

Perception of the Faculty about the Importance of the Dimensions of Organizational Climate of Selected State Agricultural Universities

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in four state agricultural universities of India viz. PAU Punjab (North); ANGRAU, Andhra Pradesh (South); AAU, Assam (East) and MPAU, Rajasthan (West) to study the variations in perceptions of the faculty and administrators regarding the importance of dimension of organizational climate along with their perception of prevailing and expected organizational climate. The data collected from the 216 faculty members using a scale developed on 13 dimensions viz. communication, management of rewards, interpersonal relationships, control and supervision, orientation, decision making, leadership, policies and rules, innovation, physical facilities, team work, monetary gains and accountability/ evaluation revealed that communication followed by leadership, team work and physical facilities were the most important dimensions according to the faculty who ranked monetary gains, accountability/ evaluation, management of rewards and control and supervision as least important.

Keywords: Perception, Importance, Organisational climate dimensions, Faculty and state agricultural university

INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies on organizational climate of both private and public sectors have shown that behaviour of the employees is governed by their perception of the organizational climate. In the last twenty years, organizational climate has been analyzed from many points of view. Likert (1967) proposed six dimensions of organizational climate whereas Litwin and Stringer (1968) proposed seven dimensions and Pareek *at al.* (1981) proposed twelve processes of organizational climate. Various studies using these dimensions have been conducted. Jhamtani and Singh (1987) used twelve and Iqbal (1999) used nine whereas Kaur (2004) analyzed the organizational climate on five dimensions. SAU's have a system of functioning which is unique due to radiations in role and responsibilities. The faculty moves beyond playing a singular role of a teacher, a scientist or an extension worker. This uniqueness calls for an in-depth

analysis of the organizational climate of these institutions as perceived by the faculty and the administrators. Such analysis may enable SAU's which have been structured and other beside the ICAR system as a whole to identify the critical dimensions of organizational climate and bridge gap between the existing and expected organizational climate to improve working environment and productivity. In this context, the present study has been designed to analyze the organizational climate in totality, firstly by analyzing the importance of the dimensions in determining the organizational climate using thirteen identified dimensions and further by capturing the gap in the existing and expected organizational climate of four SAU's representing north, south, east and west zone of the country. Keeping the above in sharp focus, the present paper has been designed with the objective to study the perception of the faculty of selected SAU's regarding the importance of the identified dimensions of organizational climate.

METHODOLOGY

The widely adaptable descriptive research survey design was used in the present study. The study was conducted in four State Agricultural Universities from Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western zone of India viz. PAU Punjab (North); ANGRAU, Andhra Pradesh (South); AAU, Assam (East) and MPAU, Rajasthan (West). Sample of 54 faculty members representing variations in hierarchy and equal allocation to teaching, research and extension of each university were selected. Hence a total of 216 faculty members were selected as the total sample for the study. Perception of organizational climate was considered as dependent variable. Organizational climate scale was developed using Likert technique for measuring the prevailing and expected organizational climate. It comprised of 13 dimensions viz. communication, management of rewards, interpersonal relationships, control and supervision, orientation, decision making, leadership, policies and rules, innovation, physical facilities, teamwork, monetary gains and accountability/evaluation. Socio-personal characteristics were selected as independent variable. An interview schedule consisting of two parts and a questionnaire consisting of two parts

was developed for collection of data. Each respondent was contacted personally to explain the objectives of the study and record the profile and the ranking of the selected dimensions according to their importance in organizational climate. Responses were coded, tabulated and analyzed. Statistical techniques used for analyzed the data were frequency, percentage, mean score, Kendall's coefficient of concordance for ranks (W) and Kruskal-Wallis test. The findings emerged out of the data were suitably interpreted and conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 shows the ranking of different dimensions of the organizational climate. The ranking was based upon the importance given to selected dimensions of the organizational climate by the faculty of the four SAU's. To study the agreement in ranking by faculty of different SAU's, Kendall's coefficient of concordance for ranks (W) was worked out using the scores calculated based upon the ranks given. Data reveals that among the dimensions of organizational climate the faculty perceived communication as the most important dimension which affected the organizational climate. It was followed by

Table 1: Variation in the importance assigned to the dimensions of organizational climate by faculty of different SAU's

Dimensions of organizational climate	AAA		ANGRAU		PAU		MPAU		Total (N=216)	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Communication	3.67	1	2.59	1	4.39	2	3.85	1	3.63	1
Management of rewards	9.89	13	7.54	11	7.56	11	7.06	8	8.01	11
Interpersonal relationship	7.57	9	5.57	7	6.50	8	7.43	11	6.77	9
Control and supervision	8.83	12	7.24	10	7.11	10	7.41	10	7.65	10
Orientation	3.69	2	4.83	4	7.04	9	7.31	9	5.72	6
Decision making	4.85	3	5.20	6	5.13	4	5.43	3	5.15	5
Leadership	5.24	5	4.70	3	3.81	1	4.63	2	4.60	2
Policies and rules	6.67	7	6.56	9	6.11	7	5.96	7	6.32	8
Innovation	6.68	8	5.63	8	5.96	5	5.91	6	6.04	7
Physical facilities	5.50	6	4.91	5	6.02	6	5.56	4	5.50	4
Teamwork	4.91	4	4.69	2	5.04	3	5.89	5	5.13	3
Monetary gains	7.72	10	7.72	13	10.98	13	9.70	13	9.03	13
Accountability/ Evaluation	8.54	11	7.56	12	9.63	12	8.76	12	8.62	12
Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W)	0.860									
chi-square	30.95**									

**Significant at 1% level of significance.

leadership, teamwork and physical facilities. The lowest ranked dimensions were monetary gains, accountability/evaluation, management of rewards and control and supervision. The university wise data shows that communication was the most important dimension except in case of PAU faculty who ranked leadership as the most important followed by communication. However statistically, agreement existed between the ranking given to all the dimensions. The faculty of AAU assigned lesser importance to leadership (Rank 5) as compared to the other universities. Teamwork, which was ranked third in overall organizational climate, was perceived as less important (Rank 5) by faculty of MPAU. The exception in case of decision making was also observed. Faculty of AAU, MPAU and PAU perceived it to be more important than faculty of ANGRAU (Ranked 6). Jhamtani and Singh (1987) also reported the importance of team as a determinant of desirable organizational climate. Faculty assigned least importance to the dimension of accountability/evaluation and monetary gains (Rank 13). Views were similar in all universities except AAU (Rank 11), where faculty found management of rewards as least important. In overall organizational climate, management of rewards occupied 11th rank and same was in case of ANGRAU and PAU whereas faculty of AAU found it to be least important. Faculty of MPAU found it to be more important (Rank 8). Rewards were also given importance in determining the organizational climate by Richard *et al.* (2004).

Faculty of ANGRAU, PAU and MPAU were in agreement in ranking the dimension of control and supervision (Rank 10) but AAU faculty perceived it as less important (Rank 12). Similar was the case of interpersonal relationship as lesser importance to this dimension was given by the faculty members of MPAU. Variation in importance assigned to dimension of 'orientation' was also observed. PAU and MPAU (Rank 9) were in agreement whereas AAU (Rank 2) and ANGRAU (Rank 4) assigned much higher importance to it. Similarly leadership was most important to the faculty of PAU (Rank 1) followed by that of MPAU (Rank 2) but AAU faculty ranked it as 5th most important determinant of organizational climate. ANGRAU faculty assigned lesser importance to policies and rules (Rank

9) as compared to all the other three universities (Rank 7) in which faculty was in complete agreement. Innovation was also perceived as more important dimension by faculty of PAU (Rank 5) than AAU and ANGRAU (Rank 8). However, variation was less between PAU and MPAU faculty (Rank 6). Teamwork was ranked second most important dimension by ANGRAU but was ranked 5 by MPAU. PAU faculty placed it at rank 3 and AAU at rank 4. Degree of trust and morale were also found to be important to organizational climate by Richard (2004). Teamwork has become an important part of the working culture and many organizations now look at teamwork skills when evaluating a person for employment. Most organization realizes that teamwork is important because complex work requires a team with multiple skills for provide better results.

The data therefore reveals that disagreement and agreement existed in perception of the faculty across SAU's regarding the importance of these dimensions. Further, the Kendall coefficient (w) revealed that statistically the faculty across the four selected universities were in agreement in ranking of dimensions. It may be due to the fact that similar people likely to have similar ways of viewing their surroundings, which leads to greater consensus regarding perceptions on importance of dimensions in organizational climate. Hence, it can be concluded that with minor variations, agreement existed among the faculty pointing towards the importance of communication and leadership and least importance of monetary gains. It may be due to the fact that organizational climate is based on employee's perceptions and when these perceptions are shared by members of a specific unit or department it results in employees behaving in similar ways (Schalt *et al.*, 2006). The data shows that dimension of 'communication' was perceived as the most important to organizational climate. Information flow from administration to the faculty, vice versa and in between faculty at all levels is especially important for a conducive organizational climate and achievement of results as proved by many past studies. Open communication is necessary to facilitate goal accomplishment. Jones and James (1977) also ranked communication as the number one dimension of

organizational climate. According to Reddy (2002) informal and friendly communication among peer groups widen the communicative openness among the university scientists. Leadership was perceived as important dimension (Rank 2) in an organizational climate. It may be due the understanding the faculty that the success of an organization depends upon the leadership capabilities of the authority and leader. Leaders also have a powerful influence on the expectations and behaviours of employees in the organization. Richard *et al.* (2004) pointed out that the success of an organization is also determined by the credibility of the leader. Woodman and King (1978) also identified leadership as a vital dimension of organizational climate.

CONCLUSION

From the data it can be concluded that among the dimensions of organizational climate the faculty perceived communication as the most important dimension which affected the organizational climate. It was followed by leadership, teamwork and physical facilities. The lowest ranked dimensions were monetary gains, accountability/evaluation, management of rewards and control and supervision. There was university wise variation in assigned importance to different dimensions of organisational climate, such as the faculty of AAU assigned lesser importance to leadership as compared to the other universities. The university wise data shows that communication was the most important dimension except in case of PAU faculty who ranked leadership as the most important followed by communication. However statistically, agreement existed between the ranking given to all the dimensions of organisational climate.

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