

**Perceptual variations of organizational climate among faculty and administration of State Agricultural Universities**

**\* Dr. Sayanika Borah  
Dr. Kiranjot Sidhu  
Dr. M. Javed**

\* Ex. Research Scholar  
\*\*Senior Scientist

\*\*\* Associate Professor, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana-141004

**Abstract**

Organizational climate is the total perception of all the individuals and its study enable an organization to use worker input to bridge gaps in the functioning and enhance satisfaction. The dimension wise analysis as perceived by the faculty performing teaching/research/extension duties and faculty on administrative side of four SAU's (PAU, Punjab; ANGRAU, Andhra Pradesh; AAU, Assam and MPUA & T, Rajasthan) revealed that both differ in their perceptions of the organizational climate. Difference in case of orientation and physical facilities were non significant but highly significant in accountability/evaluation communication, monetary gains , control and supervision. However, the chi square value reveals that this difference was non significant in case of orientation, physical facilities and monetary gains but highly significant in communication, accountability/ evaluation, management of rewards, decision making, leadership, policies/rules and inter-personal relationships The challenge is to reduce the difference in the perception of both sides and then bridge the gap between the prevailing and the expected climate on each of the dimensions.

**Keywords:** Expected; faculty; organizational climate; prevailing.

Organizational climate is the total perception of all the individuals that help to differentiate organizations according to their procedures and practices. It is the employees' perceptions and perspectives of an organization in terms of relationships among organizational members. Organizational climate focuses on its members' perceptions of the way things are. It is the employees' perceptions and attitudes toward their organization at any given time (Momeni, 2009). Organizational climate is a quality that is ingrained in the organization. It is experiential, and influences the organization and its members. The members of the organizational climate experience this climate as the actors in the process. It is something that is sensed rather than something that is recognized cognitively. Organizational climate is influenced by and shapes organizational culture (Hunt and Ivergard, 2007). Organizational culture is a broader pattern of its beliefs and stems from employees' interpretations of the assumptions, philosophies and values that produce the experienced climate within an organization (Brown and Brooks, 2002). Organizational climate is a manifestation of the organization's culture; it is the here and now (Sowpow, 2006).

The behavioral scientists had a longstanding concern with the impact of specific behavior of individuals and groups on the effectiveness of the organizations. Organizational climate studies address attitudes and concerns that help the organization work with employees to instill positive changes. The result if implemented can help to increase productivity. Climate surveys give employees a voice to assist in making desired transitions as smooth as possible. It also serves

as a basis for quality improvements. The study of organizational climate enables a successful organization to operate more efficiently through the use of worker input and satisfaction ratings (Gupta 2008). By identifying areas of inefficiency and acting on performance barriers identified by employees of all levels, an organization gains a fresh and different perspective. It helps to identify areas of employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction to facilitate management in the creation of greater workplace harmony and productivity.

State Agricultural Universities contribute significantly to agricultural development. They operate on the concept of integration of three basic functions: Teaching, Research and Extension, with a large number of specialized disciplines and departments. The congenial organizational climate provides for efficient functioning of the scientists working in these organizations and ultimately helps in achieving the objectives of the organization. In this context, the present study was designed to analyze the organizational climate by studying the prevailing and expected organizational climate as perceived by the faculty on teaching/research/extension side and faculty on administrative side of four SAU's representing north, south, east and west zone of the country using selected dimensions.

### **Material and Methods**

**Locale of the study:** The SAUs were divided into four zones based on their geographical location. One SAU from each zone was selected purposively in view of ease and accessibility for data collection. As per this criterion, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, **Punjab**; Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad, **Andhra Pradesh**; Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, **Assam** and Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur, **Rajasthan** were selected.

**Sampling:** A list of in position faculty members (Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors) and members of administration of selected SAU's were prepared. The faculty members were selected according to their area of work (Research, Teaching, and Extension) with at least five years of job experience. From each of these lists, a sample of eighteen faculty members equally representing each priority area, hierarchy and gender (proportionately) were selected as the sample for the study. A list of all the Directors and Deans (Deans of colleges located in the main campus), Dean Post Graduate Studies along with the Registrar of the each university (only if Registrar was a member of the faculty) was prepared and a random sample of five from each list was taken. From the list of head of the departments, a random selection of ten members was done. These fifteen respondents from each of the selected universities represented the administration of the selected SAU's. Hence a total sample of 54 faculty members representing variations in hierarchy, priority area of work and gender were selected along with and fifteen (15) members from different levels of administrators of each university were selected. A total of 216 faculty members and 60 members of administration formed the sample of the present study.

**Data collection:** Data were gathered by means of a questionnaire, which consisted of scales to study the perception of prevailing and expected organizational climate with respect to selected dimensions. For each of the selected ten dimensions, a scale was prepared using Likert method of summated rating. The total of ten scales containing 230 statements were used to elicit response from the respondents. The response to each statement was elicited on a five-point scale as given in table 1.

**Data analysis:** The mean values were worked out separately for the faculty on research/ teaching/extension side and for faculty performing administrative duties. The gap was determined by calculating the difference between the mean score of expected and prevailing organizational climate for each of the dimension. Chi-square test was used to test the significance of gap between the prevailing and expected organizational climate with regard to different dimensions.

### **Results and Discussion**

There is always a gap in the prevailing and expected organizational climate as perceived by the individual employees. This gap can be seen table 2 with the overall gap of 0.50 although it was found to be non significant. The dimension wise analysis reveals a highly significant difference in the prevailing conditions and the expectations of the faculty. The gap was found to be highest in 'orientation' followed by 'monetary gains', 'innovation' and 'physical facilities'. Lack of satisfaction can be seen in the dimension of 'accountability/ evaluation'. Least gap was reported on the dimensions of 'management of rewards', 'interpersonal relationships and teamwork'. The chi square values show that the gap was highly significant in all the dimensions.

Faculty expectation from 'orientation' aspect can be justified as the entire degree programmes within the SAU setup do not equip them for handling the job related issues which are outside the domain of research and course work. The higher gap in case of 'monetary gains' might be due to the comparison of multi-dimensional work undertaken by faculty of SAU's in comparison to traditional universities with same pay scales. Reddy and Maraty (2003) in his study on organizational climate of ANGRAU, Hyderabad, also reported satisfaction to a medium extent in the areas of 'job clarity', 'team work', 'appraisal', 'guidance and supervision', 'training', 'decision making', 'recognition', 'communication', 'information management system', 'psychological security', 'financial support to schemes', 'physical facilities and 'selection procedure'. He suggested improvement in these areas of functioning to build up self-confidence and aspirational levels of the teachers and to enhance their perception of the working climate of the university.

Faculty on the administrative side as shown in table 3 also reported the gap in perception of organizational climate but overall gap was not significant. The dimension wise gap was found to be highly significant in all dimensions even though the chi square values were not as high as observed in case of faculty on teaching/research /extension side, particularly for 'orientation', 'innovation' and 'monetary gains'.

On expected lines, the least gap was found in 'management of rewards', 'decision-making', 'communication', 'interpersonal relationship', 'control and supervision' and 'leadership', as administrators were directly responsible for these dimensions. Administrators reporting more gap in these dimensions would have pointed towards lacunas on their part. Even though the mean values were not very high but the differences were significant as shown by the chi square values.

The mean values (table 4) show that the gap in all the dimensions was higher in case of faculty in teaching/ research/ extension as compared to the faculty on administration side. The overall gap in the expected and prevailing climate as per the administrators was half of that perceived by the faculty.

This difference between perceptions of both category of faculty was highly significant showing that both differ in their perceptions of the prevailing and

expected organizational climate. Dimension wise, difference were found in 'orientation', 'physical facilities', 'accountability/evaluation' and 'leadership' and also in 'communication', 'monetary gains' and 'control and supervision'. However, the chi square value reveals that this difference was non significant in case of 'orientation', 'physical facilities' and 'monetary gains' but highly significant in 'communication', 'accountability,/ evaluation' and 'leadership'. Very high chi square values point towards serious differences in case of 'management of rewards', 'decision making', 'leadership', 'policies/rules' and 'inter-personal relationships'. In a study on communication climate among scientists of Kerala Agricultural University, only one half of scientists perceived it as favorable (Senthilkumar *et al* 2003).

Interestingly, variation existed between the faculty and administrators on account of 'control' and 'supervision' even when both had reported the gap lower than other dimensions. The gap was more significant in case of administrators than faculty meaning that administrators expected more 'control' and 'supervision' than in the present situation in comparison to the faculty. These differences can be attributed to personal and professional factors. The employees may perceive the same climate differently depending upon seniority, age, workload and even certain other personality and psychological attributes (Massie 1985). The interpretational biases also lead to different perceptions (James *et al*, 1990). Past studies also indicate that administrators had a slight but consistently lower gap in perception of organizational climate (Hartnett and Centra 1974, Jhamtani and Singh 1987 and Gurkan 2006).

It can therefore be concluded that the organizational climate is dynamic and variables that need constant improvements and its perception varies among people at different positions. However, the challenge is to reduce the difference in the perception of the two and then bridge the gap between the prevailing and the expected climate on each of the dimensions to bring about improvements in the organizational climate, which can have profound effect on performance and satisfaction of employees.

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**Table 1: Scoring pattern of statement**

| Prevailing climate      | Scores             |                    | Expected climate          | Scores             |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                         | Positive statement | Negative statement |                           | Positive statement | Negative statement |
| Strongly agree (SA)     | 5                  | 1                  | Strongly desirable (SD)   | 5                  | 1                  |
| Agree (A)               | 4                  | 2                  | Desirable (D)             | 4                  | 2                  |
| Undecided (U)           | 3                  | 3                  | Neutral (N)               | 3                  | 3                  |
| Disagree (DA)           | 2                  | 4                  | Undesirable(UD)           | 2                  | 4                  |
| Strongly disagree (SDA) | 1                  | 5                  | Strongly undesirable(SUD) | 1                  | 5                  |

**Table2: Perception of faculty regarding gap in the prevailing and expected organizational climate of SAU's.**

(n=216)

| Dimensions of Org. Climate | Mean Score (1-5)   |                  |             | Chi-square                |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
|                            | Prevailing climate | Expected climate | Gap         |                           |
| Communication              | 3.34               | 3.66             | 0.32        | 42.633**                  |
| Management of rewards      | 3.30               | 3.46             | 0.16        | 17.524**                  |
| Interpersonal relationship | 3.41               | 3.61             | 0.20        | 30.764**                  |
| Control and supervision    | 2.85               | 3.18             | 0.33        | 6.271*                    |
| Orientation                | 3.62               | 4.60             | 0.98        | 113.557**                 |
| Decision making            | 3.10               | 3.37             | 0.27        | 60.672**                  |
| Leadership                 | 3.71               | 4.20             | 0.49        | 25.597**                  |
| Policies and rules         | 3.37               | 3.77             | 0.40        | 46.255**                  |
| Innovation                 | 3.29               | 4.04             | 0.75        | 135.420**                 |
| Physical facilities        | 3.26               | 3.97             | 0.71        | 78.924**                  |
| Team work                  | 3.25               | 3.49             | 0.24        | 37.118**                  |
| Monetary gains             | 3.52               | 4.44             | 0.92        | 190.525**                 |
| Accountability/ Evaluation | 2.92               | 3.56             | 0.64        | 82.978**                  |
| Organizational climate     | <b>3.30</b>        | <b>3.80</b>      | <b>0.50</b> | <b>9.158<sup>NS</sup></b> |

\* Significant at 5% level of significance

\*\* Significant at 1% level of significance

NS - Non significant

**Table 3: Perception of administration about gap in the prevailing and expected organizational climate of SAU's.  
(n=60)**

| Dimensions of Org. Climate | Mean Score (1-5)   |                  |             | Chi-square                |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
|                            | Prevailing climate | Expected climate | Gap         |                           |
| Communication              | 3.28               | 3.44             | 0.16        | 27.590**                  |
| Management of rewards      | 3.21               | 3.35             | 0.14        | 7.095**                   |
| Interpersonal relationship | 3.23               | 3.40             | 0.17        | 15.056**                  |
| Control and supervision    | 3.09               | 3.27             | 0.18        | 5.801**                   |
| Orientation                | 3.50               | 4.09             | 0.59        | 44.885**                  |
| Decision making            | 3.10               | 3.25             | 0.15        | 4.639**                   |
| Leadership                 | 3.46               | 3.64             | 0.18        | 16.386**                  |
| Policies and rules         | 3.47               | 3.85             | 0.38        | 4.683**                   |
| Innovation                 | 3.25               | 3.98             | 0.73        | 51.080**                  |
| Physical facilities        | 3.22               | 3.56             | 0.34        | 57.077**                  |
| Team work                  | 3.40               | 3.61             | 0.21        | 5.398**                   |
| Monetary gains             | 3.22               | 3.98             | 0.76        | 0.918**                   |
| Accountability/ Evaluation | 3.13               | 3.43             | 0.30        | 42.080**                  |
| Organizational climate     | <b>3.27</b>        | <b>3.60</b>      | <b>0.33</b> | <b>9.639<sup>NS</sup></b> |

\*\* Significant at 1% level of significance

NS - Non significant

**Table4: Difference in the perception of faculty and administrators about gap in the prevailing and expected organizational climate of SAU's.**

| Dimensions of Org. Climate | Mean Score (1-5)                       |                       |            | Chi-square           |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|
|                            | Gap in prevailing and expected climate |                       |            |                      |
|                            | Faculty (n=216)                        | Administrators (n=60) | Difference |                      |
| Communication              | 0.32                                   | 0.16                  | 0.16       | 156.577**            |
| Management of rewards      | 0.16                                   | 0.14                  | 0.02       | 170.096**            |
| Interpersonal relationship | 0.20                                   | 0.17                  | 0.03       | 151.229**            |
| Control and supervision    | 0.33                                   | 0.18                  | 0.15       | 113.641**            |
| Orientation                | 0.98                                   | 0.59                  | 0.39       | 4.563 <sup>NS</sup>  |
| Decision making            | 0.27                                   | 0.15                  | 0.12       | 170.751**            |
| Leadership                 | 0.49                                   | 0.18                  | 0.31       | 118.64**             |
| Policies and rules         | 0.40                                   | 0.38                  | 0.02       | 119.215**            |
| Innovation                 | 0.75                                   | 0.73                  | 0.02       | 0.391 <sup>NS</sup>  |
| Physical facilities        | 0.71                                   | 0.34                  | 0.37       | 19.762 <sup>NS</sup> |
| Team work                  | 0.24                                   | 0.21                  | 0.03       | 6.597 <sup>NS</sup>  |
| Monetary gains             | 0.92                                   | 0.76                  | 0.16       | 0.394 <sup>NS</sup>  |
| Accountability/ Evaluation | 0.64                                   | 0.30                  | 0.34       | 126.942**            |
| Organizational climate     | <b>0.64</b>                            | <b>0.33</b>           | 0.31       | 300.257**            |

\*\* Significant at 1% level of significance

NS - Non significant