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A study on organizational climate as perceived by the employees of district agricultural offices in Meghalaya

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Abstract

The study was conducted in Meghalaya during 2017-18 by taking the convenient sample size of 80 respondents selected from four purposively selected District Agricultural Offices in the state. The stratified random sampling with equal allocation technique was used to select 20 employees from each office and the results found that majority of employees belongs to old age, 12th passed, low experienced, low salary, very low trained, medium work load, high level of information seeking behaviour, medium career opportunities, high job satisfaction and high extension service orientation groups. Majority of employees perceived organizational climate at medium level followed by high, very high and low levels and the major problems expressed by the employees were lack of manpower, delay in promotion of employees, lack of proper training to the employees, lack of infrastructure, vacancies in department and poor connectivity and communication.

Keywords: Organizational climate, district agricultural offices, Meghalaya, socio-personal variables

Introduction

Organizational climate is the common perception of the employees about their working environment. It is essential factor which affects significantly the performance of the employees there by the output of an organization. Cooper (2003) [2] defined organizational climate as “people’s perception of their working environment with regard to caring and friendliness.” It means that there should be creation of good and healthy organizational environment by the interaction of employees and the management. It shows that organizational climate is perceptions of both administration as well as the employees working in it. According to Litwin and Stringer (1968) [4] the organizational climate is a “set of measurable properties of the work environment perceived by the people in it, and these properties are assumed to influence motivation and behaviour.” and according to Mullins (1993) [5] “Organizational climate is a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of an organization that is experienced by its members, influences their behaviour, and can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics or attributes of the organization.”

The study was about investigating the organizational climate of the District Agricultural Offices of Meghalaya. They are the apex organizations at the district level and play prominent role in providing main stream public extension service in the field of agriculture and allied sectors in the state. They also provide all the way support, *i.e.*, technical information required, updated innovations in the farming, many subsidies, schemes to promote new practices for the improvement of sustainable agricultural productivity and production along with the socio-economic development of farmers and the rural mass, particularly tribal people as they are more and predominant in Meghalaya. With this background the study was taken with the following objectives:

1. To study the perception of employees towards the organizational climate in District Agricultural Offices.
2. To determine the relationship of socio-personnel variables of the respondents with their perceived organizational climate.
3. To identify organizational problems faced by the employees of District Agricultural Offices.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Meghalaya during 2017-18. In the state there are eleven districts namely South West Garo Hills, West Garo Hills, North Garo Hills, East Garo Hills, South Garo Hills, West Khasi Hills, South West Khasi Hills, Ri-Bhoi, East Khasi Hills, West Jaintia

Hills and East Jaintia Hills out of them four districts *i.e.*, District Agricultural Offices were purposively selected as per the highest filled hierarchy of employees with the help of secondary data collected from Directorate of Agriculture, Meghalaya. A convenient sample size of 80 respondents were selected by taking 20 respondents from each selected District Agricultural Office and stratified random sampling with equal allocation technique was used to select 20 respondents from grade A, grade B and grade C employees. Data collection was done with the help of interview schedule.

The organizational climate (dependent variable) was assessed by the scale developed by Nazir (2015) [7]. The association between dependent and independent variables was measured by the chi-square test and the relationship was measured by the spearman's rank coefficient of correlation.

Formula of Chi-square test:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Where,
 x^2 = chi square value
 O_i = observed value
 E_i = expected value

The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where,
 r = Co-efficient of correlation
 d = Differences of ranks between paired samples
 n = No. of pairs of observations

Measurement of dependent variable and the selected independent variables which are affecting dependent variable is mentioned in Table.1

Table 1: Variables and their measurement (n=80)

Sl. No.	Variables	Measurement
Independent variable		
1	Organizational climate (The degree to which a set of attributes specific to employees of District Agricultural Offices, Meghalaya may be inferred from the way that organization deals with its employees and its environment.)	Scale developed by Nazir (2015) [7] with needed modifications Scoring (Scores): Low < 87 Medium 87-103 High 104-120 Very high > 121
Dependent variables		
2	Age (The number of completed years of the respondent at the time of enquiry.)	Chronological age in completed years Scoring (years): Young < 37 Middle 37-46 Old > 47
3	Education (The different qualifications through certificates, one obtained from school, colleges and universities.)	Actual degree that the respondent possess Scoring(Score): 10th pass-1 12th pass-2 BSc.(Agri.)-3 BSc.(Hort.)-4 MSc.(agri.)-5 MSc.(Hort.)-6 PhD-7 Any other-8
4	Experience (The total number of years of service of staff in the Department of Agriculture.)	Scoring (Years): Low < 14 Medium 14- 26 High >27
5	Salary (The amount received by the employee in rupees per month.)	Scoring (Rupees): Low < ₹ 45 Medium ₹ 45 - ₹ 74 High > ₹ 75
6	Training undergone (The number of days of training received by the employees within the last three years.)	Scoring (Scores): Very low < 24 Low 24 - 46 Medium 47 - 69 High > 70
7	Work load (The feeling of the staff towards the work load in their job as rated by themselves.)	Average hours of work per week Scoring (hours): Light <26 Medium 26 - 35 Heavy > 36
8	Information seeking behaviour (The frequency of contact or exposure of a staff to different sources for obtaining information related to the job.)	Scoring (scores): Low < 24 Medium 24 - 36 High > 34
9	Career / Professional growth (Whether the staff was given enough opportunities to work towards his / her career and professional growth.)	Scoring (scores): Low < 3 Medium 3 - 5 High > 6
10	Job satisfaction (The degree to which the employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with different aspects of their job.)	Scoring (scores): Low < 28 Average 28 - 31 High 32 - 36 Very high > 37
11	Extension service orientation (The degree to which the employees were oriented to provide extension and advisory services to the farmers.)	Scoring (scores): Low <42 Medium 42 - 49 High 50 - 57 Very high >58

Results and Discussion

Majority of the employees fell in old age group (40.00%) followed by young age (37.50%) and middle aged at last (22.50%). In education majority are 12th passed (28.75%) followed by BSc.(Agri.) degree holders (23.75%), 10th passed (21.25%), other degree holders (15.00%), and master degree holders are MSc.(Agri.) (7.50%) and MSc.(Hort.) (3.75%). In experience majority are low experienced (52.50%) followed by medium (26.25%) and high (21.25%) experience category. In salary majority belongs to low salary category (61.25%) followed by medium (23.75%) and high (15%) salary. In training undergone majority fell in very low training category (92.50%) followed by low (5.00%), medium (1.25%) and high (1.25%) training category. In case of work

load majority belongs to medium work load category (82.50%) followed by heavy (13.75%) and light (3.75%) work load. In information seeking behaviour majority belongs to higher information seeking behaviour category (63.75%) followed by medium (26.25%) and low (10.00%). In career / professional growth majority belongs to medium professional growth category (58.75%) followed by low (21.25%) high (20.00%). In case of job satisfaction majority belongs to high job satisfaction (50.00%) followed by average (32.50%), very high (10.00%) and low (7.50%) category. In case of extension service orientation majority belongs to high level of extension service orientation (47.50%) followed by medium (27.50%), low (16.25%) and very high (8.75%) category as mentioned in the table 2.

Table 2: Profile of the employees (n=80)

Sl. No.	Independent variable	Category	Frequency (%)
1	Age	Young (< 37 years)	30 (37.50)
		Middle (37-46 years)	18 (22.50)
		Old (> 47 years)	32 (40.00)
2	Education	10th pass	17 (21.25)
		12th pass	23 (28.75)
		BSc.(Agri.)	19 (23.75)
		BSc.(Hort.)	0 (0.00)
		MSc.(Agri.)	6 (7.50)
		MSc.(Hort.)	3 (3.75)
		Ph.D.	0 (0.00)
3	Experience	Any other	12 (15.00)
		Low (< 14 years)	42 (52.50)
		Medium (14- 26 years)	21 (26.25)
		High (>27 years)	17 (21.25)
4	Salary	Low (< ₹ 45)	49 (61.25)
		Medium (₹ 45- ₹ 74)	19 (23.75)
		High (> ₹ 75)	12 (15.00)
5	Training undergone	Very low (< 24)	74 (92.50)
		Low (24 – 46)	4 (5.00)
		Medium (47 – 69)	1 (1.25)
		High (> 70)	1 (1.25)
6	Work load	Light(<26 hours)	3 (3.75)
		Medium (26 – 35 hours)	66 (82.50)
		Heavy (> 36 hours)	11 (13.75)
7	Information seeking behaviour	Low (< 24)	8 (10.00)
		Medium (24 – 36)	21 (26.25)
		High (> 34)	51 (63.75)
8	Career / Professional growth	Low (< 3)	17 (21.25)
		Medium (3 – 5)	47 (58.75)
		High (> 6)	16 (20.00)
9	Job satisfaction	Low (< 28)	6 (7.50)
		Average (28 - 31)	26 (32.50)
		High (32 – 36)	40 (50.00)
		Very high (> 37)	8 (10.00)
10	Extension service orientation	Low (<42)	13 (16.25)
		Medium (42 – 49)	22 (27.50)
		High (50 – 57)	38 (47.50)
		Very high (> 58)	7 (8.75)

*Values mentioned in bracket is in percentage

Response analysis

Response analysis revealed that the superiors were innovative in nature with good connection with the other line departments and there is adequate importance for the organization's work culture. There is good understanding by the superiors about the problems of the employees, superiors are good / sound professionally and easily available and there is a participative approach in organization for decisions with good promotional policy. Employees are with clarity about

the on goings of the organization, the job is with clearly defined objectives and felt proud to identify themselves with the name of the Department of Agriculture, felt personal when someone throw criticism or compliment on the organization. Overall working climate was found good with medium level with satisfaction of the employees except the lag behind in training requirements.

The findings of the study are

1. Majority of employees are of old aged and the result is in line with the finding of Nazir (2015) [7] conducted study in Andaman and Nicobar Islands who reported that majority of respondents are old aged (41.70%).
2. The majority of employees are 12th passed and the followed by BSc. (Agri.) graduates and 10th passed may be due to 12th pass is eligibility to middle and lower level employees and BSc. (Agri.) is eligibility to upper grade employees.
3. Majority of employees are of low experienced may be they were recruited at their later ages to the posts. The finding is in conformity with finding of Okoya (2013) [8] conducted in Nigeria and reported that 32.30 per cent of respondents had 0 to 5 years of experience.
4. Majority of employees belongs to low salary group.
5. Majority of employees belongs to very low training undergone group due to limited training facilities by the department as mentioned by the employees themselves in the perceived problems. Similar finding was made by Padmaja and Prabhakar (2011) [9] conducted a study in Andra Pradesh and reported that 63.60 per cent of the Assistant Professors were had low training exposure.
6. Majority of employees felt work load at medium level may be because of the fixed working hours mentioned by the employees themselves and there may not be continuous work in working hours all the time. The finding is in agreement with the findings of Bosco (2000) [1] conducted a study in Karnataka and reported that 75.60 per cent of the AAOs perceived workload as medium. Nagananda (2005) [6] conducted study in Karnataka reported that nearly 50.00 per cent of both ADAs and AOs felt their workload as medium and Srinivasa (2002) [12] conducted a study in Andra Pradesh reported that 48.33 per cent of the Horticultural Officers perceived their workload as average.
7. Majority of employees fell in the high information group as they may get more free time because of medium work load.
8. Majority of employees fell in medium career category may be because of limited promotable positions for middle and lower level employees in the department. The finding is in conformity with the finding of Nazir (2015) [7] conducted a study in Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported that 55.00 per cent of the respondents had medium career growth opportunities.

Table 4: Association of (Chi-square test) the selected socio-personal variables with the perceived organizational climate. (n=80)

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Organizational climate (x ² value)
1.	Age	82.581***(.000)
2.	Education	43.121***(.000)
3.	Experience	89.497***(.000)
4.	Salary	122.84***(.000)
5.	Training undergone	51.171***(.000)
6.	Work load	102.626***(.000)
7.	Information seeking behaviour	86.112***(.000)
8.	Carrier / professional growth	75.192***(.000)
9.	Job satisfaction	181.041***(.000)
10.	Extension service orientation	128.283***(.000)

(***. Association is significant at the 0.01 level. P values are given within brackets.)

From the table 4 it's evident that the calculated x² value of the selected socio-personal variables viz. age (x²=82.581), education (x²=43.121), experience (x²=89.497), salary

9. Exactly half of the employees fell in high job satisfaction group may be it has many factors to decide as employees have average work load, career opportunities as well as the secure and permanent government job.
10. Majority of the employees fell in high level of extension service orientation group and similar findings were made by Sangamesh (2012) [11] conducted his study in Northern Dry Zone of Karnataka indicated that majority of input dealers are highly extension service oriented. Lakshmi (2013) [3] conducted her study in Andra Pradesh results showed that 72.5 per cent of the extension personnel fell under high extension service orientation and Nazir (2015) [7] conducted his study in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and reported that majority of respondents are highly extension service oriented.

The majority of the employees perceived their organizational climate at medium level followed by high, very high levels and few perceived at low level as mentioned in the table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of the employees as per their perceived organizational climate: (n=80)

Sl. No.	Category of organizational climate	n=80	
		F	%
1	Low	6	7.50
2	Medium	41	51.25
3	High	24	30.00
4	Very high	9	11.25

The finding is in conformity with the findings of Nazir (2015) [7] conducted study in Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported that majority of respondents perceived their organizational climate at medium level, Suandi *et al.* (2014) [13] conducted a study in Malaysia results revealed that respondents' level of perception of organizational climate is at moderate level (79%), and Ravi *et al.* (2014) [10] conducted a study in Andra Pradesh and reported that 65.09 per cent of teachers perceived organizational climate at medium level.

Chi-square test revealed all socio-personal variables viz., age, education, experience, salary, training undergone, work load, information seeking behaviour, carrier / professional growth, job satisfaction and extension service orientation had shown significant association at 0.01 level of significance with the perceived organizational climate of employees as mentioned in the table 4.

(x²=122.84), training undergone (x²=51.171), work load (x²=102.626), information seeking behaviour (x²=86.112), carrier / professional growth (x²=75.192), job satisfaction

($x^2=181.041$), extension service orientation ($x^2=128.283$), all variables had significant association with the perceived organizational climate (at 0.01 level of significance). Spearman's rank correlation coefficient revealed that socio-personal variables viz., age, experience, salary, training undergone, work load, information seeking behaviour,

carrier/professional growth, job satisfaction and extension service orientation had shown positive and significant correlation at 0.01 level of significance with the perceived organizational climate of employees except the education which had shown significance at 0.1 level as mentioned in the table 5.

Table 5: Relationship of (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient) the selected independent variables with the dependent variable. (n=80)

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Organizational climate (r_s value)
1.	Age	0.879***(.000)
2.	Education	0.204*(.069)
3.	Experience	0.881***(.000)
4.	Salary	0.913***(.000)
5.	Training undergone	0.683***(.000)
6.	Work load	0.478***(.000)
7.	Information seeking behaviour	0.687***(.000)
8.	Carrier / professional growth	0.758***(.000)
9.	Job satisfaction	0.819***(.000)
10.	Extension service orientation	0.813***(.000)

(***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.1 level. P values are given within brackets.)

From the table 5 it's evident that the calculated r_s value of the independent variables viz., age ($r_s=0.879$), experience ($r_s=0.881$), salary ($r_s=0.913$), training undergone ($r_s=0.683$), work load ($r_s=0.478$), information seeking behaviour ($r_s=0.687$), carrier / professional growth ($r_s=0.758$), job satisfaction ($r_s=0.819$), extension service orientation ($r_s=0.813$) had shown positive and significant correlation at 0.01 level of significance. Whereas education ($r_s=0.204$) had shown positive and significant correlation with the perceived organizational climate at 0.1 level of significance.

The major problems expressed by the employees of District Agricultural Offices, Meghalaya are lack of man power (16.25%), delay in promotion (8.75%), lack of proper training (5.00%), lack of infrastructure (2.50%), vacancies in department (1.25%) and poor connectivity & communication (1.25%) as mentioned in the table 6.

Table 6: Organizational problems expressed by the employees (n=80)

Sl. No	Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1	Lack of man power	13	16.25
2	Delay in promotion	7	8.75
3	Lack of proper training	4	5.00
4	Lack of infrastructure	2	2.50
5	Vacancies in department	1	1.25
6	Poor connectivity & communication	1	1.25

From the table 6 it's evident that only 35 per cent of the employees expressed problems they perceived and / or faced in the Department of Agriculture, Meghalaya and among the expressed problems, lack of manpower in the department ranked first expressed by 16.25 per cent employees followed by delay in promotion of employees (8.75%), lack of proper training to the employees for update themselves to the latest technologies in agriculture for effective performance of the job (5.00%), lack of infrastructural facilities in the department (2.50%), vacancies in department leads to shortage of manpower to carry out the job in efficient way (1.25%) and poor connectivity & communication among the employees as well as the different line departments (1.25%) are perceived as major problems.

Summary and Conclusion

Majority of employees are old aged, 12th passed, had low experience, low salary, very low training, work load at medium level, high information seeking behaviour, medium career opportunities, high job satisfaction and high level of extension service orientation.

When have a look into the results of the study it reveals that the majority employee are low experienced, low salary paid, very low training undergone, as these variables had positive and significant relationship with their perceived organizational climate which is at medium level hence it would be helpful for the policy makers of the Directorate of Agriculture, Meghalaya to improve the organizational climate by providing the appropriate salaries and specifically need to take care of the training needs as the employees had very low level of training. There by to enhance the performance of the employees as well as the output of the District Agricultural Offices i.e., effective service to the farming community in the state.

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