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Research Article

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND CLIMATE IN UNIVERSITY OF HORTICULTURE AND FORESTRY, NAUNI (SOLAN) HP

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ABSTRACT

The culture and working climate has a significant impact on the performance of its employees. The study conducted on a random sample of 80 employees (teaching and non-teaching) of Dr. YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, Solan (HP) revealed that 50 per cent of the respondents perceived that the organizational culture as moderate and working climate as good to very good. The component "Adaptability" followed by "Mission" and "Involvement" were more dominant in the organizational culture. A majority of the employees perceived that they were treated humanities free to express their opinion/feelings and clear on how to do their task/work. There was a positive and significant correlation of respondents' job satisfaction and their commitment with organizational culture and climate indicating that the employees who were satisfied with their job had favourable perceptions towards organizational culture and working climate. The study implies that sincere efforts should be made by the authority to ensure transparency, congenial environment to promote spirit and institutional discipline without entertaining any undue favouritism /political interference in the functioning of the University.

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INTRODUCTION

The organizational culture and climate have a significant impact on the performance of its employees. Every organization has its own cultural norms which constitute the expected, supported and accepted ways of behaving. Becker (1982) has rightly stated that organizational culture refers to a system of shared meaning held by an employee about his organization and which distinguishes one organization from the other. These norms may be in written or unwritten forms and familiarize the employees about them. Every employee at the time of joining/entering makes a psychological contract with his organization/institution in the expectations of a supportive climate to meet his economic, social and psychological needs. Dr. YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry came into existence during the year December, 1985 with its two constituent Colleges viz. College of Horticulture and College of Forestry. The University has made tremendous progress in the fields of teaching, research and extension during the last three decades, or so but no systematic study was conducted to know the type of culture and working climate existing in the university and the extent to which the employees were committed to this organization. Keeping this in view, the

present study was undertaken with the following specific objectives:-

1. To study the employees' perception on organizational culture in Dr. Y. S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, (Solan).
2. To find out employees' perception on organizational climate of the organization under study.
3. To provide the suggestive measures for further improvement of the organizational culture and organizational climate in the University.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at Dr. YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, (Solan) Himachal Pradesh. A list of all the employees working in the university was obtained from the Registrar's office. The employees were classified into two categories namely, Teaching and Non-teaching. A random sample of 40 was taken from each category to make the total sample size of 80 respondents. The data were collected with the help of pre-tested and well-structured interview schedule which was consisted of five components namely Demographic profile, Job satisfaction, Organizational culture and Organizational

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climate, Problems and Suggestion measures. The main components and sub-components of organizational culture were identified with the help of experts and available literature. The respondents' perception on organizational climate was determined with the help of a scale consisting of 26 statements. The response was taken on the five point continuum scale viz., Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree And Strongly agree with a scoring 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The frequencies under each column were then multiplied with their respective score in order to determine the total score of the respondents. Based on the mean score and standard deviation, the respondents' perception was classified in to five categories namely, Very good, Good, Average, Poor and Very poor. The data were collected by personally interviewing the respondents and analysed by applying suitable statistical tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents' have been discussed in Table 1. It is evident from the data that a majority of respondents were male (62.50%), married (97.50%) and in the age group of 45 years and above (51.25%). A substantial percentage of them were Associate Professor/ Scientists and Professor/ Sr. Scientist (67.50%) in Teaching category and Ministerial and Technical staff (65 %) in Non-teaching category with a service experience of more than 16 years (68.75%) and were getting average salary of more than 25000/- rupees per month.

Table 1 Respondents' profile (n=80)

I		Age (years)	
	25-35	7	8.75
	35-45	32	40.00
	45 and above	41	51.25
II Gender			
	Male	50	62.50
	Female	30	37.50
III Marital Status			
	Unmarried	2	2.50
	Married	78	97.50
IV Categories Of Employees			
(A) Teaching (N = 40)			
	i) Professor/ Sr. scientist	11	27.50
	ii) Associate Professor/ Scientist	16	40.00
	iii) Assistant Professor/ Asstt. Scientist	13	32.50
(B) Designation (Non-Teaching)			
	i) Ministerial staff	14	35.00
	ii) Technical staff (Eg. lab attendant, farm manager etc.)	12	30.00
	iii) Non-technical (Store keeper, security officers etc)	14	35.00
V Service experience (years)			
	<5	3	3.75
	5 to 10	10	12.50
	10 to 15	12	15.00
	15 to 20	11	13.75
	20 to 25	27	33.75
	25 to 30	9	11.25
	30 and above	8	10.00
Vi Present Salary (Rs.)			
	<15,000/-	4	5.00
	15,000 - 25,000/-	19	23.75
	25,000 - 35,000/-	20	25.00
	35,000 - 45,000/-	20	25.00
	45,000 - 55,000/-	10	12.50
	55,000 and above	7	8.75

Existing Organizational Culture in the University of Horticulture and Forestry

Climate is the way members of an organization perceive and experience their work environment that is, a set of overt, perceptible and behavioural norms but culture may be multi-level consisting of implicit assumptions, beliefs, values and also explicit behavioural norms. Devision (1996) defined organizational culture as the deep structure of the organization which is rooted in the values, beliefs and assumptions held by the members of that organization.

After identifying the main components and sub-components of organizational culture, the strengths of organizational culture (as per the perceptions of respondents) was determined. The components and sub-components having the average mean score more than 3.5 was considered to be a 'strong' component, that having the average mean score 2.5 to 3.5 was considered 'moderate' whereas the one having average mean score less than 2.5 was considered as 'weak/poor'.

Table 2 Strength of Organizational Culture in the university (Respondents' perception)

S. No.	Aspects	Average mean score (AMS)
1.	Involvement	3.33
	a. Empowerment	3.43
	b. Team orientation	3.26
	c. Capability development	3.29
2.	Consistency	3.25
	a. Core Values	3.21
	b. Agreement	3.18
3.	Adaptability	3.47
	a. Creating Change	2.93
	b. Customer focus	3.81
4.	Mission	3.45
	a. Strategic direction and intent	2.93
	b. Goals and objectives	3.81
	c. Vision	3.61

From the average mean score of the major components viz; 'Involvement' (AMS=3.33), 'Consistency' (AMS=3.25), 'Adaptability' (AMS=3.47) and 'Mission' (AMS=3.45), it can be interpreted that the strength of these components was moderate. So far as sub-components are concerned, the Sub-components 'Customer client focus' (AMS=3.81) and 'Organizational learning' (AMS=3.69) of 'Adaptability' component were found to be strong sub-components and in case of component 'Mission', sub-components 'Goals and objectives' (AMS = 3.81) and 'Vision' (AMS = 3.61) were strong sub-components. The remaining all sub-components like 'Empowerment' (AMS=3.43), 'Team Orientation' (AMS=3.28) and 'Capability development' (AMS=3.29) of the major component 'Involvement', Core values (AMS=3.21), 'Agreement' (AMS=3.81) and 'Coordination and integration' (AMS=3.37) of component 'Consistency', 'Creating change' (AMS=2.93) of the major component 'Adaptability' and Strategic direction and intent (AMS=2.93) of the major component 'Mission' were found to display 'moderate strength'. Therefore, it is inferred from the findings that the component 'Adaptability' followed by 'Mission' were observed to be more dominant in the Organizational Culture of the university. Gordon and DiTomaso (1992) studied the relationship between cultural strength/values and

organizational performance; and found that a strong cultural value placed on adaptability were related to better performance.

Respondents’ perception on organizational climate

In the opinion of Constantin (2008) organizational climate refers to sum total of employees’ perceptions’ mainly influencing their behaviour during a certain period of time and is representative of both i.e. individuals and collective organizational culture. The respondents’ perception about Organizational Climate was studied with the help of scale consisting of 26 statements/items. The statements were based on twelve parameters like ‘Positive problem solving’, ‘Recognition and rewards’, ‘Growth and development’, ‘Innovation and change’, ‘Experimentation’, ‘Interpersonal openness and risk taking’, ‘Top Authority management commitment to HRD’, ‘Commitment to competence development’, ‘Personal policies’, ‘Positive attitude and objectivity’, ‘Developmental climate and interpersonal helpfulness’ and ‘Team-spirit’.

The respondents’ response is depicted in Table 3. It has been observed from the data that a majority of the respondents agreed that the university authority believes that human resources were extremely important resources and they have to be treated more humanly (77%), People were helpful to each other (75%), Employees were free to express their feelings and opinions with their Head/boss (69.5%), Employees had opportunities for growth in organization (57.5%), people trusted each other in this organization (53.75%), team spirit was of high order (53.75%), based on genuine training needs, the employees were sponsored for higher training needs (60%), adequate welfare facilities were provided to employees at work place (77.5%), authority planned on regular basis for career development of employees (53.75%), performance appraisal reports were based on objective and adequate basis, not on favoritism (53.75%), promotion decision were based on suitability of employee (66.25%), salaries and allowances were attractive considering their job responsibilities (77.5%), employees of different categories and different departments

Table 3 Perceived Organizational Climate

Sr. No.	STATEMENTS	RESPONSE					MEAN SCORE
		SA F%	A F%	UD F%	DA F%	SDA F%	
1	The university authority believes that human resources are extremely important resources and so they have to be treated more humanly.	15.00	62.50	11.25	8.75	2.50	3.79
2	People in this university are helpful to each other.	16.25	58.75	11.25	10.00	3.75	3.74
3	Employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their head/boss.	6.25	61.25	11.25	18.75	2.50	3.50
4	Weaknesses of employees are communicated to them in a non threatening way.	5.00	55.00	22.50	15.00	2.50	3.45
5	Employees are encouraged to take initiative and do things on their own in this university.	3.75	25.00	16.25	50.00	5.00	2.73
6	Delegation of authority to encourage juniors to develop skills in handling higher responsibility is quite common in this university.	1.25	33.75	30.00	33.75	1.25	3.00
7	Employees in this institution have many opportunities for their advancement.	3.75	53.75	10.00	25.00	7.50	3.21
8	People trust each other in this organization.	5.00	48.75	21.25	20.00	5.00	3.29
9	Employees are encouraged to experiment new methods and try out creative ideas.	5.00	53.75	18.75	18.75	3.75	3.38
10	Team spirit is of high order in this organization.	3.75	50.00	25.00	18.75	2.50	3.34
11	In this university, good work is always recognized by superiors and colleagues.	10.00	42.50	20.00	25.00	2.50	3.33
12	Employees are sponsored for higher training programmes based on their genuine training needs.	12.50	47.50	13.75	23.75	2.50	3.44
13	The university provides adequate welfare facilities to employees at the work place.	12.50	65.00	10.00	7.50	5.00	3.73
14	The university plans on a regular basis for the career development of its employees.	10.00	43.75	20.00	23.75	2.50	3.35
15	Performance appraisal reports in this organization are based on objective and adequate basis rather than favoritism.	8.75	45.00	23.75	18.75	3.75	3.36
16	Promotion decisions are based on the suitability of the promotee rather than favoritism.	12.50	53.75	15.00	16.25	2.50	3.58
17	The personnel policies in this university facilitate employee development.	3.75	57.50	22.50	15.00	1.25	3.48
18	The university authority makes sincere efforts to identify and utilize the potential of employees.	8.75	47.50	20.00	16.25	7.50	3.34
19	Salaries and allowances of employees are attractive considering their job responsibility.	15.00	62.50	10.00	8.75	3.75	3.76
20	Through regular meetings and joint forums, employees here are attractively involved in solving day to day activities.	8.75	36.25	25.00	26.25	3.75	3.20
21	Employees belonging to different departments and categories are treated impartially by authorities of the institution.	10.00	50.00	23.75	16.25	0.00	3.54
22	There is proper mechanism in this university to reward any good work done or any contribution made by the employees.	6.25	35.00	21.25	25.00	12.50	2.98
23	People in this university do not have any predisposition (fixed mental impression) about each other.	6.25	33.75	32.50	21.25	6.25	3.13
24	Job rotation in this organization facilitated employee's development.	6.25	50.00	17.50	22.50	3.75	3.26
25	There are adequate tools and techniques to perform the work properly.	11.25	60.00	7.50	18.75	2.50	3.59
26	Employees of the university are clear on how best to perform their work/task.	10.00	65.00	16.25	7.50	1.25	3.75

were treated impartially by authority (60%), there were adequate tools and techniques to perform the work properly (71.2%) and the employees of university were clear on how best to perform their work or task (75%).

However, still the perception of some of the employees was not found favourable as they disagreed on the statements that employees were encouraged to take initiative and do things on their own (55%) and ‘there is proper mechanism in this university to reward any good work done or any contribution made by the employees (41%)’. But the employees were divided in their opinion regarding delegation of authority to encourage juniors to develop skills in handling higher responsibilities, fixed mental impression about each other owned proper mechanism to reward any good work done or contribution made by an employee. These findings were in consonance with those of Wendell *et al.* (1995) who reported that high culture and climate of an organization is the power which directs the people in organizing their goals and motivates their to improve their job performance.

Overall status of organizational climate

The data on the employees’ overall perception of organizational climate have been depicted in Table-4.

Table 4 Perceived status of organizational climate

Level of organizational climate	Frequency	Percentage
1. Very good organisational climate	09	11.25
2. Good organisational climate	31	38.75
3. Average organisational climate	20	25.00
4. Poor organisational climate	13	16.25
5. Very poor organisational climate	07	8.75

It has been observed that 50 percent of the respondents perceived the Organizational Climate as ‘Good’ to ‘Very good’, whereas 25 percent perceived it as ‘Average’ in the organization under study. The remaining one fourths were found to perceive the climate as ‘Poor’ to ‘Very poor’. Hence, the study implies that sincere efforts should be made to know the reasons of this poor perceptions and remedial measures should be taken to transform this perception into positive one.

Relationship of employees’ job satisfaction with organizational climate and culture

In order to determine whether there exists any association among the above mentioned variables correlation coefficients were computed and presented in Table 5. A cursory look at the data revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation of employees’ job satisfaction with organizational culture and organizational climate. Similarly, a positive and significant correlation was observed between respondents’ commitment and organizational culture and climate which clearly indicated that those employees who were whole heartedly committed to their work had favourable perception on the existing organizational culture and climate in the university.

Table 5 Correlation Coefficients between different variables

S. No.	Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
I	Organizational Culture and Job Satisfaction	0.60*
Ii	Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment	0.66*
Iii	Organizational Climate and Job Satisfaction	0.53*
Iv	Organizational Climate and Organizational Commitment	0.57*
V	Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate	0.87*

A positive and significant correlation between organizational culture and organizational climate has also revealed that stronger the organizational culture better will be the existing working climate in the university.

Nierhoff *et al.* (1990) also found that the overall management culture and style driven by the top management actions were strongly related to the degree of employees’ commitment indicating thereby, that the employees who were satisfied with their job were very positive in their perception towards organizational culture & climate in the University.

Suggestive measures for improving the organizational culture and climate in the organization

The suggestions were elicited from the respondents for further improving the Organizational Culture and Climate in the university and the findings are presented in Table-6.

Table 6 Suggestions for improving Organizational Culture and Climate

S. No.	Suggestions	Rank
1.	Employees should be educated about goals and objectives of the organization so that they can contribute for the same with their utmost strength.	VIII
2.	The skills of employees should be regularly updated in order to improve Research, Training and Extension activities.	V
3.	Sincere efforts should be made to strengthen the team-spirit among the employees.	IX
4.	Institutional discipline needs to be maintained properly in the university.	VI
5.	Innovative and good work should be appreciated, recognized and suitably rewarded to bring a sense of accomplishment among the employees.	VII
6.	Concerted efforts should be needed to ensure transparency in the university and to minimize bureaucracy.	III
7.	There should be rotation for the post of Heads of Department and Statutory position to provide equal leadership opportunity.	XVII
8.	The authority should ensure congenial environment to the employees without any undue interference.	II
9.	Favoritism and undue political interference in any form should be discouraged in university.	I
10.	Proper sanitary and hygienic conditions should be maintained in the university.	XVI
11.	Environment should be created for the employees to vent their grievances with confidentiality.	IV
12.	Adequate facilities should be provided to the employees for smooth/better functioning.	XIV
13.	Assignment of work should be as per the expertise/skills of the employees.	XV
14.	Unnecessary paper work should be minimized.	XII
15.	Better library, computers and internet facility should be provided to the employees and timings of the library should be increased.	XIII
16.	There should be proper mechanism or platform to discuss day to day problems of the employees.	X
17.	Multidisciplinary approach and interdepartmental co-ordination should be strengthened.	XI

A perusal of the data clearly indicated that unnecessary discouraging, favouritism and political interference (Rank I) followed by ensuring congenial environment to the employees without any undue interference (Rank II), concerted efforts to ensure transparency and to minimize bureaucracy (Rank III), and creating an environment in which the employees can vent their grievances with confidentiality (Rank IV) were the prominent suggestions. Similarly, “The skills of employees should be regularly updated in order to improve Research, Training and Extension activities (Rank V)”, "Institutional discipline needs to be maintained properly in the university (Rank VI)”, “Innovative and good work should be appreciated, recognized and suitably rewarded to bring a sense of accomplishment among the employees (Rank VII)”, “Employees should be educated about goals and objectives of the organization so that they can contribute for the same with

their utmost strength (Rank VIII)”, and “Sincere efforts should be made to strengthen the team-spirit among the employees (Rank IX)” were some of other main suggestions provided by the respondents in order to further improve the Organizational Culture and Climate in the university. Eisenberger *et al.* (1990) also reported that the employees’ who feel that they are well looked after by their organizations and managers had not only higher level of commitment but also were more conscious about their responsibilities, more innovative and greatly involved in decision making of the organizations. The researchers suggested that the organizations must reward and support their employees for the best work they do as this creates a feeling of trust in them.

CONCLUSIONS

The overall organizational climate in the University of Horticulture and Forestry was perceived good to very good. Adaptability and Mission were the main strengths of organizational culture in the University. Employees’ Job satisfaction and their commitment were positively and significantly correlated with organizational culture and climate. Concerted efforts should be made to ensure transparency, congenial environment to promote team spirit and institutional discipline without entertaining any undue favouritism/political interference, so that organization culture and working climate can be further improved in the institution.

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