

Descriptive Study of Organizational Climate in Higher Education

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Abstract

The climate is what the members of the organization experience. Organizational climate is the atmosphere surrounding the organization, uniting the characteristics of individuals, organizations, and the environment that influences the behavior of individuals in the organization. Many studies have shown that organizational climate significantly impacts job satisfaction and employee productivity. One of which is Faculty X, a new faculty member at University Y, who wishes to examine their current organizational climate. Therefore, the study of climate is an essential tool for defining and understanding organizations and providing support for future improvement. This study aims to examine the organizational climate of a faculty at a private university in Bandung city, namely Faculty X at University Y. This study used a quantitative approach with a descriptive research method. The sample consisted of 30 education staff employees. The instrument used was the short version of the Organization Climate Scale (CLIOR), consisting of 15 items. The reliability test was carried out using Cronbach's Alpha statistical method, with the result of 0.819. The results showed that the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y was in the high category with indicators of cooperation, work organization, relations, innovation, participation, and attachment to the job. In short, the results of this study can provide a new understanding of the perception of the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y. Creating an organizational climate is essential because it can overcome organizational relationships. The high organizational climate can be beneficial for Faculty X as it can influence employees' productivity which in turn can influence the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

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INTRODUCTION

The climate at work creates importance and meaning for the organization and drives employee behavior and attitudes (Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Kumar & Giri (2007) suggested that organizational climate can significantly impact job satisfaction and productivity. Proven by numerous studies showing the influence of climate, not only on employees but also on the performance of the teams and organizations they work for (Paulin & Griffin, 2017). Brown & Leigh (1996) stated that organizational climate is essential because of the need for an organization to ensure that employees in the organization have value-added and wish to remain in the organization and to continue to give their best in their work in order to benefit the organization. Stringer (2002) also stated that high performance would depend on high commitment, in which an organizational climate that emphasizes employee pride, personal loyalty,

and goal achievement creates the glue needed for continuity and success. Therefore, the organizational climate has become one of the critical variables in organizational success.

The climate is a variable determined by organizational and psychological processes, which in turn affects the overall performance and good results of the organization (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Schneider, et al., 1996). Organizational climate is a fundamental construct in work and organizational settings, as it provides an appropriate context for studying organizational behavior, enabling the exploration of individual and group behavior (Asif, 2011; Denison, 1996; Ostroff, Kinicki, & Tamkins, 2003). Organizational climate is also defined as a set of measurable properties of the work environment, which is perceived directly or indirectly by the people who live and work in the environment and is assumed to influence motivation and behavior (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). Thus, motivated employees will be more productive and ultimately have an impact on employee and organizational performance. Gunter and Furnham (1996) suggested that organizational climate could directly lead to positive or negative work outcomes. Positive work incentives make work more attractive, such as an attractive work environment, good personnel policy, benefits, work structure, and compensation. A supportive work environment leads to motivation, good personnel policies, benefits, job satisfaction, and compensation. However, negative work incentives including incentives that make work boring, unchallenging, and unsatisfactory, lead to increased absenteeism, and even employee turnover. Therefore, organizational climate is crucial as it is proven to influence the behavior of employees as members of the organization.

In education, the definition of climate seems to be integrated with the view of school climate as a group phenomenon that involves consensus about certain perceptions that include the psychological, social, and physical aspects of the environment, which influences behavior (Arter, 1987). Therefore, research on organizational climate, especially those with educational backgrounds, such as universities, is significant for planning and understanding organizational life, providing valuable subsidies for improving institutional performance (Campos, 2002). In a research conducted by Austin (1987) which focused on the academic workplace in colleges, he combined variables usually used in organizational climate studies (e.g., communication, support, decision-making, etc.). An exciting feature of this study is that it compares faculty perceptions of the workplace in low and high-moral colleges. This strategy intends to identify aspects of the academic workplace where interventions to improve the workplace may be necessary and practical. For example, the result of this study indicates that universities with relatively high teacher enthusiasm and satisfaction have a more collaborative environment, more supportive teachers, and are more conducive to risk-taking and innovation (Thomas Moran & Volkwein, 1988).

Organizational Climate is a fundamental construct in work and organizational settings, as it provides an appropriate context for studying organizational behavior, allowing the exploration of individual and group behaviors ((Asif, 2011; Denison, 1996; Ostroff, Kinicky, & Tamkins, 2003) in Pena Suarez et al, 2013). Suarez (2013) develop an empirically one-dimensional scale, without

discarding any of the facets that historically make up organizational climate. This one-dimensionality is the basis in order to generate a computerized adaptive test from the proposed scale, in accordance with the most recent psychometric advances, which would be impossible with the previous scales. Having an organizational climate instrument with an essentially one-dimensional structure will facilitate its application, comprehension, and norms development, and will provide an accurate diagnosis of the working environment.

Organizational climate might differ from one organization to another because each organization has different characteristics, which these characteristics are relatively enduring, and can be used to distinguish between organizations (Campbell et al., 1970; Forehand & Gilmer, 1964; Tagiuri, 1968). One of which is the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y. Faculty X is the result of development studies at University Y by separating the newly established faculties in 2020. Faculty X consists of three study programs. With the establishment of this new faculty, Faculty X has gone through several changes to support employee performance to compete and excel from other faculties and universities. These changes include leadership training, discipline, responsibility, and reward systems. However, these changes cannot be directly said that the organizational climate of Faculty X is appropriate or suitable. There are some employees who throw responsibilities at each other. In other words, they rely more on others than themselves, and employees of Faculty X almost always refuse offers for promotion to other faculties. This problem is caused by many factors, one of which is how the organizational climate in which they currently work. Because a high organizational climate allows faculty to feel satisfied with their work, it increases their productivity, and thus prevents burnout (Dinibutun et al., 2020). Research on organizational climate in the context of education is carried out regularly abroad (Campos, 2002). However, in Indonesia, this research is relatively limited in number.

Faculty X at University Y is comprised of education staff employees: academic administration employees, department employees, IT employees, lecturers, and others. University Y carried out the separation of faculties due to university development studies, in which University Y could pursue and improve the teaching and learning process and become a digital university or smart campus. According to University Y, Faculty X has tremendous potential, therefore its existence must be optimized. Hence, a study to measure the organizational climate in this new faculty, namely Faculty X, is critical to help achieve university goals. Thus, Faculty X, together with University Y, would be able to organize education management, research and scientific development, and community service that are even better, reliable, accountable, and able to meet the community's demands using higher education services. Thus, this study aims to examine the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y in Bandung city, Indonesia.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach. A quantitative approach is more concerned with measurement and sampling design because the deductive approach emphasizes the details of planning

for data collection and analysis (Neuman, 2013). The method used in this study was descriptive. This design is considered the most appropriate and helps determine the participant's perceptions and attitudes toward the variables studied (Gay, 1992; Newman, 2013).

Participant

The target population in this study consisted of education staff employees of Faculty X. The sampling technique used in this study was a census sampling method. According to Sugiyono (2017), census sampling is a sampling technique in which all population members are used as samples. The sample in this study consisted of 30 employees of the education staff of Faculty X at University Y in Bandung city, Indonesia.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was the short version of the Organizational Climate Scale (CLIOR) developed by Peña-Suárez et al. (2013). CLIOR consisted of 15 items, including indicators of cooperation, work organization, relations, innovation, participation, and attachment to the job. This instrument used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Furthermore, the reliability test of CLIOR was carried out using internal consistency (Friedenberg, 1995) with Cronbach's Alpha statistical method. The result of the reliability test of CLIOR was 0.819, meaning that CLIOR has high reliability as stated by Hair et al. (2019). Table 1 shows the operational definition of each short version of the CLIOR indicator, as follows:

Table 1. Operational Definition of Organizational Climate Indicators

Variable	Indicators	Operational Definitions
Organizational Climate	Cooperation	It refers to trying to understand the meaning and motives underlying the level of support provided by co-workers and supervisors.
	Work Organization	This shows the importance of the organization to rules and procedures, the extent to which the company controls the organizational aspects of each department to ensure that these objectives are clear and transparent.
	Relations	It measures employee perceptions of the work environment and whether they feel they are working in a pleasant work atmosphere with positive interactions, horizontal interactions (with co-workers), and vertical interactions (supervisors).
	Innovation	It refers to the level of innovation, dynamism, and adaptation of the company to current market needs and

	whether the organization encourages its employees to generate further innovations.
Participation	It shows the degree of freedom that the company offers to employees to suggest new ideas and procedures that can increase performance.
Attachment to the job	It refers to satisfaction and the sense of accomplishment and pride associated with doing the job.

Source: Peña-Suárez et al. (2016)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the data collected from 30 education staff employees, a demographic description of the participants was obtained. The demographic description aims to provide a clearer picture of the results of this study. Data analysis used to examine demographic data was an independent sample t-test. The demographic description that has been grouped is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Participant Demographics with Organizational Climate Variable

Demographics	Categorization	Total	Mean	Std. Dev	Sig
Gender	Male	18	58,056	3,472	0,564
	Female	12	59,250	7,617	
Total		30			
Age	24-46	15	58,000	5,952	0,599
	47-56	15	59,066	4,992	
Total		30			
Education	SMA	14	58,071	4,763	0,670
	SI-S2	16	58,937	6,071	
Total		30			
Tenure	1-18 years	12	57,500	6,112	0,404
	19-36 years	18	59,222	4,977	
Total		30			

Based on Table 2, participants' demographic data including gender, age, education, and tenure have p-value greater than the level of significance ($p > 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of organizational climate of education staffs of Faculty X at University Y based on the demographic data.

Furthermore, the statistical analysis performed by the researcher on the organizational climate of 30 education staff employees is as follows:

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Climate

Organizational Climate	Frequency	Max	Min	Mean	Std. Dev
Low	1	69	41	58,533	5,425
High	29				

Table 3 shows that the group mean score is 58,533, with a standard deviation of 5,425. Furthermore, these results were used to find the t score, which was used as the norm for categorizing organizational climate. Researchers classified organizational climate into two categories, namely low and high. As seen from Table 3, education staff employees of Faculty X at University Y have a high organizational climate.

Twenty-nine people represent the description of the high organizational climate and only one person who represents the description of the low organizational climate. This shows that Faculty X at University Y has a high organizational climate. According to Peña-Suárez et al. (2013), organizational climate represents cooperation, work organization, relations, innovation, participation, and attachment to the job. The educational staff of Faculty X at University Y with a high perception of organizational climate will work together with co-workers and supervisors. Employees also have a pleasant perception of the atmosphere at work in which they can interact positively, the organization can encourage employees to produce innovation, and employees can participate in providing ideas and suggestions to improve performance. These employees understand and comply with organizational rules or policies to have satisfaction and pride when doing their jobs. They interact and negotiate effectively with others to get feedback on their work.

The organizational climate measured by the short version of CLIOR had six indicators: cooperation, work organization, relations, innovation, participation, and attachment to the job (Peña-Suárez et al., 2013). The following is a description of the organizational climate based on each indicator:

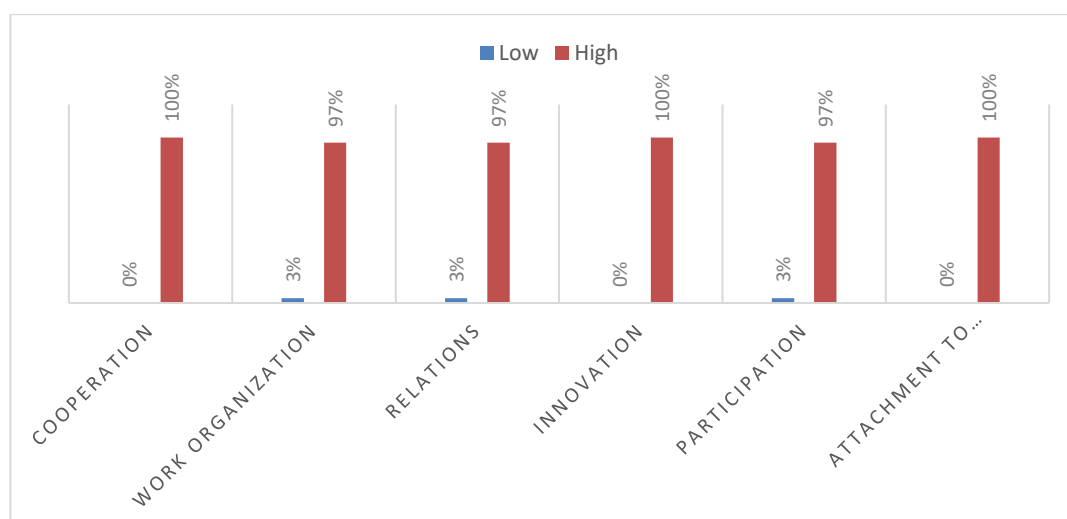
Figure 1. Percentage Graph of Six Organizational Climate Indicators

Figure 1 shows that the high category dominates nearly all indicators of organizational climate. Indicators of cooperation, innovation, and attachment to the job are not in a low category. This indicates that employees perceive the benefits of the support provided by supervisors and co-workers to become mutually supportive eventually. A good work climate works in a dynamic and innovative entity with prestige in the work environment and has a positive image outside the organization (Corral & Pereña, 2010). The results above show that Faculty X at University Y has a high indicator of innovation, indicating that its employees trust faculty X to encourage them to innovate for the organization. A good work climate also means that its employees can feel involved and participate in the common cause and are interested in the progress of the organization (Corral & Pereña, 2010). Therefore, employees at Faculty X at University Y with high indicators of attachment to the job have a sense of satisfaction and pride when doing their job.

Discussion

Employees perceive that the organization is good and has a clear definition of their roles and responsibilities, such as the position of employees in the organization. Employees also perceive that their relationships with co-workers and supervisors are also well established and are in the high category. That is, employees have the perception that they have good relationships with all their co-workers, and they have feelings of trust and mutual support that prevail in the workgroup. Employee perceptions about generating innovation for the organization are also in the high category. This means that employees perceive that change and creativity are supported by the organization, including taking risks in new areas where employees have no or little previous experience with them. The perception of the employees about participating in the organization is also in the high category. Finally, employee perceptions about the attachment to their work is also in the high category. This indicates that employees have pride and commitment to the organization. This is following the situation of Faculty X at University Y in which the organizational climate is high, meaning that a great number of employees do not wish to leave their workplace in spite of the opportunity to get promoted.

The indicators of relations, work for the organization, and participation is also in a high category in spite of its percentage is 3%. This indicates a good perception of employees of Faculty X at University Y about the level of satisfaction in personal relationships and the resulting atmosphere at the workplace. Relationships between co-workers and existing relationships with people at different hierarchical levels in the organization are also very well established. Based on the results above, also shows that employees of Faculty X at University Y perceive to have the freedom to provide ideas and suggestions to the organization. In other words, there is participation in the decision-making process, in setting goals, and in organizational policies. Finally, employees have a good perception of their work organization of Faculty X at University Y, which shows that the organization is great at controlling organizational aspects such as clarity of function, level of job planning, availability or lack of necessary facilities to

carry out tasks, and so forth.

This follows the phenomenon of Faculty X at University Y. The high organizational climate among employees makes them dependent on each other to refuse to get promotions if they have to be transferred to other faculties. In addition, this high organizational climate makes employees unwilling to leave their workplace.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y is in the high category with indicators of cooperation, work organization, relations, innovation, participation, and attachment to the job. Thus, employees of Faculty X at University Y perceive that the situation and atmosphere around the organization are in the high category, followed by cooperation which is perceived to be in the high category as well. That is, employees, perceive that they can work well with each other. Employees also have a good perception of their work organization at Faculty X at University Y.

Therefore, the organizational climate of Faculty X at University Y might be a bridge that can connect management with employee behavior in realizing organizational goals, as reflected in high organizational climate indicators. Organizational climate can help employees understand the prevailing order in their work environment and provide guidance to them to adjust within the organization. A high organizational climate can also be used as a motivation in improving performance.

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