree. The concepts, ideas, attitudes, and essentially perceptions about the learning environment provided parents are, to a large degree, products of the information their children communicate to them. If students carry home reports about the positiveness of the school, its teachers, the instructional program, curricular and co-curricular school

activities, which make school a fun place, then parents tend to value school more highly because their attitudes about education and their perceptions of that particular school have been influenced positively by the child. Redfern (1966: 38) stated:

It behooves the principal to strive for quality performance on the part of all persons associated with the school and in doing so, he is enabled to have a product that sells itself.

He also added:

Students should be well served under the tutelage of competent teachers working in an environment designed to provide the best educational opportunities possible.

Perceptions, however, are within the individual and will not be brought out unless the climate outside is safe. No one can force them out. They come out only when the perceiver feels he wants them to be presented, and he will not bring them out in the classroom or school if there is a danger they will be attacked or ridiculed. Combs (1962: 70-71) contended, "the educational climate must be made safe for the exploration of meanings of perceptions if things are to be changed."

It requires the effort of all involved individuals to improve the school's climate, providing for an openness in communication to exchange ideas, attitudes and perceptions in bringing about a better situation in which to work and learn. This commitment to openness and change will provide encouragement for the exchange of ideas without fear of punishment and/or ridicule.

In the analysis of a school's climate, ideally, one should find

evidence of respect, trust, high morale, opportunities for input, continuous academic and social growth, cohesiveness, school renewal, and caring on the part of all individuals concerned. According to Robert S. Fox and Associates (1973: 7-8), these eight factors, taken from the Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile Instrument, will provide sufficient data in determining, for a given school, the climate that exists there.

All eight factors are tremendously important in searching for the answer to a positive school environment. In a positive climate, students, teachers, administrators and parents should see themselves as persons of worth to be listened to and who make a significant difference. It is also recognized how the level of trust tends to perpetuate itself when the same considerations are reciprocated by all parties concerned.

In a positive climate, one is able to depend on others to be straightforward, open and honest people who can be counted on in any given situation and people who feel good about what takes place in the school. Thomas F. Koerner (1974: 1-3) stated:

Leaders in education must follow the path of complete openness. Their effectiveness with students, parents and teachers depends on the level of trust and confidence they have attained. Without this openness and trust, there is no foundation for image building.

It is also recognized that the best decisions are made not by one person, and surely not by the masses, but by a representative, cooperative group. Yet, every individual needs to feel he/she has

at least an opportunity for input in important decisions.

It is imperative a school provide opportunities for academic and social enrichment for teachers and students. Parenthetically, administrators and parents, likewise, need equal and suitable opportunities for academic and social growth.

Individuals associated with a positive, healthy climate tend to share a common bond--a desire to remain a member of the group or organization, as the case may be. In doing so, each member of the educational family tends to feel there is at least somebody who cares about them. Maintaining a healthy, positive, viable school climate is the task of many. According to Mitchell (1976: 302-312), there are numerous persons who play influential roles in this process. The key role, however, rests with the principal upon whom is thrust the responsibility of providing the required leadership. He is the individual who sets the tone. It is he who can either provide opportunities for a positive, harmonious and cooperative atmosphere or share in the chaotic, tense and highly uncomfortable situation created by the reciprocal situation.

Edgar Dale (1974: 5) said: "As a teaching profession, we have been more concerned with the minds of students than we have with their hearts, more concerned with their intellect than we have their emotions." Parenthetically, it could be added how teachers and parents have likewise suffered plights of similar consequence. Teachers have been expected to produce learned individuals and give unselfishly of their time with little regard given to their

contributions, skills, and talents available for productiveness to the entire educational realm. Likewise, parents have been expected to exhibit an attitude of acceptance and confidence in the professional judgment of educational leaders rather than being utilized in a productive and cooperative manner. By so doing, their support and confidence might be based on understanding and involvement rather than mere acceptance.

In spite of the dismal history school climate has experienced, Edgar Dale believed the trend to be under change. Dale (1974: 5) stated, "The trend in recent years has been toward more humane attitudes in the school both among students and teachers."

Chapter 3

METHOD OF RESEARCH

DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS

Fort Campbell, Kentucky, is a military reservation situation on the Kentucky-Tennessee border in Northwest Middle Tennessee. Fort Campbell is unique in the respect of being only one of two military installations in the continental United States with a complete education unit, K-12, situated within its perimeters. This educational unit, hereafter to be referred to as Fort Campbell Dependent Schools, serves a student population of 3575 with an approximate parent population of 5500 in number. Within the Dependent school system, there are four elementary schools, one middle school (grade six only), one junior high school (7-9), and one high school (10-12).

The focus of this study was in grades 7-9 housed as one unit and known as Fort Campbell Junior High School. Fort Campbell Junior High School has a student population of 612, a parent population of approximately 1200, 42 teachers, and two administrators. The support staff numbers 13. Out of the 42 teachers numbered as part of the staff, eight are seventh grade teachers, eight are eighth grade teachers, and eight are ninth grade teachers. Of the remaining 18 members, there is one librarian, two guidance counselors and 15 various members of the enrichment team. Each grade level is comprised of two teams with 4-5 members per team. Student members per

team and by grade level vary considerably. The student population by grade level is distributed on a somewhat equal basis according to alphabetical order. This distribution is an administrative arrangement whereby fairly equal numbers in the boy/girl ratio are maintained. This is accomplished by placing students in alphabetical order and having each teacher draw from the list until all students are selected.

The sample for this field study was taken from one administrative unit or cluster, called homeroom, in each team for grades seven through nine. This yielded a total of six administrative clusters, containing an average of 25-30 students per unit, one teacher per unit and two parents for each child for a total of 50-60 parents per unit.

The teachers at Fort Campbell Junior High School come from diverse backgrounds. The majority, however, were born in the Clarksville-Hopkinsville area. The majority are graduates of local universities, either Austin Peay State in Clarksville, Tennessee, Murray State in Murray, Kentucky, Western Kentucky State in Bowling Green, Kentucky, or Middle Tennessee State in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. All the teachers are certified 7-12 and hold at least a B.S. or B.A. from an accredited university. A large number of the teachers are engaged in programs leading to either a Master of Arts Degree or post masters work. The teacher sample for this study was comprised of 35 of the 42 teachers in the school.

The students who come to Fort Campbell Junior High School are

well traveled, learned, and diversified individuals, not only academically, but socially and extra-curricularly as well. They arrive from all parts of the world, many with a highly cosmopolitan background. Many have traveled extensively in Europe and Asia as well as in the United States. Their interests are varied and diverse, presenting a tremendous challenge to the teaching profession wherever they go.

The parents are, likewise, just as, if not more, traveled and diversified in their interests and background. All fathers possess military rank from the lowest ranking enlisted personnel to two-star generals. The parents have experienced good and bad schools, good and bad teachers, and are quite cognizant of the differences in the two. Many hold college degrees from universities throughout the world with a large number either having or working toward advanced graduate degrees. Their knowledge in educational matters and their interests in the schools are areas of tremendous resources--resources which could prove to be of enormous asset to the schools in almost limitless ways.

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURES EMPLOYED

The questionnaire used in this study was the Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile, developed by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. This particular questionnaire is designed to assist school personnel in assessing the general overall climate of the school. The Charles F. Kettering Climate instrument is of value only as an overall climate assessment tool yielding data to help in making decisions relative to climate areas needing intensive scrutiny. The Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile covers eight essential school climate factors: respect, trust, morale, opportunities for input, continuous academic and social growth, cohesiveness, school renewal and caring. Under each of these eight categories, or climate factors, were five questions, each pertaining to that particular area for a total of forty items. There were two parts per question to be answered bringing the actual number of questions to eighty items. Each respondent needed to answer: (1) on a scale of 1-4, how he/she would rate the school on each item listed in terms of how each perceived the climate of the school to be and (2) using the same scale, rate each question in terms of how the individual felt the school's climate should be ideally.

The items in this questionnaire combined with the demographic data compiled from the personal information sheet were intended to test the various hypotheses in this field study.

Prior to administering the Charles F. Kettering Limited School

Climate Profile Instrument, the writer met with the administration and representative teachers from each of the seven administrative teams at Fort Campbell Junior High School. The meeting was aimed primarily at providing an explanation of the questionnaire, how it would be administered, the purpose of the study, and the benefits to be derived from such a study. Enough copies were issued to the teachers for the students and their parents in one cluster (homeroom) for six of the seven teams. Instructions were given the teachers as follows:

(1) A representative cluster, or unit, would be chosen from each team.

(2) A thorough explanation would be given the students for properly filling out the questionnaire.

(3) Upon completing the questionnaire, it would be returned to the teacher.

(4) Seven days later the same students would be given the questionnaire and directions for having their parents fill out the same questionnaire.

(5) Upon completion by the parents, students should return the questionnaire to the homeroom teacher.

(6) Teachers and administrators were also asked to fill out the climate instrument and return all forms for parents, students and themselves to the secretary to be picked up by the administrator of this study.

In addition to the Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile Questionnaire, all respondents were asked to complete an

additional personal information sheet concerning sex of the respondent, highest level of education attained and grade level of attendance in the junior high school.

A cover letter for each respondent was included to help in his/her understanding of the study, its intentions and purposes, the anticipated benefits to be derived from the study, and who was initiating the study and why.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The type of experimental design for this field study was an assessment questionnaire combined with a demographic data information sheet to examine and compare the perceptions of the school climate for administrators, teachers, students and parents at Fort Campbell Junior High School. The Charles F. Kettering Limited School Climate Profile Questionnaire and the demographic information sheet drawn up by this writer were used to test the six hypotheses relating to school climate. The questionnaire was explained and administered to the teachers and administrators. Selected teachers then explained and administered the questionnaire to their students who, in turn, with further instructions from the teachers, carried the questionnaires home and had their parents complete them. When all questionnaires were completed they were returned to the school secretary. Of the 42 teachers sampled in the study, 35 responded for a response rate of 83.3 percent. Of the 165 students sampled, all 165 students responded for a response rate of 100 percent. The total parent sampling

was 165 in number of which 125 responded for a response rate of 75.75 percent.

With the raw data, the writer computed mean scores for each category in the questionnaire. The mean scores were then programmed and cross programmed to determine statistical significance using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) test. With this information, the writer hoped to identify those areas of the school's climate which were weakest. By this same procedure, the writer hoped to find evidence to validate certain hypotheses concerning the school's climate and perhaps indicate where efforts for improvement could be made.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

A very high percentage of the population involved in filling out the school climate survey (taken from CFK Ltd. School Climate Survey) for Fort Campbell Junior High School returned the questionnaires completed as requested. The student population questioned returned 165 out of 165 questionnaires yielding a return rate of 100 percent. A more thorough breakdown of the student population shows responses from:

23 Females and 31 Males	Seventh (7th) graders
21 Females and 28 Males	Eighth (8th) graders
28 Females and 34 Males	Ninth (9th) graders

The parent population surveyed returned 125 out of 165 questionnaires for a return rate of 75.75 percent. Parent categories showed:

8 Females and 6 Males	in elementary k-8 component
30 Females and 30 Males	in 9-12 component
15 Females and 17 Males	in 2 years college component
11 Females and 8 Males	in B.S. and beyond component

The teacher population had 35 out of 42 questionnaires returned for a 83.3 percent return rate. Teacher categories based on professional training and sex yielded the following results:

10 Females and 6 Males	in B.S./B.A. component
14 Females and 5 Males	in MA+ component

The raw data taken from the questionnaires from respondents were considered by individual categories or climate factors and assigned a mean score based on a four-point system for each. The mean scores for all respondents were then entered into the computer and an analysis of variance run on the mean scores for each group for all climate factors. The initial run through the computer gave feedback or correlations between gender and other factors and correlations between the individual climate factors in the instrument and their individual effect on the overall climate. Initial feedback led to the determination that gender had negligible correlation with the various categories of respondents. It was, therefore, not dealt with in further statistical data runs. The initial run on individual climate factors indicated that all eight climate factors individually had little statistical correlation with the overall climate. Therefore, additional runs dealt with the sums of all mean scores for "what is" and "what should be" rather than individual climate factor means for a given group of respondents.

The first hypothesis in this field study was there will be no significant difference in the perceptions of school climate for females and males. During the initial run to determine correlation and significance between variables, the level of correlation was found to be almost negligible for the variable of sex. Because of the low correlation on the sex variable, further tests of the data regarding sex was deemed unnecessary. Therefore, the first hypothesis

was supported since the correlation was so low.

It should be noted, however, that even though female teachers were not significantly different from males in the other group at the .01 level of significance, they were significantly different from their male counterparts on ideal or "what should be" at the .05 level of significance.

Even though, statistically, it was determined there was no significant difference between males' and females' perceptions for the overall climate of the school, there were some points of interest to the writer in the raw means for these two groups. As one examines Tables III and IV which gives the mean scores for male and female teachers, it was readily discernable by the writer which areas of the climate appeared to be in need of serious consideration on the part of school personnel. The area of Opportunities for Input was the particular one which caught the eye of the writer. The mean score for female teachers in this category was 1.62 while the mean for male teachers was 1.98. Both mean scores were considerably lower than the mean scores in any of the other categories. The overall mean score for teachers was 2.58 which again far exceeded the low ratings teachers produced in the area of Opportunities for Input.

Even though the area wasn't nearly as notable in its variance from the mean for all teachers as was Opportunity for Input, the climate area Cohesiveness was the only other one which both male

and female teachers alike were below the mean (2.58) for all items.

Another item of interest one might observe upon looking at Table III is that female teachers scored appreciably higher in most climate areas except three, Opportunities for Input, which has already been noted, Cohesiveness, and Caring. The mean score difference for the area of Cohesiveness from female to male was a +.13, while the difference for caring was +.01.

Male teachers' means fell below the overall climate mean in six out of eight categories which could lead one to propose that male teachers are overall not nearly as satisfied with the climate as are female teachers. However, this cannot be true of Opportunities for Input. As Table III indicates, the difference in mean scores from female to male teachers was +.36, giving the largest difference in mean scores in any of the categories for teachers. It could be concluded, based on observation of the raw data and not on any statistical evidence, female teachers generally perceive the school's climate more positively than do male teachers, except in the areas of Opportunities for Input and, to a lesser amount, in the area of Cohesiveness.

Using Table VII as a reference, the writer also found what seemed to be appreciable differences in the perceptions of male and female parents but not a consistent pattern. The most obvious difference between male and female perceptions occurred in the climate factor Cohesiveness at the B.S.+ educational level. Female

parents had a 3.38 mean score as compared to a 2.28 mean score for males yielding a -1.10 difference from female to males. The second area of noticeable discrepancy in perceptions was in the climate area School Renewal where female parents had a mean of 2.90 as compared to a 2.27 for male parents yielding a -.63 difference at the K-8 educational level.

An examination of Table VIII shows mean scores for seventh, eighth and ninth graders by males and females. Visual examination of the mean scores, indicated in Table VIII, clearly indicates lower mean scores for males at the eighth and ninth grade levels than females at the same levels. The lower mean scores were consistent throughout all eight climate areas. Another interesting observation of Table VIII by the writer was not only did the aforementioned not hold true consistently for seventh grade male and female students but the reverse was the case. In all eight climate categories seventh grade females had lower mean scores than seventh grade males.

The trend seemed to be different for each sex at the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade levels. Female perceptions appear to increase between seventh and eighth grade students only to diminish in all climate areas from eighth to ninth grade. Male students, on the otherhand, appeared to demonstrate a consistent decrease in perception in all climate areas from seventh to eighth and from eighth to ninth grade levels.

In the second hypothesis, it was stated there would be no

significant difference between students' grade level and their perception of the school's climate. The probability for "what is" was 0.00044 which falls within the accepted .01 level of significance. The probability for what should be was 0.03029 which exceeds the .01 level of significance (see Table I).

Test results failed to support the hypothesis for students' perception of school climate varying at different grade levels. However, the same results supported the hypothesis in the realm of "ideal" or "what should be" for students at different grade levels. Therefore, student's perceptions did vary significantly from grade level to grade level for "what is," while a statistically significant difference for "what should be" failed to exist.

By examination of the mean scores by grade level, the writer observed a consistent decrease between seventh, eighth, and ninth graders in only three areas, as is indicated in Table IX: Respect, Morale, and Cohesiveness showed consistent decreases in perceptions as grade level increased. The most interesting observation made pertaining to Table IX was the consistent decrease in all eight climate factors between eighth and ninth graders. By examination of the difference in means from highest to lowest, the areas needing most attention on the part of school personnel appeared to be Morale (-.52), Cohesiveness (-.46), Renewal (-.46), Opportunities for Input (-.34), and for Growth (-.34).

The third hypothesis stated there would be no significant

difference in the perception of the school's climate for both "what is" and "what should be" for parents, students, and teachers. As indicated by Table I, a probability of 0.00008 was found which falls far below the .01 level of significance for "what is" between parents, students, and teachers. The table likewise indicated a significant difference between parents', students', and teachers' perceptions concerning "what should be". A probability of 0.00000 was found which also falls far below the .01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis for both "what is" and "what should be" was rejected based on these statistical findings.

Since a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers, students and parents regarding the overall climate of the school has been determined statistically, the writer chose to examine the raw mean scores for each category in the school climate profile and compare each of these between the three groups. By visual examination of Table V one might be able to draw some conclusions as to how the overall climate is affected as a result of the mean scores for each of the eight climate factors. Not only was the climate factor Opportunity for Input lowest for teachers, both male and female, but also it was the lowest climate factor among the student and parent groups.

In addition to this particular category having the lowest mean score for the eight in each group, the difference in the mean score between Opportunity for Input and the mean for the eight factors

was more in all three groups than the difference between the highest mean in the eight factors and the overall mean score for all eight factors, as is shown in Table VI. It should likewise be noted as a result of visual examination of Table VI, the writer observed the climate factor Respect to be consistently higher than other climate factors for all three groups: +.41 for teachers, +.19 for students and +.12 for parents. The only other climate factors scored consistently high or low on by all three groups was Caring, with +.27, +.09 and +.06 for teachers, students and parents, respectively; and Renewal with +.02, +.14, and +.03 for teachers, students, and parents, respectively. This led the writer to believe Respect, Caring and Renewal to be the factors with which each group in the school family was most pleased. Further examination of Table VI shows students and parents agreeing on the Trust factor as possibly being significantly low as it relates to their perceptions of school climate.

The fourth hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference in the perception of the school's climate for parents and students. Table II indicates the sum of the mean scores for climate factors as a comparison. Table II indicates a total mean of 23.72 for parents as opposed to 21.66 for students in reference to "what is." This is significant at the .01 level, with a probability of 0.00008 as indicated in Table I. Table II likewise indicates a sum of mean scores of 30.95 for parents and 29.09 for students in the category of "what should be." With a probability of

0.00000, it is also well within the .01 level of acceptance. It could, therefore, be concluded that hypothesis number four is rejected for both parts, "what is" and "what should be."

As was mentioned in the presentation of statistical evidence for hypothesis three, the categories students and parents agreed most closely on, based on personal observation of the means in Table V, were Opportunity for Input, with mean scores of 2.38 and 2.60, respectively, as their lowest category and Respect, with mean scores of 2.91 and 3.06, respectively, as their choice for the most positive climate factor. It might also be pointed out that parents were consistently higher in all eight climate factor categories than were students.

The fifth hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference in the parental perceptions of the school's climate as their level of education increased. Table I indicated a probability factor of 0.00436 which falls within the accepted .01 level of probability.

As indicated by Table II, the sum of the mean scores for parents with K-8 educational attainment was 21.46; the sum of the means for parents with 9-12 education was 23.46; the sum of the means for parents with 2 years college was 24.61; and the sum of the means for parents with a degree and beyond was 24.76. The consistent progression from 21.46 at K-8 level to a 24.76 at the degree and beyond level indicates a definite increase in mean scores as the

level of education for this group increases. The opposite could, as well, be the case. As the level of education decreases for a given group, parents, so does its perception of "what is" or what the school is actually like. Therefore, the "what is" portion of this hypothesis is rejected. The second portion, "what should be," is accepted since a probability factor of 0.05278 was found, as is shown in Table I, which falls outside the .01 level of significance.

By visual examination of the mean scores in each climate category for parents in each educational category, it appeared to the writer to be supportive of the overall statistical findings dealing with the hypothesis. As the level of education increased, so did the perception of the climate. Table VII indicated the means for female and male parents, the difference moving from female to male, and the mean for both groups by educational level. Not only did the means in Table VII appear to be consistent with the statistical findings, but also they were actually quite supportive in all respects. There was a progression of mean scores in all eight climate categories for parents with K-8 educational attainment as compared to those with 9-12 and, likewise, those with 2 years college. Only three categories showed a progression throughout all four educational levels for parents. These three were Respect, Morale and Caring.

As has already been pointed out, the demographic factor of sex was not considered a consistent statistical factor in climate. However, the writer did choose to examine unscientifically the raw

mean scores from Table VII to determine areas of unusually observable differences between male and female perceptions of the school's climate.

The largest difference between the perceptions of female and male parents occurred in the category of Cohesiveness at the degree and beyond level, with female parents showing a 3.38 mean score as compared to 2.28 mean score for male parents. By visual examination of Table VII, this showed a -1.10 difference between female and male parents.

The second largest area of difference between female and male parents' perception was in the category of School Renewal at the K-8 educational level. Female parents again scored higher than the males with a 2.90 mean score as compared to a 2.27 mean score yielding a -.63 difference from female to male as is shown in Table VII.

Another observation made by the writer upon examination of Table VII was that even though large differences occurred in some levels between females and males, the males were more positive than females in four out of eight climate categories, while the females were more positive than males in four out of eight categories.

For the sixth hypothesis it was stated there would be no significant difference in teachers' perceptions for school climate at their different levels of formal professional training. With a probability factor of 0.16914 for "what is" and 0.04552 for "what should be" (see Table I) in regards to teacher training and their perception,

it is basis for accepting hypothesis six in its entirety since the .01 level of significance is exceeded in both cases.

Hypothesis seven dealt with teachers as well. It was, however, concerned with differences in perception between genders. The hypothesis stated, there would be no significant difference in the perception of school climate for male and female teachers in either the "what is" or "what should be" categories. Table I indicated a 0.55117 probability factor for "what is" and a 0.03676 level of probable significance for "what should be." With both levels, "what is" and "what should be," exceeding the .01 level of significance, the test results supported the hypothesis concerning teachers' perception as sex changed. It should be noted, however, that in regards to sex and teacher perceptions of school climate, females were found to be significantly different at the .05 level of significance.

Table III indicated a comparison of mean scores between female and male teachers. By visual examination, the observer was able to easily ascertain the areas of greatest difference between male and female teachers. Opportunities for Input indicated a mean score of 1.62 for females and a 1.98 for males with a +.36 difference from females to males. Five out of eight climate categories indicated mean scores for males which were less than those for females. However, the one climate factor Opportunity for Input, which, according to hypotheses one and six, indicated teachers having the lowest mean scores of all groups in the study, also indicated the lowest mean

score for female teachers. Opportunities for Input was low not only for female teachers but also for male teachers.

The eighth hypothesis declared there would be no direct relationship between the distance a member of the school family is from the administration and the level at which he/she perceives the school climate "to be." Test results were unable to support the hypothesis. With a probability factor of 0.00008 for "what is" which falls within the .01 level of significance, there appeared to be a significant difference in the way students, teachers, and parents viewed climate as is indicated in Table I and in the discussion of hypothesis three. Upon personal examination of the sum of the mean scores in Table II for parents, students, and teachers, there appeared to be a progression in mean scores as one moved away from the administration. Parents had a mean score of 23.73, students a mean score of 21.66, and teachers a mean score of 20.97. As one examines the scores, it should be noted that parents had the highest mean score, while teachers had the lowest with students clustered between the two. It could, therefore, be concluded that as a group's proximity to the administration decreased, their perception of the school's climate increased. The reciprocal likewise appeared to be true. As one moved closer to the administration, the lower his/her perception of the school's climate tended to be.

It should be noted that the research results indicated a significant difference between the three groups in how they perceived the

"ideal" or "what should be." The probability factor, as indicated in Table I, for "what should be" was 0.00000 which fell well within the .01 level of significance. However, upon examination of the sum of the mean scores for parents (30.95), students (29.09), and teachers (30.25), as is indicated in Table I, the progression was not consistent. There was a significant difference between what parents, students and teachers felt the climate "should be," but an indirect or direct relationship did not occur.

The hypothesis cannot be supported or rejected statistically. However, upon personal examination of the mean scores for "what is" and "what should be" one can observe even though parents had higher means for both, a progression did not exist; therefore, the hypothesis was supported for "what should be."

By examination of Tables V and VII, the mean scores for each group in all eight climate categories can be studied. A significant difference existed between what teachers, students, and parents perceived the climate "to be" and "should be." Also, overall, as one moves away from the administration, the perceptions increased for the groups. But through an examination of the mean scores for the groups in the area of "what is" for each individual category, progressions were not the case for all categories. Those areas where progressions existed were Morale (teachers 2.69, students 2.69, parents 3.06); Opportunities for Input (teachers 1.80, students 2.38, parents 2.60); Growth (teachers 2.62, students 2.72, parents 3.00);

Cohesiveness (teachers 2.50, students 2.80, parents 2.93); and Renewal (teachers 2.60, students 2.86, parents 2.97). Even though progressions did not exist for the categories of Respect, Trust and Caring, parents' mean scores were consistently higher than either students' or teachers' for each individual category as well as the overall climate.

The ninth and final hypothesis stated there would be no direct relationship between students' grade level and their perception of school climate. With a probability factor of 0.00044 for "what is," it has been previously stated in the presentation of data for hypothesis two that students' perceptions of school climate were significantly different. By personally examining the sum of the mean scores for "what is" under the student groups for seventh, eighth, and ninth grades in Table II the writer found what appeared to be a trend existing which progressively decreased as grade level increased. Seventh graders had the highest mean with a 22.90, eighth graders next with a 22.72, and ninth graders last with a 19.73 mean scores.

Even though students' grade level appeared to have no significant difference in regard to student perception of the ideal or "what should be," it should be pointed out, with a probability factor of 0.03029, which was slightly above the .01 level of acceptance, the mean scores for the ideal also decreased as grade level increased, as indicated in Table I. Test results seemed to indicate a progressive trend toward an inverse relationship concerning grade level and the difference in students' perceptions of school climate.

Therefore, test results appeared to support the hypothesis for "what is." The hypothesis for "what should be" was supported, as well, since a direct relationship failed to exist in that area.

Even though the sum of the mean scores decreased as grade level increased (as is indicated in Table II), an examination of the mean scores for students by grade level and sex in Tables VIII and IX indicated some interesting points. The writer was aware of sex being found to be of non-significance, statistically, in the overall school climate. He chose, however, to examine the raw mean scores for each climate factor to ascertain, if possible, the differences and/or similarities in male and female perceptions between grade levels. By examination of Table VIII, the difference in mean scores between seventh and eighth grade females indicated an increase in perception for all climate factors except Cohesiveness. The table also shows the difference between eighth and ninth grade females as being negative or a decrease in all eight climate areas. By comparison, males showed a negative difference between seventh and eighth and eighth and ninth grades. Therefore, male perceptions were not only progressively poorer as grade level increased but were consistently poorer in all climate factors. Not only did males indicate a consistent decrease in all climate areas between all grade levels, but ninth grade males were consistently lower for all climate factors than any other group as indicated in Table VIII. In Table VIII, eighth and ninth grade males both showed mean scores which were below the female students' means for their respective

grade levels in all categories. Looking at students' mean scores disregarding sex, Table IX showed, what would appear to be, considerable decreases in mean scores from highest to lowest mean scores for each climate factor. The climate area of greatest difference was Morale with a $-.52$ difference from highest to lowest mean scores for grade levels. Cohesiveness and Renewal with a $-.46$, and Opportunity for Input and Growth each with a $-.34$ appeared to be of notable difference. The area of closest agreement between students of different grade levels was Caring with only a $-.18$ difference between highest to lowest mean scores.

Examination of Table X indicated a higher perception of the school by males than females at the seventh grade level. However, at the eighth and ninth grade levels, male perceptions were consistently lower than female perceptions in all areas for both grade levels except Cohesiveness at the eighth grade level where males and females each had a mean score of 2.86.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES, METHOD AND FINDINGS

School climate became a concern of this writer as his experience in teaching, administrative experience, and professional training increased. The writer chose Fort Campbell Junior High School to study for several reasons but primarily because he had been so closely associated with it during his teaching career and felt like doing something to contribute to its continued growth. Since a great deal of concern and consideration was already being directed toward improving the school in several areas, the eagerness on the part of the staff and concerned family groups to assist the writer was already deep-seated. Upon examination of the area of school climate for this school, and the junior high school in general, the writer wondered to what extent he could contribute to the school's growth and success.

It became apparent to the writer that all persons must first become aware of what the problems were and where they existed in order to completely understand what must be done and where most of their efforts must be concentrated. These problems, as well as a deep concern for the educational direction within this particular school system, led the writer to focus on this field study topic.

Nine hypotheses were formulated and stated as a focus for the

research in this field study. The first one stated there will be no significant difference in the perceptions of school climate for females and males. This hypothesis was supported during the initial run to determine correlation between groups and variables. Correlations dealing with groups and the variable of sex were so negligible, further testing of these variables was deemed unnecessary. There was, however, one group, female teachers, which was significantly different at the .05 level of significance on the "ideal" or "what should be" as compared to their male counterpart.

By examination of the data in the tables giving mean comparisons, an understanding of the hypothesis and its supportive findings was further sought. After careful comparison of the mean scores between males and females, it appeared to be evident to the writer that female teachers generally perceived the school's climate more positively than did male teachers. Male and female parental perceptions were varied, but the most obvious discrepancy occurred in the area of Cohesiveness at the B.S.+ educational level.

The second hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference between students' grade level and their perception of the school's climate. Test results did not support the "what is" or "real" portion of the hypothesis, indicating grade level did make a significant difference in the way students perceived the school's climate. All the mean scores for eighth and ninth graders, when compared, showed consistent decreases as grade level increased in

all eight climate areas. Test results did support the "what should be" portion of the hypothesis and indicated the perception of the student did not significantly change as grade level changed.

Hypothesis three was not supported by the research findings. It was stated there would be no significant difference in the perception of the school's climate between parents, students and teachers. The results statistically indicated a significant difference in the perceptions of parents, students and teachers for both "what is" and "what should be."

Personal examination of the mean scores indicated the climate factor Opportunity for Input to be the one area which had the lowest mean scores for male as well as female teachers, students and parents. A further examination of the mean scores indicated Respect as the climate factor which consistently had the highest mean scores for all three groups, teachers, students and parents.

Research findings failed to support the fourth hypothesis which said there would be no significant difference in perceptions of school climate for parents and students. Not only were both portions, "what is" and "what should be," statistically well within the .01 range of significance, but also an obvious variance in the sum of the mean scores for the two groups existed as well.

By examination of the mean scores for each climate factor, it appeared that both parents and students believed Opportunities for Input to be the climate area needing greatest efforts toward improving,

while Respect was their choice for the climate area which was perceived as most positive within the school.

The study hypothesized there would be no significant difference in the way parents, with different levels of education, viewed the school's climate. It was specifically stated that parents' perceptions would not change significantly as levels of educational attainment changed. Test results indicated an increase in mean scores for "what is" as the level of education for the group increased. The results were statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence. The "what should be" portion of the hypothesis exceeded the .05 level of confidence.

Not only was there a difference in the way parents perceived the climate with different levels of formal education, but also a progression of mean scores in all eight climate categories for parents with K-8 education as compared to those with 9-12 and likewise those with two years college appeared. Only three climate areas indicated possible positive progressions throughout all four educational categories. They were: Respect, Morale and Caring.

Even though sex was considered to be statistically nonsignificant early in the analysis of the data, examination and visual comparison of male and female mean scores was considered appropriate by the writer. The largest perceptual difference between females and males occurred in the climate area of Cohesiveness at the degree and beyond level in favor of females.

The second largest difference occurred in the area of School Renewal at the K-8 educational level. Females were again more positive. Even though large differences existed at some levels, overall male and female parents were not significantly different in their overall perception of the climate.

The sixth hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers with different levels of formal education. The test results for "what is" and "what should be" indicated probability factors of 0.16914 and 0.04552 respectively. The research findings supported the hypothesis.

The seventh hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference in the perception of school climate for male and female teachers. Both "what is" and "what should be" were found to be of no significant difference. The research findings thereby supported the hypothesis.

Visual examination of mean scores for male and female teachers indicated male teachers having lower mean scores in five of the eight climate categories. The area of greatest difference, however, was in the climate factor Opportunities for Input. Female teachers were not only lower than male teachers in the mean score for this category, but also both male and female teachers were lower in Opportunities for Input than any other group.

The eighth hypothesis was supported by the research findings. The hypothesis stated there would be no direct relationship between

the distance a member of the school family is from the administration, and the level at which they perceive the school's climate. With "what is" having a 0.00008 probability factor and "what should be" having 0.00000 as its probability factor, statistically there was a significant difference in the way the three groups perceived the climate "to be" and "should be." The hypothesis was rejected in the case of "what is" since a direct relationship existed. Results indicated that as the groups have less contact with the administration (move away from), the mean scores increased significantly. Even though the research findings indicated a significant difference for "what should be" among the three groups, no direct relationship was found to exist among the mean scores of these groups. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted on this basis.

The final hypothesis asserted there would be no direct relationship between students' grade level and their perceptions of school climate. Test results seemed to indicate an inverse relationship for "what is" concerning students' grade level. As grade level increased, climate scores decreased. To a lesser degree, the reasoning was true for "what should be" or the "ideal." However, since the level of probability did not fall within the .01 level of confidence, one can only speculate regarding an inverse relationship for "what should be." The hypothesis was supported, however, since a relationship failed to exist.

CONCLUSIONS

For the most part, the findings of the study were not totally unexpected by the writer even though all the hypotheses were written in the null set. There were, however, a few research findings and observations of the various groups in comparisons which caused the writer to come to the conclusions within this section.

One interesting finding was that not only do students' perceptions vary by grade level but actually decrease as grade level increases. The only possible explanation the writer can offer in regard to this is the maturation factor. It was not at all surprising to find mean scores which indicated that male perceptions were lower than female perceptions even though, statistically, the research data did not support the proposal of sex being of significant difference in the overall climate of the school. The mean scores for males, however, were consistently poorer than for female students. It would appear, by examination of the tables comparing the mean scores of these groups, perception of school climate moves from positive for females at the seventh and eighth grade levels to a negative perception in all climate categories as one moves to the ninth grade level. Male perceptions consistently, and progressively, decreased as the mean scores for students moved from the seventh to the eighth and even to the ninth grade. All the statistical data and personal observations of the mean scores led the writer to view the student, male and female, at the ninth grade level the prime

focus in improving student perceptions of the school.

Another significant finding which could have had a bearing on the perceptions of the students was the perceptions of their teachers. Male teachers had mean scores lower in five out of the eight climate areas than did the female teachers. With teachers having mean scores lower in overall climate than all other groups and considering the high degree of association with students, a comparison of the mean scores for the two groups could be viewed as possibly significant, at least interesting.

Teacher perceptions were lowest in the climate area Opportunities for Input. The mean scores indicated female teachers have a lower perception in this category than male teachers. All teachers combined, however, had a lower perception of this climate factor than any other group. Herein lies another interesting observation since the climate area Opportunities for Input produced the lowest mean scores for all groups in all eight climate areas. This could mean at least one important thing. All groups are seeking more input into the overall operation of the school and as they perceive they are being denied this voice, perceptions tend to become negatively influenced.

The writer was not completely surprised when, statistically, it was found there were significant differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents. What was of significance and equally of interest to the writer was the increased perception of

groups as they moved away from the administration of the school. Teachers, having the closest proximity to the administration of the school, possessed mean scores lowest of the three groups followed by students and parents. Again, the climate area Opportunities for Input was by far the most significant area of the climate needing improvement by all groups. Students and parents probably felt the trust level in the school could also be improved. All three groups seemed to be pleased with the areas of Respect, Caring, and Renewal. One might, therefore, consider not only Opportunities for Input as the definite area needing attention by the school in improving the climate of the school, but also the area of trust for parents and students as well.

One of the most interesting findings of this study dealt with parents' perceptions and how they change in regard to the level of formal education they have acquired. It was found as parents' formal education increased, so did their overall perception of the school. A progression in mean scores occurred in all eight climate categories from K-8 through the two years college level. A progression occurred in only three climate areas, however, throughout all four educational levels for parents. The three climate areas of progression were: Respect, Morale, and Caring. Even though, by observation, one can find seemingly large differences between males and females at the various levels, overall their perceptions were fairly consistent. The areas of largest discrepancies between male and female parents

were Cohesiveness at the degree and beyond level and Renewal at the K-8 educational level. In each case, male parents demonstrated perceptions lower than female parents.

There is no real way from this study and the data contained in it to determine why parents' perceptions decrease with levels of formal education attained. It is possible that within the K-8 educational ranks, individuals have developed a dislike for schools at an early age and these perceptions of their school days tend to tint their perceptions of the present educational system. If so, consideration should be given to efforts at re-establishing faith, trust and a need for education in these parents.

Another thought or possibility the writer had in regard to parental perceptions was as people receive more education, they begin to believe and perceive a certain way based on a set of ideas which operate to protect the institution. In this case it would seem necessary to operate from the assumption of attempting to improve the perceptual beliefs of those with less education to believe or perceive education as a way and means of giving their children more of the good life. Since parental perceptions are somewhat, if not considerably, influenced by what their children say about school and perceive the school to be, a fairly safe assumption might be one in which the child is the focal point of our efforts at reaching the parent.

Student perceptions must have a definite carry-over at the parental level. Children who experience success in school usually

view school in a more positive manner. The success they experience leads to more success, fewer problems, fewer negative confrontations with school personnel and, indirectly, an increased positive perception of what school is, what it does, and the need for and the benefits of increased education. Since these perceptions are transmitted to parents, the writer believes parents, who have a better educational background or who see the good things schools are providing their children, will view the school with a more positive attitude. With this knowledge, the writer feels that these parents tend to stress the importance of education much more and actually provide support for the school in various ways.

Children of parents with little formal educational training either perceive a negativism on the part of the parent or fail to see a real need for increased education for themselves because of their parents' lack of such or their attitude concerning school. In any case, the school is faced with a tremendous task in changing perceptions in a situation of this nature. Again, the child must be the focus of the school's attention in improving perceptions. Teachers' perceptions are most influential in changing or improving the perceptions of the student. Student perceptions of school go a long way toward determining the perceptions of their parents. Therefore, one must consider the teacher as the cornerstone in building perceptions about school. But to focus all efforts on improving or changing the perceptions of teachers would be terribly inadequate. Change should begin in the classroom but should extend to the student,

the parents, and any other members of the school family where it has been determined that improvement is needed.

Again, it appears attention should be given to the area of Opportunities for Input. In addition, consideration needs to be extended to Cohesiveness and Renewal at the respective educational levels for parents. The primary concern from this data should be not only the perceptions of parents with formal education near, equal to, or exceeding those of school professionals, but also all parents who have children in the school. Special attention should be given to those parents with a felt need for input and a concern for being a part of the school's operation. With more negative perceptions prevailing for parents with lesser educational attainment, it behooves the appropriate individuals to give serious consideration to improving the perceptions of these groups while maintaining or improving the perceptions of parents who are already satisfied with the job the school is doing.

IMPLICATIONS

The perceptions of the school's climate at Fort Campbell Junior High School were varied and, in some respects, of statistical significance. If not, they were at least of considerable interest. Even though the purpose of this paper was not intended to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the efforts at climate change, there was evidence that efforts are needed in some areas or more effort, as the case may be. The study made it quite plain that perceptions

of the school and its climate are not the same on the part of all who are concerned. The administration tends to view the climate more positively than other individuals in the school family. In most areas of climate, perceptions increase as distance from the administration increases. With teachers maintaining closest proximity to the administration, it, therefore, behooves one to examine the areas in need of greatest attention in the school's climate. Teachers felt a need for more input opportunities. Even though female teachers generally perceived the climate more positively than their male counterparts, and it was determined that in the overall climate picture there was no significant difference in the perceptions of females and males, the climate area Opportunities for Input was significantly lower for female teachers as compared to all other groups. Male teachers did, however, agree that this particular area needed attention as did all respondent groups. With all groups agreeing that one climate factor was consistently low, it appeared to the writer of utmost necessity to devote adequate attention and energies to changing this perception, or condition if it so exists as such.

Significant differences existed between the various respondent groups. As one moved away from the administration, perceptions appeared to increase. Perhaps closeness serves to "insulate" individuals from accepting conditions as being as good as they actually are. It could be, however, that closeness allows individuals to see other aspects of the school as individuals within the

school and causes them to transfer these perceptions to other areas. It is also possible that being as close as teachers are to the overall operation of the school, they actually see the mechanics and are not pleased with this aspect of the administration of the school, while most parents are only familiar with the final product or the outcome.

Students' perceptions varied by grade level. Perceptions consistently decreased from eighth to ninth grade for both males and females and males' perceptions decreased consistently in all climate areas from seventh to eighth to ninth grades. The areas with lowest scores were Morale, Cohesiveness, Renewal, Opportunities for Input, and Growth. Interesting, however, there were only three areas--Respect, Morale, and Cohesiveness--where a consistent decrease was evident between each grade level moving from the seventh all the way up to the ninth grade.

It was quite evident that something happens to junior high students from the eighth to the ninth grade levels for both males and females. What the school is, or is not, the school personnel is doing or is not doing, could have a definite effect on perceptions. There is an obvious decline in perceptions on the part of students, especially males, and the writer contends that efforts need to be made to determine why and what can be done to diminish this trend.

It would appear that communication is a key to remedying some

of the differences in perceptions. Perhaps, a more adequate assumption would be that the communication transmitted is not being decoded the same or it is being acted upon by factors other than those pertaining to the immediate situation. In view of the fact that parents perceive the climate differently from students, and parents' attitudes or perceptions about the school varied with the amount of formal education they had received, the writer of this paper was faced with several other areas of concern. Parents with more formal education had more positive perceptions than those with lesser amounts of formal education. The only exception to this was the B.S. + group of parents. It would appear, based on the mean scores for the climate areas, parents, in general, are more pleased with the job Fort Campbell Junior High School is doing than either students or teachers. The mean scores did imply, however, that more attention should be spent in improving the trust level and involvement of parents who have lesser degrees of education and who are not so nearly aware of what schools have become over the past few years. Could it be that we have changed considerably since some of the parents were experiencing their junior high school years? If this be the situation, more attention needs to be directed toward educating, through various means of communication and involvement, all parents in some aspect of the school and the school's operation.

Even though educational attainment showed slight differences

in perception for parents, the same was not found to be true for teachers. Teachers felt ills existed, but the reasons were not isolated to any one group. Even though the means for parents were consistently different or varied from one educational attainment group to another, teachers as a group wanted more input. If input is the issue, efforts by administrative personnel should be made for implementing change in the future based on various input methods to involve all staff members. If input is being provided, however, then perceptions need to be attended to in order that personnel may be helped to believe their contributions are beneficial and they are listened to.

In summary, more energies should be expended in determining why teachers, especially female teachers, perceive a need for more input and devise means by which this can be accomplished. As students move through the junior high grades, perceptions are influenced or molded, especially in the male students, causing a tendency toward regression of perceptions from the seventh through the ninth grades. Since female students show a regression of perceptions about climate from the eighth to the ninth grades only, particular attention needs to be focused in this area.

The implications seem to be plain. The climate of a school, with Fort Campbell Junior High School being no exception, is not a haphazard phenomena which happens by some mystical accident. A positive, healthy climate requires hard work, constant attention, and

competent leadership both on the part of the administration and all other members of the school family. A healthy climate requires joint cooperativeness and attention by all school personnel concerning the important aspects of school life, school goals, and student productivity. Just as important is a concern for the goals, needs and feelings of all individuals concerned with the school. Teachers determine the climate of the classroom, while the principal is responsible for the overall climate of the school. The responsibility does not stop here, however. The overriding concern of all individuals--parents, teachers and administration--should be the education and welfare of the child. If students are learning, cared about, listened to, allowed to contribute and feel important, then school goals have been successful. Further, teachers, administrators, and parents are also important elements of the school climate. They, too, must feel important and contributing to this school goal.

Such does not happen by mere accident, continue by chance, nor improve by complacency. Hard work and the love and concern for the welfare of others, whether it be a student, a colleague, or an interested person who has a vested interest in the school and especially students' education, are of the utmost necessity and the writer believes could very possibly be the roadmap to a healthy climate.

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Appendix A

Tables

Appendix A

TABLE I

Probability Factors for Selected Sample Groups
When Comparing Real and Ideal School
Climate Factor Means

RESEARCH GROUP	Probability Factor	
	Real - What Is	Ideal - What Should Be
Teachers		
Training	0.16914	0.04552
Sex	0.55117	0.03676
Parents, Students & Teachers - a comparison	0.00008 *	0.00000 *
Parents & Educ. Level	0.00436 *	0.05278
Students & Grade Level	0.00044 *	0.03029

* $p < .01$

The probability of Significance Factor was derived during correlation run to determine significance in perceptions between and within groups. .01 level of significance was used to determine whether significant differences existed.

TABLE II

Sum of the Means From Combined Climate Factors
for Selected Sample Groups

		Sum of Means	
GROUP - CORRESPONDING CATEGORY		"WHAT IS" "REAL"	"WHAT SHOULD BE" "IDEAL"
PARENTS	All Combined	23.73	30.95
	K-8	21.46	30.49
	9-12	23.46	31.01
	2 Yrs. College	24.61	30.92
	B. S. +	24.76	31.27
STUDENTS	All Combined	21.66	29.09
	7th	22.90	29.78
	8th	22.72	29.15
	9th	19.73	38.43
TEACHERS	All Combined	20.97	30.25

TABLE III

Difference in Mean Scores on School Climate Categories
Between Female & Male Teachers for Real & Ideal

CLIMATE CATEGORY	MEAN SCORES - Real		Difference in Means From Female to Male
	Female	Male	
Respect	3.08	2.90	- .18
Trust	2.72	2.49	- .23
Morale	2.81	2.56	- .25
Opportunities for Input	1.62	1.98	+ .36
Growth	2.68	2.56	- .12
Cohesiveness	2.43	2.56	+ .13
Renewal	2.73	2.47	- .26
Caring	2.84	2.85	+ .01
CLIMATE	MEAN SCORES - Ideal		Difference in Means From Female to Male
	Female	Male	
Respect	3.83	3.69	- .14
Trust	3.79	3.73	- .06
Morale	3.92	3.85	- .07
Opportunities for Input	3.75	3.49	- .26
Growth	3.85	3.55	- .30
Cohesiveness	3.78	3.77	- .01
Renewal	3.81	3.64	- .16
Caring	3.89	3.65	- .24

TABLE IV

Comparison of Real and Ideal Overall Means, and Means for Each Climate Category for Teachers

CLIMATE CATEGORY	OVERALL MEAN REAL	MEAN FOR TEACHERS REAL	DIFFERENCE IN MEANS	
Respect	2.58	2.99	+ .41	* +
Trust	2.58	2.60	+ .02	
Morale	2.58	2.69	+ .11	
Opportunities/Input	2.58	1.80	- .78	* -
Growth	2.58	2.62	+ .04	
Cohesiveness	2.58	2.50	- .08	
Renewal	2.58	2.60	+ .02	
Caring	2.58	2.85	+ .27	* +

* Indicates climate categories with most negative and most positive differences between teacher means and over climate means for "what is".

CLIMATE CATEGORY	OVERALL MEAN IDEAL	MEAN FOR TEACHERS IDEAL	DIFFERENCE IN MEANS	
Respect	3.75	3.76	+ .01	
Trust	3.75	3.76	+ .01	
Morale	3.75	3.89	+ .14	* +
Opportunities/Input	3.75	3.62	- .13	* -
Growth	3.75	3.70	- .05	
Cohesiveness	3.75	3.78	+ .03	
Renewal	3.75	3.73	- .02	
Caring	3.75	3.77	+ .02	

* Indicates climate categories with most negative and most positive differences between teacher means and overall climate means for "what should be".

TABLE V

Comparison of Real and Ideal Mean Scores for
Selected Sample Groups in Eight School
Climate Categories

CLIMATE CATEGORY	TEACHERS		STUDENTS		PARENTS	
	REAL	IDEAL	REAL	IDEAL	REAL	IDEAL
Respect	2.99	3.76	2.91	3.62	3.06	3.89
Trust	2.60	3.76	2.58	3.65	2.86	3.83
Morale	2.69	3.89	2.69	3.66	3.06	3.87
Opportunities/Input	1.80	3.62	2.38	3.54	2.60	3.84
Growth	2.62	3.70	2.72	3.63	3.00	3.84
Cohesiveness	2.50	3.78	2.80	3.58	2.93	3.89
Renewal	2.60	3.73	2.86	3.71	2.97	3.88
Caring	2.85	3.77	2.81	3.76	3.00	3.89

TABLE VI

Differences in Mean Scores for Total Climate and for
Each Climate Factor for Respondent Groups

CLIMATE FACTOR	TEACHERS		STUDENTS		PARENTS	
	REAL	IDEAL	REAL	IDEAL	REAL	IDEAL
Total	2.58	3.75	2.72	3.64	2.94	3.87
Respect	+ .41*	- .01	+ .19	- .02	+ .12*	+ .02
Trust	+ .02	+ .01	- .14	+ .01	- .08	- .04
Morale	+ .11	+ .14	- .03	+ .02	+ .12*	.00
Opportunities/Input	- .78**	- .13	- .34**	- .10	- .34**	- .03
Growth	+ .04	- .05	.00	- .01	+ .06	- .03
Cohesiveness	- .08	+ .03	+ .08	- .06	- .01	+ .02
Renewal	+ .02	- .02	+ .14	+ .07	+ .03	+ .01
Caring	+ .27	+ .02	+ .09	+ .12	+ .06	+ .02

* - Largest positive difference in Real Means

** - Largest negative difference in Real Means

TABLE VII

Difference in Means on Climate Factors for Parents by Sex
and Educational Attainment

CLIMATE FACTOR	MEAN SCORES		Difference in Means - Female To Male	Level of Educational Attainment
	Female	Male		
RESPECT	2.65	3.00	+ .35	K-8
	2.94	2.77	- .17	9-12
	2.97	3.30	+ .33	2 Yrs. College
	3.29	3.52	+ .23	B. S. +
	2.96	3.15	+ .19	All Levels Combined
TRUST	2.70	2.40	- .30	K-8
	2.85	2.81	- .04	9-12
	3.01	3.12	+ .11	2 Yrs. College
	2.87	3.08	+ .21	B. S. +
	2.86	2.85	- .01	All Levels Combined
MORALE	2.68	3.03	+ .35	K-8
	3.05	2.98	- .07	9-12
	3.11	3.13	+ .02	2 Yrs. College
	3.18	3.25	+ .07	B. S. +
	3.01	3.10	+ .09	All Levels Combined
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT	2.08	2.57	+ .49	K-8
	2.45	2.54	+ .09	9-12
	2.88	2.81	- .07	2 Yrs. College
	2.65	2.75	+ .10	B. S. +
	2.52	2.67	+ .15	All Levels Combined

TABLE VII
(Continued)

CLIMATE FACTOR	MEAN SCORES		Difference in Means - Female To Male	Level of Educational Attainment
	Female	Male		
GROWTH	2.88	2.60	- .28	K-8
	3.09	3.01	- .08	9-12
	3.25	3.03	- .22	2 Yrs. College
	3.15	3.00	- .15	B. S. +
	3.09	2.91	- .18	All Levels Combined
COHESIVENESS	2.95	2.60	- .35	K-8
	2.96	3.05	+ .09	9-12
	2.99	3.21	+ .22	2 Yrs. College
	3.38	2.28	- 1.10	B. S. +
	3.07	2.79	- .28	All Levels Combined
RENEWAL	2.90	2.27	- .63	K-8
	3.07	3.09	+ .02	9-12
	3.12	3.26	+ .14	2 Yrs. College
	3.24	2.78	- .46	B. S. +
	3.08	2.85	- .23	All Levels Combined
CARING	2.85	2.80	- .05	K-8
	2.99	3.09	+ .10	9-12
	2.79	3.28	+ .49	2 Yrs. College
	3.05	3.10	+ .05	B. S. +
	2.92	3.07	+ .15	All Levels Combined

Mean Scores on Climate Factors by Grade Level and
Sex Indicating Progression

CLIMATE FACTOR	MEANS - FEMALE STUDENTS 7-9				
	7th	+ or - Factor	8th	+ or - Factor	9th
Respect	2.88	+	2.97	-	2.85
Trust	2.33	+	2.78	-	2.39
Morale	2.76	+	2.81	-	2.45
Opportunities/ Input	2.15	+	2.60	-	2.31
Growth	2.63	+	2.87	-	2.64
Cohesiveness	2.98	-	2.86	-	2.62
Renewal	2.83	+	3.08	-	2.60
Caring	2.60	+	3.03	-	2.86
	MEANS - MALE STUDENTS 7-9				
	7th	+ or - Factor	8th	+ or - Factor	9th
Respect	3.15	-	2.96	-	2.64
Trust	2.97	-	2.71	-	2.26
Morale	3.01	-	2.78	-	2.29
Opportunities/ Input	2.79	-	2.45	-	1.95
Growth	3.01	-	2.82	-	2.31
Cohesiveness	3.01	-	2.86	-	2.46
Renewal	3.16	-	3.01	-	2.47
Caring	3.04	-	2.91	-	2.42

TABLE IX

Mean Scores on Climate Factors for Students by
Grade Level Indicating Progression and
Differences

CLIMATE FACTOR	7th Means	+ or - Factor	8th Means	+ or - Factor	9th Means	Difference In Highest to Lowest M
Respect	3.02	-	2.97	-	2.75	- .27
Trust	2.65	+	2.75	-	2.33	- .32
Morale	2.89	-	2.80	-	2.37	- .52
Opportunities for Input	2.47	+	2.53	-	2.13	- .34
Growth	2.82	+	2.85	-	2.48	- .34
Cohesiveness	3.00	-	2.86	-	2.54	- .46
Renewal	3.00	+	3.05	-	2.54	- .46
Caring	2.82	-	2.97	-	2.64	- .18

TABLE X

Student Mean Scores on Climate Factors Indicating Sex and Grade Difference

CLIMATE FACTOR	7th GRADE			8th GRADE			9th GRADE		
	Female	+ or - Factor	Male	Female	+ or - Factor	Male	Female	+ or - Factor	Male
Respect	2.88	+	3.15	2.97	-	2.96	2.85	-	2.64
Trust	2.33	+	2.97	2.78	-	2.71	2.39	-	2.26
Morale	2.76	+	3.01	2.81	-	2.78	2.45	-	2.29
Opportunities for Input	2.15	+	2.79	2.60	-	2.45	2.31	-	1.95
Growth	2.63	+	3.01	2.87	-	2.82	2.64	-	2.31
Cohesiveness	2.98	+	3.01	2.86	N	2.86	2.62	-	2.46
Renewal	2.83	+	3.16	3.08	-	3.01	2.60	-	2.47
Caring	2.60	+	3.04	3.03	-	2.91	2.86	-	2.42

Appendix B

Letter of Transmittal

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: Parents, Students, Teachers & Administration
FROM: J. Gary Stewart, Survey Administrator
RE: School Climate at Fort Campbell Jr. High School

Dear Respondents:

The following is a survey intended to accomplish several things. The first and most important thing it will attempt to accomplish is to provide an accurate assessment of the School Climate at Fort Campbell Junior High School. This will be done by using feedback from the people who are most closely associated with the school, the administration, teachers, students and the parents. In addition to finding out what the climate actually is, it will also provide data that can be used in determining what should be done to improve the school. The third purpose for this study is to assist the administrator of this study in completing a field study requirement for the degree of Ed.S. at Austin Peay State University.

All the information requested is essential to insure an accurate analysis of the school climate. I would, therefore, ask that all questions be answered with the utmost honesty and candor.

Thank you for assisting me in completing my degree and for helping provide data to accurately determine what the climate at your school really is.

Appendix C

Demographic Data Sheet

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

Please answer the following questions for use in this survey. Names are not needed and all information will be handled with extreme care and confidentiality should names be given.

Check the appropriate blank for each question below:

1. I am a/an: ☐ Administrator ☐ Student
 ☐ Teacher ☐ Parent

If student is checked, please indicate the grade level by checking the appropriate box:

☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th

2. ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Highest level of education received:

☐ Elementary (K-8)

☐ High School (9-12)

☐ College (2 yrs.)

☐ College (BS or BA Degree)

☐ Masters ☐ Post Masters Work

Appendix D

The CFK LTD. School Climate Profile

THE CFK LTD. SCHOOL CLIMATE PROFILE

(This instrument is part of an extensive description and analysis of the school's climate and should be used in association with School Climate Improvement: A Challenge for the School Administrator.)

I AM A:

<u> </u> Student	<u> </u> Female
<u> </u> Teacher	<u> </u> Male
<u> </u> Parent	
<u> </u> Secretary, custodian, or other staff member	
<u> </u> Administrator in this School	
<u> </u> Superintendent or central administrator	

PART A: GENERAL CLIMATE FACTORS

WHAT IS: (1) Almost Never
(2) Occasionally
(3) Frequently
(4) Almost Always

WHAT SHOULD BE:

(1) Almost Never
(2) Occasionally
(3) Frequently
(4) Almost Always

In the column marked (A) write ONE of the NUMBERS from What Is.
In the column marked (B) write ONE of the NUMBERS from What Should Be.

RESPECT:

A	B	
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	1. In this school even low achieving students are respected.
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	2. Teachers treat students as persons.
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	3. Parents are considered by this school as important collaborators.
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4. Teachers from one subject area or grade level respect those from other subject areas.
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	5. Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers.

TRUST:

<u> </u>	<u> </u>	1. Students feel that teachers are "on their side".
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	2. While we don't always agree, we can share our concerns with each other openly.

WHAT IS:

- (1) Almost Never
- (2) Occasionally
- (3) Frequently
- (4) Almost Always

WHAT SHOULD BE:

- (1) Almost Never
- (2) Occasionally
- (3) Frequently
- (4) Almost Always

A B

- ___ 3. Our principal is a good spokesman before the superintendent and the board for our interests and needs.
- ___ 4. Students can count on teachers to listen to their side of the story and to be fair.
- ___ 5. Teachers trust students to use good judgement.

HIGH MORALE:

- ___ 1. This school makes students enthusiastic about learning.
- ___ 2. Teachers feel pride in this school and in its students.
- ___ 3. Attendance is good; students stay away only for urgent and good reasons.
- ___ 4. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school's program if it were challenged.
- ___ 5. I like working in this school.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INPUT:

- ___ 1. I feel that my ideas are listened to and used in this school.
- ___ 2. When important decisions are made about the programs in this school, I personally, have heard about the plan beforehand and have been involved in some of the discussions.
- ___ 3. Important decisions are made in this school by a governing council with representation from students, faculty, and administration.
- ___ 4. While I obviously can't have a vote on every decision that is made in this school that affects me, I do feel that I can have some important input into that decision.
- ___ 5. When all is said and done, I feel that I count in this school.

WHAT IS:

- (1) Almost Never
- (2) Occasionally
- (3) Frequently
- (4) Almost Always

WHAT SHOULD BE:

- (1) Almost Never
- (2) Occasionally
- (3) Frequently
- (4) Almost Always

CONTINUOUS ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL GROWTH:

A B

- ___ 1. The teachers are "alive", they are interested in life around them; they are doing interesting things outside the school.
- ___ 2. Teachers in this school are "out in front", seeking better ways of teaching and learning.
- ___ 3. Students feel that the school program is meaningful and relevant to their present and future needs.
- ___ 4. The principal is growing and learning, too. He or she is seeking new ideas.
- ___ 5. The school supports parent growth. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in learning activities and in examining new ideas.

COHESIVENESS:

- ___ 1. Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another.
- ___ 2. There is a "we" spirit in this school.
- ___ 3. Administration and teachers collaborate toward making the school run effectively, there is little administrator - teacher tension.
- ___ 4. Differences between individuals and groups (both among faculty and students) are considered to contribute to the richness of the school; not as divisive influences.
- ___ 5. New students and faculty members are made to feel welcome and part of the group.

SCHOOL RENEWAL:

- ___ 1. When a problem comes up, this school has procedures for working on it; problems are seen as normal challenges; not as "rocking the boat".
- ___ 2. Teachers are encouraged to innovate in their classroom rather than to conform.

WHAT IS:

- (1) Almost Never
- (2) Occasionally
- (3) Frequently
- (4) Almost Always

A B

- ___ ___ 3. When a student comes along who has special problems, this school works out a plan that helps that student.
- ___ ___ 4. Students are encouraged to be creative rather than to conform.
- ___ ___ 5. Careful effort is made, when new programs are introduced, to adapt them to the particular needs of this community and this school.

CARING:

- ___ ___ 1. There is someone in this school that I can always count on.
- ___ ___ 2. The principal really cares about students.
- ___ ___ 3. I think people in this school care about me as a person; are concerned about more than just how well I perform my role at school (as student, teacher, parent, etc.)
- ___ ___ 4. School is a nice place to be because I feel wanted and needed there.
- ___ ___ 5. Most people at this school are kind.

Appendix E

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Sources for Research
(Books, Periodicals, Dissertation Abstracts)

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