



A STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE CLIMATE AND TEACHERS' JOB CREATIVITY AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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Abstract

In educational setting, the workplace climate is the blend of principal's behavior and teacher's behavior. Organizational climate is one of the factors that explicitly or implicitly influences the level of creativity of teachers. This study was aimed to identify the workplace climate and teachers job creativity at university level. The survey research method was used in this study. For data collection, two instruments named Questionnaire on Workplace Climate (QWC) and Questionnaire on Teachers' Creativity (QTC) were adapted and collected data was analyzed by applying descriptive statistics i.e. mean and standard deviation and inferential statistical analysis technique (e.g. Pearson r). The results of the study revealed that fairness with employee and their security at workplace may positively strengthen the level of trust of teachers and they become more creative in their teaching which eventually advances their students' knowledge. The major implication of this study is to create a balanced workplace climate in universities.

Key words: Workplace Climate, Job Creativity

INTRODUCTION

Climate is defined as a set of definite features of a particular organization (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009). Employees' behavior at workplace is a result of their personal characteristics as well as the environment in which they perform. Employees' job attitudes are affected by a wide range of organizational characteristics and social relationships, which form the employees' work environment. When referring to employees' perceptions of their working environments, it is possible to find a variety of terms and definitions such as workplace climate, psychological climate, collective climate, and organizational culture. Workplace climate is one of the most important matters regarding organizational environment, which has a direct relationship with employee behavior. Workplace climate is a concept that has academic meaning in the fields of organizational behavior. Workplace climate shows how the members of an organization practice the culture of an organization and it can be formed by the top level management of an organization. Workplace climate can be viewed as an illustrative idea that mirrors the regular view and is understanding of all individuals with respect to the different components of the organization, For example, structure, frameworks and practices (Mumford & Hemlin, 2017). The workplace climate is composed of two components. First one is job characteristics which relate to the aspects of an employee's job or task responsibilities that contribute to the psychological states, which in turn, has an effect on employee's spirit, growth and development. The second

one is work context variables, that relate to the characteristics of the organizational setting in which the employee performs his or her duties (Wright & Davis, 2003). Workplace climate not only refers to the physical environment but also includes emotional aspects of it, which includes the relationships with the supervisors and other staff, autonomy, equity and fairness, and the match between the job and the person (Dollinger , 2007) .

In order to understand how an employee perceives organizational climate, it is necessary to consider the employee's perceptions of the work situation (including the characteristics of the organization they work for) and the nature of his/her relationships with other people in the same environment. Workplace climate has a significant impact on the well-being of employees that has a direct influence on quality and quantity of work done in the organization. There are various studies regarding the relationship between workplace climate and its consequences. The role of teachers' creativity and innovation in organization cannot be denied. So, if the workplace climate is appropriate and fulfills the requirement of an employee then the creativity of an employee starts appearing and it leads organizations towards the success and excellence (Humera, 2016). Creativity can be explained as production of new ideas; a creative employee is one who can come up with new ideas. It is not an important skill for society as a whole (Choi, 2007; Soh, 2017), but it is also a highly desired skill in the workforce because it increases innovation (Runco, 2014). Moreover, creativity contributes to developing lifelong learners who are motivated intrinsically (Cho & Kim, 2004). In addition to enhancing the learning process and environment, creativity is a valuable skill that strengthens problem-solving and critical thinking skills (Husain, 2011). Creativity can be explained as introducing new techniques by individual or group of people in organization for achieving the maximum potential of human labor which will result in achieving goals effectively, due to innovation and globalization if a firm wants to compete with its competitor they must hire creative employee who are extroverts, feeling easy to work in groups. Employees with proactive personalities are the one which are mostly admired to make constructive change (George & Zhou, 2001). It has been long observed that employee's creativity is mostly seen by the large organization and team. A creative employee is one who has the ability to be aware of the organization and must be sensitive so that he can tackle the problem, he must have sharp mind to be able to remember his task for long time, and he must be adaptive, it is because due to globalization there is rapid change in the technology as well as the culture, so a creative employee would be one who is able to adapt all the changes before time, in this way, he would be termed as creative (Mumford & Hemlin, 2017). Creativity is important in an organization, to the point it affects the employees' job efficacy and its satisfaction (Gilson, Mathieu, Shelley, & Ruddy, 2005). Some researchers give argument that teacher's creativity will enhance when the top management (Zhou & Shelley, 2003) provides proper workplace climate such as empowering the teachers and giving feedback on how they achieved their goals, giving them free hand how they want to achieve those goals which will result to enhance performance of the institute beyond imagination (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002).

In the present scenario of the educational institutes, it is important to understand the influence of workplace climate factors on teachers' work outcomes. There is a constant rise in the importance of understanding the teachers' creativity within the workplace. It has been proved by many researches that the workplace climate factors influence the creativity of employees directly or indirectly. In Pakistan, there is lack of support or less favorable culture in organizations to lead them towards the successful outcomes as compared to favorable workplace which helps in attaining appropriate results. It is well found concept that the

workplace is an essential component for creativity (Ali & Zainab, 2013). Creativity is considered as well known requirement of this era, but Pakistan is facing many challenges associated with creativity and innovation. Teachers' creativity fosters the association among workplace and teachers by utilizing efficient communication modes and methods to implicate creativity and innovation at workplaces by involvement of leaders who are responsible for providing proper workplace climate (Alavi, Khezri, & Ghezelayagh, 2003). To fill this gap, present study is conducted to study workplace climate and teachers' job creativity at university level. So the aim of this research is to study the workplace climate of universities and its relation with teachers' job creativity. In this way, this study would provide a ground for educational institutes to develop a creative and innovative environment among the faculty to cope with the needs of current era. Because workplace climate supports teachers' job creativity that introduces new and effective ideas which are momentous for the creation of advanced learning for students as well and ultimately lead institutes towards progress.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study were to

- i. Identify the workplace climate and teacher's job creativity at university level
- ii. Find out the relationship between workplace climate and teachers' job creativity at university level.

Method and Procedure

Research Design

This study was quantitative in nature and survey research method was used to conduct this research.

Participants of the Study

All the teachers of public sector universities of the Punjab constituted the population of the study. The data were collected from 240 teachers from 4 universities that were selected as a sample of the study by using simple random sampling technique.

Instruments of the Study

Two Likert type instruments were used for data collection. The instruments named Questionnaire on Workplace Climate (QWC) and Questionnaire on Teachers' Creativity (QTC) were adapted for data collection. The questionnaire on workplace climate was composed of 30 items and eleven indicators which are: Mission and Purpose, Feedback, Teamwork, Communication, Resources and Procedures, Opportunities for Growth, Compensation, Work / Life Balance, Fairness and Security, Meaningfulness, and Bottom Line understanding. The second questionnaire on teachers' creativity was developed by George and Zhou. There are 9 items which are related to the creativity of teachers. Likert type scale was used in above mentioned scales to measure the respondent attitude on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques were used to analyze the collected data. Mean and standard deviation were calculated in the descriptive statistical analysis to know the percentage of the subjects according to their demographic representation. . In inferential statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was used to find the correlation between workplace climate and teachers' job creativity.

Results

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Missions and Purpose in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	I am familiar with the mission, vision, and values of the institute.	3.94	1.00
2	I can see the link between my work and this institutes objectives.	4.23	.96
3	Mission, vision, and values show in everyday work and procedures.	4.20	1.22

n=240

Table 1 showed that the item 2 “I can see the link between my work and this institutes objectives” had the highest mean score i.e. $M = 4.23$. Item 1 have lowest mean score i.e. $M = 3.94$ indicated that the respondents agreed somewhat about that they are familiar with the mission, vision and values of the institute. The range of Mean scores (3.94 to 4.23) indicates that distribution of sores is centered between the scale marks from Agree (4.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Feedback in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	I am recognized whenever I do a good job.	3.70	1.21
2	My head of department provide me adequate feedback.	3.11	1.37

n=240

The Table 2 showed, that item 1 had the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.70$ which indicated that the respondents agreed that they were recognized whenever they do a good job. Items 2 had lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.11$ indicated that the respondents to some extent agreed that their head of department provide them adequate feedback The range of Mean scores (3.11 to 3.70) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Agree (4.0).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Teamwork in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	My colleagues will help me if I need help.	4.35	1.008
2	My colleagues focus on fixing the problems rather than blaming teachers.	4.00	1.198
3	I can trust that head of department will address any conflict that may arise.	3.93	1.232

n =240

The Table 3 showed, that item 1 “My colleagues will help me if I need help” had the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.35$. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed that at workplace teachers will help each other as a colleague. Items 3 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.93$ indicated that the respondents agreed that head of department will address any conflict that may arise at workplace. The range of Mean scores (3.93 to 4.35) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Communication in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I generally feel informed about the change that affect me within the Institution.	3.94	1.229
2	The institute supports honest two way communication.	3.75	.650
3	My head of department is available to me whenever I have a question or need help.	4.23	.968

n = 240

The Table 4 reflected, item 3 “My head of department is available to me whenever I have a question or need help.” was on top with highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.23$. Whereas, items 2 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.75$ indicated that the respondents agreed to some extent that the institute supports honest two way communication. The range of Mean scores (3.75 to 4.23) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Resources and Procedures in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I have all the tools and equipment to do my job well.	3.52	1.22
2	Procedures necessary to do my job do not involve unnecessary steps.	4.35	1.00
3	I get the training is need to do my job well.	3.94	1.22

n=240

The Table 5 showed, that item 2 “Procedures necessary to do my job do not involve unnecessary steps.” with the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.35$. Items 1 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.52$ this indicated that the respondents have not all the tools and equipment to do their job well The range of Mean scores (3.52 to 4.35) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Opportunities for Growth in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	M	SD
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1	There is a variety of ways for me to develop my career at this institute.	4.23	.96
2	There is equal opportunity for advancement.	3.94	1.22
3	Colleagues at work encourage my development.	4.01	.76

n=240

The Table 6 reflected, item 1 “There is a variety of ways for me to develop my career at this institute” was on top with highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.23$. Items 2 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.94$ indicated that the respondents to some extent agree that there is an equal opportunity for advancement at their workplace. The range of Mean scores (3.94 to 4.23) is centered between the scale marks from Agree (4.0) to Strongly Agree (4.0).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Compensation in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	I am paid a fairly for the work I do.	3.94	1.22
2	I am satisfied with my benefit package.	3.46	1.11

n=240

The Table 7 showed, that item 1 “I am paid a fairly for the work I do” had the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.94$. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed that they are fairly paid at their workplace. Items 2 have lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.46$ indicated that the respondents agreed somewhat that they are satisfied with their benefit package. The range of Mean scores (3.94 to 3.46) indicates that distribution of scores is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Agree (4.0).

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Work life Balance in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	My work is appropriate.	4.23	1.22
2	I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	3.94	.96
3	I enjoy coming to work.	4.20	.96

n=240

The Table 8 showed, that item 1 “My work is appropriate” had the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.23$. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed that their work is appropriate. Items 2 had lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.94$ indicated that the respondents agreed to have the opportunity to do what I do best every day The range of Mean scores (3.94 to 4.23) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Meaningfulness in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	My work is interesting.	4.23	.96
2	I feel a sense of belonging to the community.	3.65	.86

3	The relationship between head of department and teachers is good.	3.79	.93
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n=240

The Table 9 showed, that item 1 “My work is interesting” had the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.23$. Items 2 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.65$ indicated that respondents feel less sense of belongingness to the community. The range of Mean scores (3.65 to 4.23) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Fairness in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I believe everyone is treated fairly in my department.	3.94	1.22
2	I have a sense of security in my job.	3.24	1.28
3	The institute values diversity.	3.31	1.21

n=240

The Table 10 reflected, item 1 “I believe everyone is treated fairly in my department” was on top with highest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.94$. This revealed that respondents believed that they are treated fairly at workplace. Items 2 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.24$ indicated that the respondents have less sense of security in their job. The range of Mean scores (3.24 to 3.94) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Agree (4.0).

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Bottom line in Workplace Climate Scale

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I would refer others who are seeking employment to this institute.	4.11	1.37
2	I plan to be working for this institute a year from now.	3.95	1.09

n=240

The Table 11 showed, that item 1 “I would refer others who are seeking employment to this institute.” with the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.11$. Items 2 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.95$. The range of Mean scores (4.11 to 3.95) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for the Opinions regarding Teachers Job Creativity Scale

	Statement	M	SD
1	The institute suggests new and creative ideas to achieve goals and objectives.	3.79	1.28
2	I come up with new and practical ideas to improve teaching.	3.31	1.21
3	Institute suggests new ways to increase creativity in teaching.	3.24	.93
4	My institute is a good source of creative ideas.	3.94	1.22
5	I exhibit creativity in teaching when given the opportunity to do.	4.20	1.28
6	I often have new and innovative ideas in teaching.	4.03	1.21
7	I come up with creative solutions to problems while teaching.	3.26	1.28
8	I often have a fresh approach to problems in teaching.	3.90	1.21

9	I suggest new ways of performing teaching tasks.	4.05	1.09
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n=240

The Table 12 showed, that item 5 “I I exhibit creativity in teaching when given the opportunity to do.” with the highest Mean score i.e. $M = 4.20$. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed to teach creatively if institute provide them opportunity. Items 3 with lowest Mean score i.e. $M = 3.24$ in which respondents somewhat agreed that institute suggests new ways to increase creativity in teaching. The range of Mean scores (3.24 to 4.20) is centered between the scale marks from Undecided (3.0) to Strongly Agree (5.0).

Table 13

Relationship between Workplace Climate and its Component with Teachers Job Creativity

	<i>n</i>	Pearson Correlation <i>r</i>	Sig
Teachers’ job creativity			
Overall workplace climate	240	.420	.000
1 Mission and Purpose	240	.300	.001
2 Feedback	240	.240	.011
3 Teamwork	240	.290	.002
4 Communication	240	.255	.007
5 Resources	240	.266	.005
6 Opportunities of growth	240	.205	.030
7 Compensation	240	.129	.176
8 Work life Balance	240	.304	.001
9 Fairness and security	240	.309	.001
10 Meaningfulness	240	.249	.008
11 Bottom line	240	.064	.500

* $p < .05$ and *** $p < .001$

Table 13 indicated that there was a significant relationship between independent variable (workplace climate) and dependent variable (teachers’ job creativity) i.e. $r = .402$, $p = .000$ (.000 is less than .05). Analysis of components showed that strong relationship exists between workplace climate and teachers job creativity. This revealed that workplace climate is correlated with teachers’ job creativity which means that better workplace environment is effective to create creativity in teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis “*There is no significant relationship between workplace climates and its component with teachers’ job creativity at university level*” was rejected.

Discussion

The success of any institute depends upon its workplace climate because it is one of the factors that explicitly or implicitly influences the level of performance of teachers which, in turn, is likely to have bearing on their classroom performance (Ahmed, 2010). The results of the study revealed that most of the teachers agreed that there is a link between work and their institutes' objectives and they are somewhat agreed that they are aware of the missions, values and norms of the workplace. According to Raza (2010), teachers should be aware of the workplace climate value from the first day so that they can make their work more effective according to the norms and values. The results of the study showed that most of the teachers strongly agreed that they receive the feedback from their Head of Department for the work they do and the feedback they receive is helpful to them to be more creative at their job. This results are aligned with the studies of Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer (2004) and Politis (2004) who found that the feedback factor affects creativity in a positive way. The results of the study showed that mostly teachers agreed that they are satisfied with their team members because they think at the time of trouble and colleagues help them to solve the problems instead of blaming each other. A significant positive relationship was also found between workplace climate and overall teachers' job creativity. The teamwork at workplace also has positive relationship with and creativity. Previous studies also propose that teachers will be more creative if they perceive their colleagues support them in their work (Amabile et al., 2004). The results are consistent with the studies of Amabile et al. (2004) and Nooraee, Amirtash, Tondnevis, & Behrangi (2006) which have shown the importance of teamwork, open communication and cooperative atmosphere to increase teachers' creativity.

The results of the study showed that availability of resources is one of the most important factors of positive workplace climate. Most of the teachers agreed that they had a variety of ways to develop their career at their institutes and there are equal opportunities of advancement at their institutes. The results of the study indicated that teachers strongly agreed that they enjoyed at their workplace because they were treated fairly and their work was interesting. Teachers agreed that they had sense of security at their workplace as well as good relationship with their head of department. The result also showed that teachers agreed to be in effective working position at their workplace and they will suggest others to also work at their institutes effectively. When talking about teachers' job creativity, the result of the study showed that mostly teachers agreed that they exhibited creativity in teaching when they were given the opportunities to do and also they often had new and innovative ideas in teaching. Ward (2007) suggested that workplace climate influenced the effective creativity of teachers in an organization because it was related to motivation and job satisfaction. The results were also consistent with the findings of Alavi et al. (2003), which found that by increasing consensus and effectiveness of teachers' communications in organization, their creativity would be increased.

It is concluded that the teacher's creativity is the most important if the institute wants to maximize its success, they should empower the teachers to take any creative step to increase the results of institutes, at small or large level, it is important to keep in mind that if teachers' positive climate is at workplace, they would utilize their skills to their utmost level and the institutions will be more successful.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that university administration may provide a suitable workplace environment to increase the creativity of teachers in order to meet the challenges of educational field.

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