

Perception of Middle Level Managers Regarding Organizational Work Climate: An Exploratory Study of Pharmaceutical Industry in Pakistan

Zulfqar Ahmad, Dr. Liaqat Ali, Nazir Ahmad, Muhammad Musarrat Nawaz, Ishfaq Ahmed
Hailey College of Commerce, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

The job satisfaction of employees is a function of organizational climate because the performance and retention of middle managers can only be guaranteed if they are satisfied with workplace environment. This study investigates the perceptions of 246 middle managers about organizational climate of local and multinational pharmaceutical organizations. The results show that middle managers perceived that internal communication was open, organizational structure was highly structured, organizational climate was not highly politicized, and professional development opportunities, evaluation for improvement, and internal promotion were highly encouraged. While organizational administration was not sensitive in relation to the regard for personal concerns. The study reveals significant difference in perceptions of middle managers in respect of political climate, professional development opportunities and regard for personal concerns when local and multinational organizations are compared. The findings of this study will be useful for Human Resource Management experts and practitioners in creation of positive organizational climate in the industrial sector of Pakistan in particular and other Asian countries in general.

Keywords: Organizational Climate, Middle managers, Pharmaceutical Industry, Internal Communication, Organizational Structure, Political Climate, Professional Development Opportunities, Evaluation, Promotion, Regard for personal concerns.

1. Introduction

Best performing employees are in demand by every organization. But the question what makes employees perform requires identifying the determinants of job performance. Out of many factors positive workplace climate is one of the biggest determinants. It encourages the workforce to work at its best by expending discretionary efforts. The purpose of this study is to investigate middle managers' perceptions for organizational climate as it has an important

bearing on their motivation. The perceptions influence the level of motivation of employees to perform their jobs effectively (Hackman *et al.* 1983). Hawthorne studies (1927-1932) revealed that human feelings and attitudes; interpersonal relationships; social, psychological and economic needs are related to motivation of individuals (Lunenberg & Ornstein, 1991). As revealed by Sell and Shiplay (1979) positive organizational climate was significant and important for success of the individuals and the organization.

Organizational climate is a set of measurable properties like trust, morale, reward, equity, conflict, leader's credibility, and resistance to change, that influences their motivation, behavior at work, and work environment as perceived by employees (Burton *et al.* 2004; Mathisen & Einarsen, 2004; and Anderson & West 1998). The value system, prevalent conditions, factors affecting and events occurring at workplace become the base for employees' perceptions for work environment (Ekvall, 2001; and Verbeke *et al.* 1998). Sharing of values, beliefs, and behavioral norms makes climate of an organization (Ouchi, 1981). Organizational climate is sum total of values, beliefs, and attitudes of employees that influence their behavior at work and contribute towards the success of the organization (Arvidsson, *et al.* 2006; Ashkanasy *et al.* 2000; and Payne & Pugh, 1976). Organizational climate is personality of an organization and like human personality it distinguishes one organization from the other organizations (Emery, 1999). The climate of the organization has vital effect on the organizational outcomes.

Organizational climate brings numerous positive changes in the behaviors of employees. The organizational climate influences the job involvement, productivity, and turnover of employees (Barnard, 1997; and Davis & Newstrom, 1985). The organizational climate characterized with more concerns for employees' welfare, professional development opportunities, innovation in organizational processes and flexibility for change initiatives, and performance feedback to motivate employees has shown better productivity (Patterson *et al.* 2004). The significant relationship among organizational structure, job performance, organizational commitment and job satisfaction make climate at work more important (Deal & Kennedy, 1992). It is revealed that supportive climate has positive relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance at work (Al-shamiri, 1994; and Al-rahimi, 1990).

The paper is organized in five parts. The next section describes seven factors of organizational: Internal Communication, Organizational Structure, Political Climate, Professional Development Opportunities, Evaluation, Promotion and Regard for Personal Concerns. The comparison is

made to analyze whether any significant difference exists between organizational climate of local and multinational. This is followed by the methodology, which describes the participants in the study, the measures used, and the statistical methods applied. The concluding sections contain the results obtained, discussion of the findings of this study, and conclusion drawn from the results in terms of implication and consequences for human resource management policies and practices in contemporary local and multinational organizations working in Pakistan.

2. Literature Review

The organizational climate is made up of four variables: overall environment, internal communication, employees' role conflicts, and supervisory support (Dastmalchian, 1991). A variety of variables is used in research to measure the organizational climate: organizational structure; performance standards; responsibility; transversality (communication among teams); recognition; support; commitment; autonomy; performance feedback; concern for employee welfare; skill development; effort; and goal clarity. The congruence between employee and organization make climate of organization that positively affects the performance, behavior, and job satisfaction while incongruence negatively affects these organizational outcomes (Argyris, 1957; and Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). Organizational climate in concept and practice can be understood well with '*Person-Environment Fit theory*' which measures congruence and incongruence between person and organization, *Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire*' developed by Halpin and Croft (1963), and Organizational Climate Index (OCI) was developed by Stern (1970) with the premise that groups and individuals in organizations could only be understood in the context of their work climate. Chappell's (1995) used seven factors to measure the organizational climate at workplace. These factors are internal communication, organizational structure, political climate, organizational development opportunities, evaluation, growth and regard for personal concern. This study is based on these seven variables and the following literature on the said variables.

2.1 Internal Communication

The style of information flow in the organization, whether open or closed distinguishes the climate of one organization from other organizations (Dill, 1958; Huber & Daft, 1987). Internal communication demands to capture both *content* and *intent* and to learn the use of language of logic and emotion. As the emotions are far more motivational and powerful, this is due to the fact that eyes and hearts are primary and ears have secondary importance in listening.

Communication is not matter of intellect (conveying technically and tactfully) but it is matter of trust and acceptance of ideas and feelings (Covey, 1991).

There are two types of communications one is open communication and other is closed communication. Open internal communication develops and maintains the vision and facilitates the participation of employees in decision making process that leads to organizational success (Leslie & Fretwell, 1996). Internal communication may be closed, it is just contrast to the open communication' where new ideas have a little space or cannot be expressed, people feel threat of criticism or punishment in sharing information of critical nature. The closed communication may be due to some unpleasant workplace experiences that create barriers on the sharing of information with others in context of competition or social values.

A strong positive correlation was found between positive feelings about communication within the organization and positive feelings regarding the organizational climate (Moynihan & Pandey, 2008). Internal communication transmits organizational culture in new members through assumptions, beliefs, and values of the organization and the way the activities are performed at the workplace (Quirke, 1995). The effectiveness of internal communication can be instrumental in the improvement of workgroups, group coherence, and energizes the work teams; and the organizations that lack in quality of internal communication experience failure (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991).

2.2 Organizational structure

Organizational structure is the connectivity of employees to the organization through formal chain of command with people-centeredness built on the emotional and psychological needs of individuals and groups (Overholt *et al.* 2000). The degree of *centralization* (lack of autonomy or the extent to which organizational decisions are taken at level above the chief executive, for example, by the board of company or by a parent company), *specialization* (the extent to which organizations specialize their no workflow activities along functional lines), and *formalization* (the extent to which organizations possess and distribute documents to define organizational roles), groupings of subunits and the like activities give rise to a certain climate as organizational members respond to that structure (Payne & Pugh, 1976).

2.3 PoliticalClimate

Politics is an inherent part of the workplace and it should be accepted and understood (Mintzberg, 1989). Political climate is the extent to which decision making process in the organization is dominated by political groupings and professional growth is affected by political affiliations and members of organization are involved in struggle for resources, personal conflicts, using a variety of influence tactics to obtain personal benefits and to achieve their goals in different ways which are sometimes opposite to the interests of coworkers and the organization (Ferris *et al.* 1989). The organizational climate highly politicized is considered unfair, unethical, dysfunctional, and featured by injustice, inequitable distribution of resources among employees and even among external clients of the organization, and abuse of the authority to serve self-interests (Thompson & Ingraham, 1996; Ferris & Kacmar 1992). Hierarchical levels have reverse relationship with the perceptions of political climate, meaning thereby, the lower level employees with staled careers, more often blame the political climate responsible for their deprivations at workplace (Gandz & Murray, 1980). The highly politicized social behavior has negative relationship with the organizational functioning (Pfeffer, 1981). So to it is useful to understand the work environment (Madison *et al.* 1980).

2.4 Professional Development Opportunities

The advancement in career is always been the dream of employees irrespective of their level in the organizational hierarchy. Learning opportunities both on the job and off the job create professional development opportunities finally leading to job satisfaction (Koonce, 1998). The workforce of today is more concerned with productivity, and awareness regarding the obsolescence of their knowledge and skills is increasing (Cheng & Ho 2001). The professional development opportunities have significant positive relation with the job satisfaction (Acker, 2004). Similarly, The employees satisfied with their jobs are more motivated to expend more time and effort to enhance their new skills for future professional development (Chen *et al.* 2004).

2.5 Evaluation

Evaluation is analyzing the data collected through the supervisor, peer review or coworkers in connection with one's performance in relation to job description, to form an opinion for future decisions. The purpose of evaluation may be to support the decisions of raising the salary or other fringe benefits, enhancement of responsibility or promotion, and extending the tenure of

employment. The data are collected on regular basis for the evaluation of employee through the supervisor's feedback, to provide professional growth opportunities (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; and Langley, 1994). Evaluation is part of performance management process at workplace. The performance management can be divided into three stages: performance planning, routine coaching, and performance evaluation (Hersey *et al.* 1996). The process of performance evaluation, should be capable of reliability (stable and consistent), influence (employee can control), classifiable (differentiate the performance on basis of scales/ratings), acceptable (employees feel it fair and accurate for assessment). Generally, everyone wants to know how he performs and how is it accepted. The feedback enhances individual performance in behavioral management (Prue & Fairbank, 1981).

2.6 Promotion

Promotion is upward growth in one's job hierarchy as a consequence of human capital investment, good job match, recognition of past performance and an incentive for future performance. Moreover, it is the probability of winning prize and an outcome of revealed ability of worker at his job (Lazear & Rosen, 1981).

2.7 Regard for Personal Concerns

Regards for personal concerns is joint emotional bank account of employee and employer, which enables them to have a win-win performance agreement (Covey, 1991). The organizational support to an individual's career and in personal affairs is more important than money or other material rewards and it reduces turnover of employees (Blau, 2001).

On the basis of given literature there are seven components of work climate, internal communication, organizational structure, political climate, professional growth, evaluation, promotion, regards for personal concerns. This study aims to see the perception so middle level managers regarding work climate of their organizations. This study would be very helpful for management as work climate is having positive relation with job satisfaction, performance and outcome.

3. Methodology

3.1 Population

The population of this study consists of pharmacists; chemists; plant engineers; accountants; marketing; and personnel managers working as middle-level managers in the pharmaceutical industry in Pakistan. In Pakistan 441 (411 local and 30 multinational) pharmaceutical organizations are working and about 1500 middle-level managers are working in this area (Pakistan health & pharmaceuticals sector, n.d.). All these organizations were selected as population of the study from four big cities of Pakistan Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar. These cities are located in different provinces, so the study can be generalized to all companies of Pakistan.

3.2 Sample

Out of these 66 organizations 246 middle-level managers were selected as sample of the study.

3.3 Sampling technique

The cluster sampling technique is used because it is more appropriate where the target population is scattered geographically (Gay *et al.* 2005).

3.4 Collection of Data

The middle-level managers of the selected industrial units who were present at the time of visit to the specific unit were administered the questionnaires personally. A total of 322 questionnaires were distributed among the middle-level managers, out of which 265 filled in questionnaires were received back with response rate of 82%. Nineteen questionnaires were discarded during editing of data and 246 were used in analysis.

3.5 Instrument

A five point Likert-type rating scale with scale points: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (DA), and strongly disagree (SD), was developed, validated and used with scores 5 to 1 respectively. The pilot testing was done and cronbach alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The alpha score of the instrument was 0.714 which falls in acceptable limits. The questionnaire with 27 statements was finalized for the study, to measure the perceptions of

middle-level managers about factors of organizational climate: internal communication (5-statements), organizational structure (6-statements), political climate (4-statements), professional development opportunities(4-statements), evaluation (3-statements), promotion (3-statements) and regard for personal concerns (2-statements).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. SPSS 16 was used for this purpose.

4. Results and Findings

Table 1: Distribution of Gender of respondents and type of organization

Gender	Organization		Total	Percent
	Local	Multinational		
Male	137	67	204	83
Female	33	9	42	17
Total	170 (69%)	76 (31%)	246	100

Table 1 shows descriptive of gender. Out of the 246 respondents, 204 (83%) were male and 42 (17%) managers were females. Majority of them were working in local 170 (69%) and rest 76 (31%) in multinational organizations.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Managers

Age Limit	Frequency	Percent
Less then 35 years	190	77
36-45 years	43	18
More then 45 years	12	5
Total	246	100

Table 3: Work Experience

Work Experience	Frequency	Percent
10 years or less	194	79
36-45 years	42	17
More then 45 years	9	4
Total	246	100

Table 2 & Table 3 show ages and work experience of respondents respectively. A majority (n=190, 77%) of middle-level managers are 35 years of age or lower, n=43 (18%) are between

36 and 45 years and only 12 (5%) are older than 45 years. One respondent has not mentioned his/her age.

Regarding work experience, majority of the respondents (n=194, 79%) had experience 10 year or less. Forty-two (17%) middle managers had up to 20 years and only 9 (4%) were having more than twenty years.

Table 4: Academic qualifications of the respondents

Discipline	Frequency	Percent
B. Pharmacy	72	29.3
M. Pharmacy	5	02.0
M. Sc Chemistry	36	14.6
B. Com/M. Com	16	06.5
MBA	38	15.4
Other	79	32.1
Total	246	100.0

Table 4 provides data about education of 246 middle-level managers, all are university graduates. A handsome number of them was directly related to production of medicines (n=113, 46%) that is, graduates in pharmacy and chemistry. Business graduates (B.Com/M.Com & MBA) were 54 (22%) and (n=79, 32%) having other degrees working in the support services. City-wise distribution of population and sample for local & multinational industrial units is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Pharmaceutical Industrial-Units included in the Sample

S.No.	Cities (clusters)	Number of Industrial Units				Total
		Local		Multinational		
		Total	Selected	Total	Selected	
1	Karachi	105	13	20	09	22
2	Lahore	110	22	06	04	26
3	Islamabad	32	10	02	02	08
4	Peshawar	29	06	00	00	10
Total		276	51	28	15	66

Table 6: Perception of Middle Level Managers regarding elements of Organizational Climate

Organizational Climate elements		% responses
Internal Communication	Open	35
	Partly Open	45
	Closed	20
Organizational Structure	Highly Structured	88
	Loose structured	12
Political Climate	Highly politicized	20
	Not highly politicized	80
Professional Development Opportunities	Highly Encouraged	73
	Not highly encouraged	27
Perception of evaluation	Highly supportive	86
	Not highly supportive	14
Promotion	Encouraged	77
	Not Encouraged	23
Regard for Personal concerns	Sensitive	29
	Not sensitive	71

As the unit of analysis was organization, the model responses of the middle-level managers of organization are considered to categorize organizations on basis of organizational climate factors dimensions. The Internal Communication in majority 80% organizations is open or partly open while in 20% organizations it is closed. Organizational Structure in highly structured in most of the organizations (88%) and only 12% of the organizations are having loose structure. Political Climate in most of the pharmaceutical organizations is not highly politicized, meaning thereby no discrimination is found on the basis of political affiliations.

In majority (73%) of organizations Professional Development Opportunities are highly encouraged and Evaluation in majority (86%) of organizations is highly supportive for improvement while it is not being used for discipline purposes. The internal Promotion in majority (77%) organizations is encouraged while organizational management are not sensitive to Regard for Personal Concerns in majority (71%) organizations as perceived by middle managers working in pharmaceutical industry in Pakistan.

While making the comparison in the perceptions of middle managers of multinational and local organizations, following table is prepared to find whether significant difference exists between the perceptions of middle managers in the two-types of the organizations.

Table 7 : Perceptions of Middle-level Managers about Organizational Climate

Variables of Organizational Climate	Organization	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig
Internal Communication	Local	170	3.44	0.49	-0.359	0.720
	Multinational	76	3.46	0.63		
Organizational Structure	Local	170	3.33	0.44	1.124	0.262
	Multinational	76	3.26	0.56		
Political Climate	Local	170	3.26	0.59	-2.202	0.029*
	Multinational	76	3.44	0.65		
Professional Development Opportunities	Local	170	3.24	0.54	-2.099	0.037*
	Multinational	76	3.40	0.55		
Evaluation	Local	170	3.49	0.69	-0.201	0.841
	Multinational	76	3.51	0.69		
Promotion	Local	170	3.34	0.63	0.896	0.371
	Multinational	76	3.26	0.70		
Regard for Personal Concerns	Local	170	3.07	0.82	2.410	0.017*
	Multinational	76	2.80	0.86		

*Significant at 0.05 Level

Table 7 reveals that no significant difference is found in four factors of organizational climate: internal communication, organizational structure, evaluation, and promotion on the basis of comparison made between multinational and local organizations. While in three factors of organizational climate: Political Climate, Professional Development Opportunities, and Regard for Personal Concerns, the perceptions of middle managers are significantly different in local and multinational organizations.

5. Discussion

Organizational structure of pharmaceutical organizations is perceived as highly structured that is negatively related with the job satisfaction (Finlay *et al.* 1995). The pharmaceutical organizations should redesign organizational structure to increase the participation in decision making and proper communication of job requirements will enhance job satisfaction of employees (Campbell

et al. 2004). According to the perceptions of middle-level managers organizational climate is not highly politicized, it will enhance the job satisfaction of middle-level managers because a negative relationship is found between high political climate and job satisfaction (Vigoda, 2000). The professional development opportunities are highly encouraged in pharmaceutical organizations as perceived by respondents of the study. It was found by Koonce, (1998) that the learning on the job and off the job creates professional development opportunities that ensure the job satisfaction of the employees. It will give competitive advantage to the organization (Gardon, 1990), and will enhance job satisfaction levels even with the lower salaries (Leavitt, 1996).

It is revealed by the study that the evaluation is supportive for improvement and is not being used for discipline purposes as perceived by respondents. The fairness in the implementation of evaluation process enhances job satisfaction of the employees, even if, they are receiving less than their expectations (Bretz *et al.* 1992). The internal promotion as perceived by middle-level managers is highly encouraged in the pharmaceutical industry. It was found by Lunenburg & Ornstein, (1991) that encouragement of promotions has positive effect on the organizational climate and job satisfaction.

The pharmaceutical organizations as perceived by the middle-level managers are not sensitive to regard for personal concerns. The cases of emergency i.e. sickness, accident or any other are considered as personal problems of the employees and the organizational managements are found not sensitive to support their employees in the times of crisis. It was found that sensitivity of organizational management for well being of employees and supportiveness in their personal affairs at workplace has positive effect on the job satisfaction (Vroom, 1964; and Moorman *et al.* 1993). The organizational support to an individual's career and personal affairs is more important than money or other material rewards and reduces turnover of employees (Blau, 2001). The organizational managements who want to create positive organizational climate at their workplaces have to be more sensitive to regard for personal concerns of their middle-level managers.

These findings of this study are consistent with the findings of the studies conducted by Bailey (2002); Gratto (2001) and Kindt (2008) all factors of organizational climate with exception of regard for personal concerns. In the above studies respondents perceived that their organizational managements were very sensitive to support their employees in case of any challenged situation

but the position in this study is not appreciable. The considerate attitude of management for employees builds confidence and trust of employees that will enhance the morale at workplace.

6. Conclusion

The majority of pharmaceutical organizations are characterized by open internal communication, highly structured organizations, not highly politicized climate, highly encouraged professional development opportunities, highly supportive evaluation for improvement, and encouraged internal promotions while administration of pharmaceutical organizations is not sensitive to regard for personal concerns of employees. It is also concluded that the perceptions of managers in relation to three factors of organizational climate: political climate, professional development opportunities, and regard for personal concerns are significantly different in local and multinational organizations.

On the basis of findings of this study, the local organizations have to minimize the politicization and should take steps to increase professional development opportunities for better climate at workplace. While multinational organizations have to be more sensitive in regard for personal concerns as they are performing low in this aspect as compared to local organizations.

The human resource policy makers, who want to create positive organizational climate that enhances job satisfaction, organizational performance, and organizational citizenship behavior; and curbs job dissatisfaction, turnover, absenteeism and deviant behavior at workplace, can use these findings. The comparison of local and multinational organizations also highlights that improvement of which factors enhances positive organizational climate of Pakistani organizations in particular; and international organizations in general.

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