

RESEARCH NOTE

Variations in Organizational Climate Perception of Faculty in State Agricultural Universities

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ABSTRACT

Organizations need constant studies and evaluation with a view to ascertain the measures necessary to improve areas of deficiency, so as to attain a faster rate of growth and development towards achieving its goals. The present study was designed to analyze the organizational climate by studying the prevailing and expected organizational climate as perceived by the faculty performing teaching/research/extension duties and faculty on administrative side of four SAU's using selected dimensions. The data from PAU, Punjab, ANGRAU, Andhra Pradesh, AAU, Assam and MPUA & T, Rajasthan indicate the highest gap reported by AAU faculty in orientation, innovation and monetary gains but were comparatively most satisfied with decision making, leadership and accountability/evaluation. ANGRAU faculty perceived the highest gap in leadership and teamwork, PAU in control and supervision, rules/policies and accountability/evaluation and MPUA&T in decision-making. Administrators of AAU reported more gaps as compared to other universities in control/ supervision, orientation, decision-making, leadership, physical facilities, teamwork and accountability/evaluation. In ANGRAU it was for monetary gains and PAU in leadership and innovation. Difference among faculty and administrators may be due to the differences in duties and experiences. Gaps in prevailing and expected levels of different dimensions need to be plugged with suitable strategies for creating more suitable organizational climate.

Key words: Administration; Dimensions; Expected; Faculty; Organizational climate; Perception; Prevailing;

Organization is a social arrangement consisting of number of individuals, with different tasks for each individual, independence and interaction of these individuals aiming at the achievement of prefixed objectives. 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. Organizational climate is the employees' perceptions and perspectives of an organization. It is something that is sensed rather than something that is recognized cognitively. Organizational climate is the total perception of all the individuals that help to differentiate organizations according to their procedures and practices. 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 culture is more defined than organizational climate; thus organizational culture is a broader pattern of its beliefs and stems from employees' interpretations of the assumptions, philosophies and values that produces the experienced climate within an organization (Brown and Brooks, 2002).

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. 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 productivity. An organizational climate study enables a successful organization to

operate more efficiently through the use of worker input and satisfaction ratings (*Gupta, 2008*).

SAUs are academic organizations, which 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 has been 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.

METHODOLOGY

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 Agril. University, Rajendra Nagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh; Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Assam and Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur, Rajasthan were selected.

The perception of the faculty members and faculty members on the administrative side with regard to the organizational climate was studied. A list of in position faculty members (Prof., Asso. Prof. and Asstt. Prof.) and those in administrative positions was prepared separately. A sample of eighteen faculty members representing each priority area (Research, Teaching, and Extension) and each gender (proportionately) was selected as the sample for the study. From the list of all the Directors and Deans of colleges located in the main campus), Dean Post Graduate Studies along the Registrar of the each university (only if Registrar was a member of the faculty) five members were randomly selected along with a random selection of ten Head of the Departments. These fifteen respondents from each of the selected university represented the faculty on the administrative side in the selected SAU's. Data were

gathered by means of a questionnaire consisting 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.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The organizational climate consists of different dimensions. The perception has been given in form of mean scores with regard to the prevailing and expected organizational climate and Chi square was used to test the significance of gap between the prevailing and expected organizational climate in different dimensions.

The data in the table reveals the gap as perceived by the faculty and administrators in each of the dimension of the organizational climate of selected SAU's. Highly significant values indicate high gap between prevailing and expected organizational climate of each dimension. The data has been discussed as follows, individually for each of the dimension:

Control and supervision: The satisfaction of the MPUA&T faculty and administrators with the control and supervision in comparison to the other universities was evident from the least gap. PAU faculty and AAU administrators reported comparatively more unsatisfactory condition. These points towards need for improvement in the present system of control and supervision in these universities. Lack of satisfaction might be due to the less freedom given to faculty to take independent decisions, more strictness to follow the directions of their superiors and constant supervisions and work pressure to accomplish the assigned task.

Orientation: AAU faculty reported more expectations from the 'orientation' dimension as compared to the least reported by MPUA&T. On the contrary AAU administrators revealing contrary perception of the situation showing that they were more satisfied than the faculty. The ANGRAU administrators perceived the existing situation as far as orientation was concerned more unsatisfactory than their counterparts in other universities. The gap values of all the universities was found to be significant at 1% level of significance indicating a high gap in all SAU's with regard to the prevailing and the expected situation.

Decision-making: The gap as perceived by the faculty in decision-making was the highest in MPUA&T and comparatively very low in the other universities. But

Table 1. University wise comparison of gap in perception of faculty and administration regarding selected dimensions of organizational climate in selected SAU's

Dimensions	SAU	Faculty (n=54 for each university)				Administrator (n=15 for each university)			
		\bar{X}_p	\bar{X}_e	Gap	X^2	\bar{X}_p	\bar{X}_e	Gap	X^2
Control and supervision	AAU	2.71	3.06	0.35	5.221*	3.07	3.33	0.26	7.273**
	ANGRAU	2.75	3.10	0.35	6.171*	3.14	3.36	0.22	6.221*
	PAU	2.97	3.59	0.62	8.667**	3.00	3.15	0.15	5.738*
	MPUA&T	2.97	2.98	0.01	4.221*	3.15	3.25	0.10	4.913*
Orientation	AAU	3.39	4.63	1.24	47.999**	3.77	4.32	0.54	12.565**
	ANGRAU	3.50	4.68	1.18	30.490**	3.49	4.16	0.67	15.323**
	PAU	3.55	4.38	0.83	30.664**	3.31	3.91	0.60	14.844**
	MPUA&T	4.02	4.70	0.68	23.892**	3.43	4.00	0.57	14.234**
Decision making	AAU	3.02	3.12	0.10	7.807**	2.94	3.33	0.39	15.323**
	ANGRAU	2.97	3.08	0.10	8.439**	2.93	3.12	0.19	5.758*
	PAU	3.05	3.49	0.44	9.281**	3.19	3.21	0.02	0.096 ^{NS}
	MPUA&T	3.33	3.78	0.45	46.255**	3.23	3.37	0.14	4.993*
Leadership	AAU	3.59	4.13	0.54	7.807**	3.57	3.59	0.02	3.794 ^{NS}
	ANGRAU	3.57	4.20	0.63	19.555**	3.51	3.70	0.19	6.221*
	PAU	3.64	4.02	0.38	5.918*	3.35	3.65	0.31	15.964**
	MPUA&T	4.07	4.46	0.39	8.211**	3.42	3.62	0.19	4.993*
Policies and rules	AAU	3.37	3.49	0.12	5.918*	3.51	3.77	0.26	4.014*
	ANGRAU	3.22	3.72	0.50	9.066**	3.32	3.65	0.33	5.758*
	PAU	3.42	3.94	0.50	58.943**	3.43	4.17	0.74	6.223*
	MPUA&T	3.48	3.94	0.46	6.270*	3.60	3.83	0.23	3.551 ^{NS}
Innovation	AAU	3.52	4.41	0.89	53.776**	3.17	4.02	0.86	15.323**
	ANGRAU	3.41	4.29	0.89	49.571**	2.97	3.80	0.83	14.844**
	PAU	3.08	3.68	0.60	36.905**	3.46	4.24	0.79	14.615**
	MPUA&T	3.16	3.77	0.60	35.138**	3.40	3.87	0.47	11.224**
Physical facilities	AAU	3.14	4.03	0.89	27.195**	3.32	3.66	0.35	14.786**
	ANGRAU	3.16	3.90	0.74	26.222**	3.32	3.60	0.29	12.565**
	PAU	3.28	3.91	0.63	14.663**	3.09	3.47	0.38	14.844**
	MPUA&T	3.45	4.05	0.60	7.691**	3.13	3.51	0.38	15.323**
Team work	AAU	3.44	3.73	0.29	21.056**	3.49	3.71	0.21	4.281*
	ANGRAU	3.24	3.57	0.33	35.751**	3.21	3.43	0.22	10.224**
	PAU	3.10	3.31	0.20	5.918*	3.37	3.59	0.21	5.642*
	MPUA&T	3.20	3.33	0.13	4.931*	3.53	3.69	0.16	4.211*
Monetary gains	AAU	3.46	4.65	1.18	64.906**	3.13	3.92	0.79	14.890**
	ANGRAU	3.52	4.53	1.01	49.112**	3.29	4.18	0.88	16.964**
	PAU	3.16	3.95	0.78	48.646**	3.24	3.86	0.62	7.273**
	MPUA&T	3.95	4.64	0.69	37.176**	3.20	3.94	0.74	11.752**
Accountability/ Evaluation	AAU	3.18	3.51	0.32	10.339**	3.18	3.51	0.32	14.334**
	ANGRAU	2.88	3.67	0.79	22.841**	2.99	3.40	0.41	16.964**
	PAU	2.66	3.48	0.81	61.069**	3.17	3.41	0.23	5.758*
	MPUA&T	2.95	3.59	0.64	10.620**	3.17	3.42	0.24	9.878**

** Significant at 1% level of significance, * Significant at 5% level of significance, NS = Non significant

the gap in all the universities was highly significant pointing towards serious look into the decision making dimension. Lack of satisfaction with the decision-making aspect within the university can be cause of dissatisfaction with regard to other dimensions also. With regard to administrators the data shows that the administrators of AAU were the least satisfied. This gap was found to be non significant in case of PAU administrators. It proves that administrators in PAU administrators were satisfied with their decision-making. In other universities the gap was found to be significant. Nearly a decade back, *Kaur (2004)* studied the organizational climate of SAU's and reported serious gap in this regard. *Mohan (2000)* reported lack of satisfaction by the faculty with decision-making. This can be attributed to the inability or unwillingness of the administrators to either seek the opinion of the faculty or were not considering their viewpoint even after knowing their views on important issues.

Leadership: The dimension was found least up to the expectation of ANGRAU faculty as compared to the other three universities and on the contrary administrators of PAU expected more from leadership than others. The gap was significant in all cases except AAU administrators. Successful leaders adjust their behavior in accordance with the organizational requirements or according to the demand of the situation (*Bodla and Nawaz, 2010; Goleman, et al. 2001*).

Policies and rules: Differences in prevailing and expected situation as perceived by the faculty and administrators with regard to policies and rules were significant in all SAU's. In MPUA&T, no difference was found between the perceptions of administrators about prevailing and expected organizational climate. The gap was highest in case of both PAU faculty and administrators and was also highly significant. It points towards their dissatisfaction with either the present policies or rules or their implementation. *Gurkan (2006)* found a difference between the perception levels of those who were in the post of management and the perception level of those who were not. In present case this was only true in MPUA&T. However, the lower gap in case of administrators may be due to the fact that the one's responsible for making of rules doing not find scope for improvements. Whereas the faculty is responsible for the actual implementation and hence had conveyed dissatisfaction with regard to policies and rule.

Innovation: Data on gap in perceived prevailing and expected organizational climate of selected SAU's as far as innovation was concerned shows that both faculty and administrators perceived the gap to be highly significant in all SAU's. This is an indication of both faculty and administrators keen on introduction of new ideas even in SAU's where this dimension was ranked low on importance. The gap was the highest in AAU and comparatively low in MPUA&T. A close look at the data shows that the gap was higher in case of faculty than the administrators.

Physical facilities: Faculty and administrators both found gap in the physical facilities, which was highly significant, indicating more expectation of both on this front. AAU faculty reported highest expectations as compared to least by MPUA&T. On the contrary maximum gap was reported by MPUA&T administrators and lowest by ANGRAU. More gaps can be attributed to the perception that the physical facilities particularly in an environment which involves long hours, highly stressful, creative and multidimensional work need to be satisfactory for achieving the desired objectives.

Teamwork: The gap as perceived by the faculty and administrators in teamwork was the highest in ANGRAU and AAU and comparatively very low in MPUA&T and PAU, whereas the administrators of ANGRAU were least satisfied. The administrators of MPUA&T perceived lowest gap. *Gurkan (2006)* found differences in the perception of academic personnel and administrative personnel in this regard. Team work is the key to goal achievement in all organization and is particularly useful in organizations like SAU's where the faculty has to perform multiple tasks ranging from teaching to extension and research.

Monetary gains: AAU faculty reported more expectations with regard to the monetary gains as compared to least in MPUA&T. Maximum gap was perceived by ANGRAU administrators and the lowest by PAU. The gap in all the universities as reported by faculty and administrators was found to be highly significant showing a discontent among both faculty and administrators as far as monetary gains were concerned. Even with high salaries this discontent might be due to the perception that work undertaken by faculty and administrators at SAU's is more strenuous and multidimensional than the traditional universities where faculty draws similar salaries.

Accountability/evaluation: The gap in perception about the prevailing and expected climate in the dimension of accountability/evaluation was highly significant in all the universities. Highest gap was reported by PAU and least by AAU faculty. In case of administrators, the highest gap was found in ANGRAU and lowest in PAU. This shows significant difference between PAU faculty and administrators in their perception regarding the dimension of accountability/evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The overall university comparisons indicate that AAU faculty perceived the highest gap in the dimensions of orientation, innovation and monetary gains but were comparatively most satisfied with decision making, leadership and accountability/evaluation. The faculty of ANGRAU perceived the highest gap in leadership and teamwork. In comparison to the faculty members of other universities, PAU faculty perceived maximum gap in control and supervision, rules/policies and accountability/evaluation. Faculty of MPUA&T reported maximum gap on the dimension of decision-making.

The administrators on other hand had different perception than the faculty. In AAU, the faculty on the administration side perceived more gap than their counterparts in other universities with regard to control and supervision, orientation, decision-making, leadership, physical facilities, teamwork and accountability/evaluation. The administrative faculty of ANGRAU only

reported comparatively more gap in monetary gains and PAU in leadership and innovation.

Individual difference among faculty and administrators may be due to the differences in backgrounds, personalities, and experiences. A consensus in perception of climate by the members working in different situations makes it more meaningful to interpret perceived organizational climate as an attribute of organization itself reflecting the quality of its environment.

The improvement of these areas of functioning of the teachers was suggested to build up self-confidence and aspiration levels of the teachers and to enhance their perception of the working climate of the university leading to increase in satisfaction and efficiency. It is therefore very important for the authorities of each of these universities to strategize so as to reduce the gaps. Leaders that behave according to the moment or situation help to create an organizational climate with less stress and worry. When leaders adjust their behavior accordingly, they reduce employee turnover and burnout, which as *Momeni (2009)* stated, allows organizations to operate more efficiently and maximize performance. This helps to create the perception of fairness within the organization leading to satisfaction about the organizational climate.

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