

The Relationship Between Class Environment and Psychological Suzhi of Minority Middle School Students in Yunnan

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Abstract

In this study, 1307 minority middle school students in Yunnan are surveyed. This study uses survey questionnaires to observe the relationship between classroom environment and psychological suzhi of minority middle school students. The results show that: (a) the psychological suzhi of the Bai middle school students in terms of cognitive qualities, adaptability and psychological suzhi overall score is significantly better than the Yi and Hui students; (b) there is a significant positive correlation between the factors of teacher-student relationship, order and discipline, competition, the relationship between students in the class environment and minority students' psychological suzhi; there is a significant negative correlation between the factors of the burden of learning in the class environment and the psychological suzhi of minority middle school students; (c) the factors of the teacher-student relationship, competition and the relationship between students in class environment have a significant positive prediction function on the psychological suzhi of minority middle school students.

Key words: Psychological suzhi; Class environment; Minority middle school students; Regression analysis

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1. PROPOSE THE ISSUE

Psychological Suzhi is a localized concept put forward under the background of quality education in China.

It refers to the ability which is based on physiological conditions and can internalize the acquired external stimuli into stable, basic, implicit psychological characters, including three dimensions: recognition characters, personality traits and adaptive characters (Su & Zhang, 2015). Psychological Suzhi training, as the core of Chinese quality education, plays an important role in the maintenance and promotion of students' mental health, the development of students' potential and the improvement of students' adaptability (Zhang, 2012). Currently, the related research on the psychological suzhi of middle school students is mainly on the analysis and discussion of the functional value and mechanism of psychological suzhi (Liu & Lei, 2015), and there is rare empirical research about the influencing factors of the psychological suzhi of middle school students. The researchers believe that to clarify the formation mechanism of the psychological suzhi is the key issue which must be solved to research psychological suzhi training, and the domestic psychological circles lack systematic research on this issue (Zhang, Li, & Gong, 2013). In addition, the domestic psychological suzhi research of middle school students is more likely to have the mainland Han middle school students as the research objects (Wang & Qin, 2014), which also restricts the explanatory power of the psychological suzhi research findings in a cross-cultural context. Yunnan Province, located in China's southwest border, is a multi-ethnic frontier province and the population of ethnic minorities accounts for 33.37% of the province's total population (Yang & Te, 2012). Therefore, the survey of the development situation and influencing factors of the psychological suzhi of Yunnan minority middle school students is of great significance to enhance the effect of psychological suzhi education of middle school students in Yunnan Province.

Under the existing school system in China (and other East Asian countries and regions), class is the basic structural unit of the school, also the most important

development environment outside their family for students (Jiang, 2004). The so-called class atmosphere refers to the degree of harmony and stability of the class, which shows different levels of differences in positive interaction and frequent conflict (Gazelle, 2006). It is the perception of students of the whole class social and psychological atmosphere formed through the internal social interaction of a class (Qu, Zou, & Wang, 2004). Currently, the studies of class environment and student development in China are more concentrated on exploring the relationship between class environment and students' academic achievement and academic attitudes (Sang & Huang, 2007). Few studies pay attention to the influence of class environment on students' psychological suzhi. Studies have shown that, class environment, as an important microsystem for children development, affects not only the acquisition of knowledge and skills for children and adolescents, but also the training of their will and quality as well as the shaping of their personality and behavior (Li, Zong, & Liu, 2013). Studies have found that a good class atmosphere, on the one hand, may reduce the possibility of externalizing behavior problems of adolescent (Thomas, Bierman, & Powers, 2011), increase the overall performance of adolescents in school adaptation and social adaptation (Tan & Chen, 2007); on the other hand, it also helps shape and cultivate the creativity of middle school students (Huang, 2015).

Based on the above analysis, this paper intends to investigate the current development situation of Yunnan minority middle school students' psychological suzhi, and take class environment as an independent variable to investigate the psychological mechanism of its effect on minority middle school students' psychological suzhi.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Objects

In the study, 1375 survey questionnaires were distributed and 1307 valid questionnaires were collected. The effective collection rate is 95.05%. Their ages range between 10-19 (15.18 ± 1.83) years old, of which 701 were boys and 606 were girls; 501 were Junior 1 students; 416 were Junior 2 students; 390 were Junior 3 students. 590 were Bai middle school students; 412 were Yi middle school students; 305 were Hui middle school students.

2.2 Research Tool

2.2.1 The Questionnaire on Middle School Students' Psychological Suzhi

Zhang, Liang, and Su (2015) have prepared the questionnaire. The questionnaire includes three dimensions: Cognitive characters, personality traits and adaptability characters with a total of 34 questions, using 5 scale scoring system from "very inconsistent" to "very consistent", where questions 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 23

and 29 use reverse score, with higher scores indicating better psychological qualities. In this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the overall score of the middle school students' psychological suzhi questionnaire and the three dimensions of cognition, personality and adaptability is between 0.88-0.80. The construct validity of scales is observed through the degree of correlation between dimensions and between dimensions and the overall score. The results show that the correlation between the three dimensions is between 0.42 and 0.53. The correlation between the three dimensions and the overall score is between 0.76 and 0.83, indicating that the dimensions are consistent with the overall concept, whilst maintaining a relative independence.

2.2.2 The Questionnaire on My Class

Jiang (2004) has prepared the questionnaire. The questionnaire has a total of 38 projects, constituted by five subscales, respectively measuring five dimensions of class environment: teacher-student relationship, the relationship between students, orderly discipline, competition and learning burden. The questionnaire uses five-scale scoring, from "completely inconsistent" to "completely consistent", recording 1-5 points accordingly. Wherein questions 3, 5, 7, 8, 13 and 22 use reverse score. Higher scores indicate better class environment. In this study, the internal consistency coefficient among the class environment overall score and the relationship between teachers and students, the relationship between students, orderly discipline, competition and the burden of learning is 0.92-0.98.

2.3 The Survey Procedures

The study uses stratified random sampling principle, sampling in the rural secondary schools in Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan and the surveying way is a group survey. The experimenters are well trained psychology teachers or graduate students. They all use the same guidance language. The surveyed were asked to read the guidance language, and then fill out a questionnaire as required. The administered test time was about 35 minutes. All questionnaires were recovered on the spot.

2.4 Statistical Analysis

We use SPSS16.0 to statistically process and analyze the data, mainly including the single-factor analysis of variance, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis.

3. RESULTS

3.1 The Present Development Situation of Psychological Suzhi of Minority Middle School Students in Yunnan

Through the overall score and factor score ANOVA of the tested three minority middle school students' psychological suzhi, the results show that there are

significant ethnic differences in the cognitive character dimension, the adaptability character dimension and the psychological suzhi overall score. Please see the detailed

result in Table 1. The further LSD test finds that the scores Bai students in all three aspects are significantly higher than that of the Yi and Hui students.

Table 1
Comparison of Difference Scores of the Psychological Suzhi of Different Ethnic Minorities Middle School Students in Yunnan($\bar{x}\pm S$)

	Sample	Cognitive characters	Personality traits	Adaptability characters	Psychological suzhi overall score
Bai	590	39.46±8.58	37.08±7.27	38.13±6.79	114.67±16.42
Yi	412	36.98±8.34	37.81±6.44	35.94±6.78	112.66±15.39
Hui	305	37.71±8.42	37.64±7.07	36.17±6.60	112.76±15.43
	F	4.081	1.492	3.876	4.327
	P	0.001	1.001	0.001	0.001

3.2 Correlation Analysis of Yunnan Minority Middle School Students' Psychological Suzhi and Their Class Environment

The correlation analysis of the Yunnan Minority middle school students' class environment and their psychological suzhi overall score shows that the factors of teacher-student relationship, orderly discipline, competition, and

the relationship between students in minority middle school students' classroom environment and their psychological suzhi are in significant positive correlation and the learning burden factor in class environment and minority middle school students' psychological suzhi are in significant negative correlation. For more details, please refer to Table 2.

Table 2
The Correlation Between the Psychological Suzhi of Different Ethnic Minorities Middle School Students in Yunnan and Their Class Environment (*R*)

	Teacher-student relationship	Orderly discipline	Competition	Learning burden	The relationship between students	Overall score of class environment
Psychological Suzhi	.314***	.268***	.288***	-.073**	.389***	.416***

Note. ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, the same below.

3.3 Regression Analysis of Class Environment on Yunnan Minority Middle School Students' Psychological Suzhi

Taking Yunnan minority middle school students' psychological suzhi total score as the dependent variable, with the five factors in classes environment as independent variables and taking $\alpha = 0.05$, we conduct gradual multiple regression analysis and find

that the three factors in class environment: relationship between teacher and student, competition and the relationship between students, are all included in the regression equation in the prediction of minority middle school students' psychological suzhi. They together explain the variance of 62.60% of the psychological suzhi overall score. For more details, please refer to Table 3.

Table 3
Regression Analysis of Class Environment Factors and Minority Middle School Students' Psychological Suzhi

Dependent variable	Predictor variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	β	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Psychological suzhi	Relationship between teacher and student	0.616	0.612	0.607	0.368	7.413	0.000
	Competition	0.622	0.625	0.615	0.266	5.457	0.000
	The relationship between students	0.628	0.626	0.624	0.253	5.361	0.000

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The Present Development Situation of Psychological Suzhi of Minority Middle School Students in Yunnan

This study shows that there are significant ethnic differences in the cognitive dimension, adaptability

dimension and the overall score psychological suzhi in the psychological suzhi of surveyed Yunnan minority middle school students, and Bai students' scores in these three areas are significantly higher than Yi and Hui students. Analyzing the main reasons, that is because the Dali Bai people have always emphasized cultural and educational traditions, and the education level of Bai

parents is higher than the other local minorities (Dong & Li, 2014). Compared with other local parents of minority students, parents of Bai students are better at guiding children from different angles to understand life and learning environment and the parents of Bai student put emphasis on education which is reflected in the stringent requirements on the learning objectives and learning outcomes for their children (Li, 2011), which makes the Bai ethnic students, compared with other local students, on the one hand, can be more objective understanding the surrounding environment to live and study, and to the various problems or difficulties encountered in their own have more a comprehensive understanding and assessment. On the other hand, Bai students can clear learning objectives and devote more time and effort to respond to the requirements of the school, which also allows them to better adapt to the school learning and life, and Bai students in their daily life and learning are more self-disciplined with more persistent will. This also makes it easy to understand why Bai middle school students' overall performance of their psychological suzhi is better than that of Yi and Hui middle school students.

4.2 Discussion on the Relationship Between Class Environment and Psychological Suzhi of Yunnan Minority Middle School Students

Correlation analysis of this study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the factors of classroom environment: teacher-student relationship, order and discipline, competition and the relationship between students and the psychological suzhi of Yunnan minority middle school students and there is significant negative correlation between the burden of learning factor in class environmental and the psychological suzhi of Yunnan minority middle school students. Previous studies have shown that good teacher-student relationship, the relationship between students and classroom discipline and order can help the formation positive psychological suzhi for middle school students (Lu, Wang, & Liu 2014). Another study has found that the strong class atmosphere of competition is likely to arouse the intrinsic motivation of middle school students, so that they are more motivated to pursue and more likely to get positive social adjustment (Jin & Zou, 2012). In addition, studies show that China's current primary and secondary school students have problems of heavy learning burden and overburdened learning pressure (Yang & Tao, 2013). Studies have pointed out that the heavy burden of learning not only affects the health of primary and secondary students, and would seriously damage students' mental health (Wan & Zhang, 2010). The study also shows that heavy burden of learning is not conducive to the formation and training of the psychological suzhi of minority middle school students.

Regression analysis of this study has found that the relationship between teachers and students, competition

and the relationship between students in the classroom environment have significant positive prediction effects on Yunnan minority middle school students' psychological suzhi. It also suggests that, to create a good classroom environment has important practical significance to promote the development of minority students' psychological suzhi. In the daily class environmental management and maintenance process, we should pay special attention to the important role of the good relationship between teachers and students and the relationship between students in the psychological suzhi of minority middle school students. Studies have shown that, if the teacher is supportive and the relationship between teachers and students is positive, this environment will help improve students' mental health and academic achievements (Jiang & Lin, 2005). Some researchers have pointed out that, class is the main carrier for teenagers in junior high school to form mutual friendship and exchange activities (Lei, Liu, & Guo 2012), and studies confirm that if teenagers get more support from students in the classroom, that will help them form a positive academic self (Zhao, 2011). The study also suggests that creating an appropriate competitive atmosphere in class environmental management contributes to enhancing the students' psychological suzhi. The survey sampled three ethnic groups in Yunnan. These native peoples in multi-ethnic culture emphasize harmony where there is little competition or conflict (You, 1994). This ethnic cultural characteristic might also virtually penetrate into the daily life of minority middle school students and form a certain constraint to their sense of competition and self-motivation. As a result, in the daily management and maintenance of minority middle school classroom environment, it is necessary to guide and improve students' sense of competition, which is conducive to promote the formation and development of minority middle school students' good mental qualities.

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