

A study on relationship between organizational climate and creativity

Ali Akbar Ahmadi and Zainab Emamipour*

Department of Public Administration, Payam Noor University, Tehran, Iran

CHRONICLE

Article history:

Received May 16, 2013
Received in revised format
16 August 2013
Accepted 28 September 2013
Available online
October 4 2013

Keywords:

Manager's behavior
Employee's behavior
Organizational climate
Creativity

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between organizational climate and women employees' creativity of Tabriz Red Crescent Organization. The research method is descriptive correlation performed among 120 women employed at the Red Crescent and 100 cases were selected for the proposed study. For data collection, Hoy and Miskel (2005)'s organizational climate and Randsyp creativity questionnaires with 0.78 and 0.82 Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used. Pearson correlation and multiple regressions were used to analyze research hypotheses. Results showed that there was a significant relationship between two indices of manager and subordinate behaviors and creativity. In addition, in investigating the relationship between climate and creativity components, findings showed that there was a significant relationship only between cooperation and pretending to job dimensions and creativity. This study also has shown that managers' behavior is closed and employees' behavior is more open than managers are.

© 2013 Growing Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Global economy creates fundamental and radical changes to business units all over the world. These changes force all organizations to accurately re-evaluate their objectives and pay more attention to choose and pursue better strategies to reach higher levels of success. There are literally various cases where organizations have radically reconstructed their operational structure in response to the rapid and dramatic changes that occur in their internal and external environments (Shahae, 2007). Modern countries always require making revolution in managers and workers' minds so that the concept of organization, quality, work and competition is changed in their minds. Under such circumstances, business owners are required to inject new blood in the body of economy through creativity, innovation, perseverance, confidence, and tolerance of ambiguity and to take an effective step to resolve the employment crisis (Kordnaeesh & Shams, 2007). Others quickly imitate what most business units consider as a competitive advantage against their other competitors. Therefore,

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: emamipourzainab@yahoo.com (Z. Emamipour)

organization managers continually provide new advantage with a new combination of their resources, here, the importance of creative human resources in organizations is highlighted and with such people, any organization can introduce itself as a leading and creative institution. The existence of appropriate context for individual and organizational creative activities as well as external environment supporting these activities play essential role for the success of organizations (Jeddi & Zanjani, 2001). Therefore, one factor caused to transform the economic, social and industrial face of a country is the enjoyment of human creative spirit. In competitive global markets, classic capitalism gradually loses its power and those who have creative morale continue to socioeconomic life in the international arena. To address this issue properly, building a suitable environment is a priority. Suitable organizational climate can be effective in motivation and improvement of individuals' morale and participation in decision-making and increasing their creativity and innovation and is considered as a primary source of employees' mental health. However, poor organizational climate can be also a major source of stress (Samadi & Shirzadi Esfahani, 2006).

According to Williams et al. (1979), climate directly or indirectly influences the performance of organizations. Many organizations measure climate characteristics such as trust, honesty, integrity and justice and understand that these aspects are associated with organizational entrepreneurship. According to previous studies, the realization of participatory approach involves intimacy between employees, manager's supportive behavior, and quiet environment atmosphere and so in which totally form the climate governing the organization (Alavi et al., 2003). Organizational climate specifically is referred to the internal quality of a firm so that its members can experience and perceive this quality, i.e. a series of internal characteristics that distinguish an institution from other institutions and influences employee behavior is called organizational climate. Organizational climate is recognized as a critical element to determine organizational effectiveness.

Creativity is another variable affected by the organizational climate. As for plant growth, appropriate environment is required; there has be also a good atmosphere to flourish creativity so that individuals' mind and memory are kept open to deal with new ideas and creating new opportunities. Innovation is associated with value creation and creativity is innovation's engine. Creativity is a combination and an integration of two or more ideas to achieve an entirely new idea. Creativity is in favor and the result of ready mind and often it is the consequence of individual's dissatisfaction with current circumstances. Creativity depends on both individual and environment (Jung et al., 2003; Kahai et al., 2003; Loukas & Murphy, 2007). To the best of our knowledge, there are not many studies on the effect of organizational climate on employees' innovative spirit. The main problem is to learn more about the relationship between organizational climate and creative morale and the role of organizational climate and its importance on the development of employees' creativity. We also need to know whether a suitable organizational climate could lead to foster creativity among employees or not. Hoy and Miskel (2003) identified two manager's behavior and employee's behavior indicators with six dimensions of organizational climate components, because of using these dimensions in this study, some descriptions about these dimensions and indicators are as follows:

Manager's behavior

Manager's behavior contains three dimensions in organizational climate and this behavior in organizational climate could be open or closed. Following equation is used to evaluate open or closed manner of manager behavior in organizational climate:

Manager's open behavior = Manager's restrictive behavior + manager's directive behavior – Manager's supportive behavior

Supportive behavior

It shows manager's basic attention to employees. Manager welcomes staff's recommendations and listens to them. Employees are appreciated sequentially and faithfully and criticism should be also

constructive. Supportive managers respect employees' professional competence and they are interested in them, personally and professionally (Robbins & Langton, 2007).

Directive behavior

Directive behavior means close supervision, i.e. managers examine closely the details of employees' activities.

Restrictive behavior

Manager makes barrier against person rather than facilitates his work and imposes them paperwork, committee requirements, and other requests which intervene in employees' responsibilities (Hoy & Miskel, 2003).

Employee's behavior

This item has also three dimensions in organizational climate and the behavior to other employees may be open or closed. To assess open or closed manner of employee behavior following equation is used:

Employee open behavior = Pretending to job behavior – (intimate behavior + cooperative behavior)

Cooperative behavior

Cooperative behavior supports open and professional action and reaction among employees. Employees are proud of their organization, enjoy working with their colleagues, empathize with each other, and respect professional competence of their colleagues.

Intimate behavior

This figure reflects a strong and interconnected network of social support among employees. Employees know each other very well like friends, communicate with each other socially, and support each other strongly.

Pretending to job behavior

Employees work only with special group or by creating non-beneficial groups, waste time and do not share the same goals and desires. Their behavior toward their colleagues and the organization is more negative and critical (Hoy & Miskel, 2003).

2. Creativity

Creativity is a multifaceted phenomenon, so, scholars and experts have different methods in its definition (Ward, 2007). For instance, the personality traits of individuals, the creative process and creative product, are various aspects that researchers have concentrated on them in their definitions (Imani & Ranjbar, 2005). Today, most definitions of creativity contain originality (novelty) and valuableness elements, that is for an idea or a product is considered creative, it should be new and applied (Dollinger, 2007). According to Albert Renet Geurkey "creativity is a different look at things that other people see them" (Seyed Javadin, 2005). There different important emphasized aspects of these definitions such as process, output, problem solving, environment, etc.

3. Organizational climate and creativity

Organizations may inherently support creativity and innovation by encouraging, recognizing, and rewarding human resources through budget and. Some people believed that organizational climate represents signs that individuals receive associated with organization's expectations for their behavior and potential consequences of their behavior. Therefore, when they consider their own organization as an open system that changes and supports creative ideas and there are sufficient resources such as

time, personnel and helping in organization, they likely perceive organizational climate as supporting individual creativity and organizational innovation and proceed to take risks and support innovation and creativity. Creativity is fertilized in organization's open environment; namely environment that strengthens exploring new ways. Dynamic organizational climate need to be created in organizations to develop creativity in which organization's members can raise their ideas. Organization's climate should be such that organization's members feel that organization values and supports their new and novel ideas (Rice, 2006, 2007).

Some other studies state that climate within an organization is the most important factor in an organization's ability for compatibility, creativity, persistence, growth. Ghaseminejad et al. (2004) investigated the relationship between organizational climate and employee creativity and its effects on secondary school teachers. They stated that there was a significant relationship between organizational climate and employee creativity (Samadi Shirazi, 2007). Rezaee's findings (2003) suggested that there was not any significant relationship between open organizational climate and creativity; however, there was a significant relationship between closed organizational climate and reducing creativity. In her study, Ghaffari (2003) stated that there was no significant relationship between organizational climate and its dimensions and employee's creativity. Therefore, according to research theoretical framework, this study is aimed to test assumed model 1.

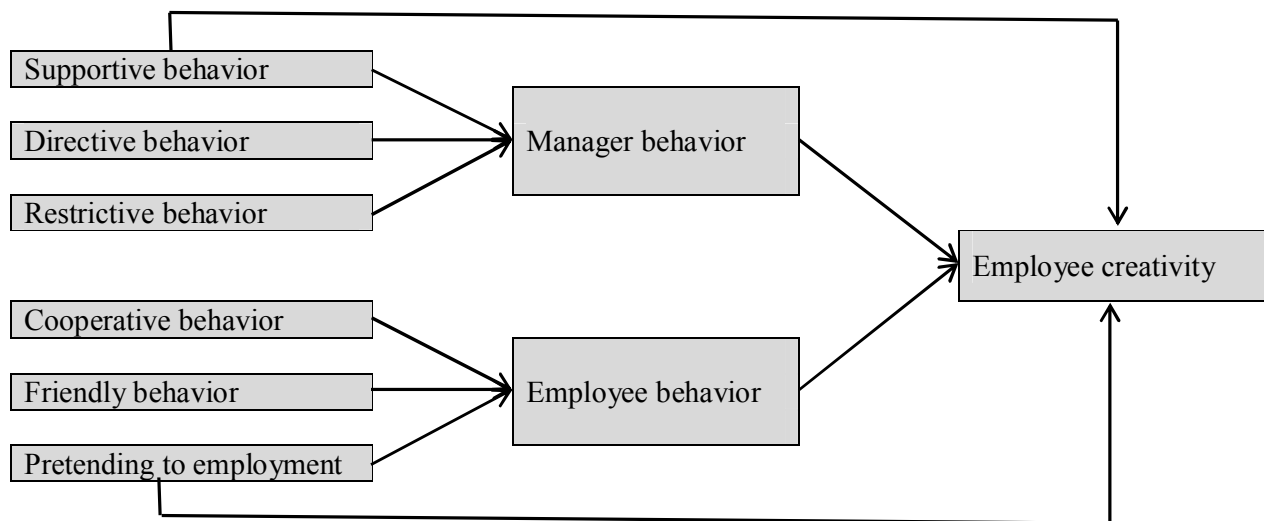


Fig. 1. The proposed study

4. Research hypotheses

1. There is a significant relationship between manager's behavior and employees' creativity.
2. There is a significant relationship between employees' behavior and their creativity.
3. There is a significant relationship between managers' supportive, directive, and restrictive behaviors and employees' creativity.
4. There is a significant relationship between employees' cooperative, friendly, and pretending to job behaviors and their creativity.

5. Results

We first have a look at some basic statistics such as mean and standard deviation (SD). Table demonstrates the summary of these figures for different kinds of behaviors. As we can observe from the results of Table 1, supportive behavior maintains the highest mean followed by cooperative behavior, friendly behavior and directive behavior and these results indicate that employee behavior

with each other is relatively open and cooperative. Our survey also indicates that only 1.4 % employees have above average creativity.

Table 1

The summary of some basic statistics

	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Supportive behavior	3.16	0.6	1.11	4
Directive behavior	2.55	0.51	1.22	4
Restrictive behavior	1.8	0.49	1	3.4
Cooperative behavior	3.05	0.4	1.5	3.75
Friendly behavior	2.94	0.6	1	3.14
Pretending to job	1.50	0.05	1	3.5

Creativity of 4.8% employees is at medium level and about 93.8% of employees have low or no creativity. Studying the means of six dimensions of organizational climate and their relationship with employees' creativity showed that all employees with low, medium and high creativity, with little difference, have considered relatively open manager's behavior with staff. However, each three groups of employees consider employees' behavior with each other open with low, medium and high creativity.

Table 2

The means of organizational climate components regarding creativity

	Low creativity		Medium creativity		High creativity	
	S	X	S	X	S	X
Supportive behavior	3.14	0.41	3.22	0.49	3.16	0.61
Directive behavior	3.11	0.3	2.43	0.3	2.54	0.51
Restrictive behavior	1.7	0.48	1.67	0.31	1.81	0.5
Cooperative behavior	3	0.31	3.06	0.26	3.05	0.41
Friendly behavior	2.82	0.56	2.78	0.58	2.92	0.6
Pretending to job	1.63	0.48	1.25	0.34	1.53	0.54

6. Results of hypotheses test

H₁: There is a significant relationship between manager's behavior and employee's creativity.

Pearson correlation coefficient is used to find a relationship between manager's behavior and personnel's creativity. The results of manager's behavior with employee's creativity show that the relationship between manager's behavior and employee's creativity is positive and significant. The correlation coefficient of 0.47 with significance level of 0.000 indicates that when there is a suitable and open climate of organization (improved manager's behavior), employee creativity is expected to increase.

Table 3

Pearson correlation test results

Manager behavior	Employee creativity	
	r	Sig.
	0.471*	0.000
	N	120

*P<0.05

H₂: there is a significant relationship between employees' behavior and their creativity.

Pearson correlation results regarding employee behavior with creativity shows that the relationship between employee behavior and their creativity is positive and significant. The correlation coefficient of 0.231 with significance level of 0.017 indicates that with suitable and open climate of organization (improved employee behavior), employee creativity also is increased.

Table 4

Correlation test results

		Employee creativity	
	r		0.231*
Employee behavior	Sig.		0.017
	N		120

*P<0.05

H₃: there is a significant relationship between managers' supportive, directive, and restrictive behaviors and employees' creativity.

Multivariate regressions are used to determine the relationship between independent variables and creativity. Findings have shown that there is no significant relationship between manager's supportive behavior and creativity. Significance level of supportive behavior is 0.3; therefore, the null hypothesis of considered variables coefficient is rejected. On the other hand, directive behavior had high mean (2.53), but it had no significant relationship with creativity. In relation to restrictive behavior, results imply the lack of relationship between restrictive behavior and creativity.

Table 5

Results of multivariate regression

Independent variables	Supportive behavior			Directive behavior			Restrictive behavior		
	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3
Degrees of each variable									
Regression coefficient	0.55	0.22	0.83	6.3	0.04	0.12	7.4	4.1	3.67
t-statistic	4.39	2.12	0.16	2.6	0.08	1.67	4.1	9.17	2.34
Significance level	6.60	5.14	1.24	0.11	0.21	0.14	4.17	0.23	0.17

D1: Low D2: Medium D3: High

H₄: There is a significant relationship between employee cooperative, friendly, and pretending to job behaviors and creativity. Results of multivariate regression show that there is a significant relationship between employee cooperative behavior and creativity. Significance level of cooperative behavior is lower than 0.05. Thus, cooperative behavior is a predictor of creativity. Employee's friendly behavior is not introduced as a significant predictor of creativity; because significance level is higher than 0.05. In addition, there was not any significant relationship between pretending to job and creativity.

Table 6

Results of multivariate regression

Independent variables	Cooperative behavior			Friendly behavior			pretending to job		
	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3	D1	D2	D3
Degrees of each variable									
Regression coefficient	23.17	21.14	17.8	7.4	4.1	3.67	1.23	0.88	1.24
t-statistic	14.23	15.2	15.7	4.1	9.17	2.34	1.93	1.66	0.98
Significance level	0.012	0.002	0.026	0.13	0.088	0.32	4.17	0.23	0.17

D1: low D2: medium D3: high

7. Discussion and conclusion

The results of this study, which was carried out to examine the relationship between organizational climate and creativity of woman employees' Tabriz Red Crescent Organization show that:

At 0.05 level, there is a significant relationship between creativity among women employees and manager's behavior. These findings are consistent with research theoretical framework, which suggests the importance of managers in the emergence of employee's creativity. A significant relationship was found between manager's supportive behavior and employees' creativity but this relationship was not significant at 0.05 level. According to various scholars' views on the impact of leadership behaviors on employees and their creativity, it appears that these results are little

consistent with theoretical framework. This may be because managers' behavior has not been supportive in these organizations; but employees fear that their responses will be evaluated by the manager, have reported managers' behavior supportive. On the other hand, it can be argued that managers' behavior is supportive and influences on the level of creativity, because employee creativity has been very low, it has not increased significantly. The relationship between manager's directive behavior and employee creativity is not significant at 0.05 level but regression coefficient shows that a weak relationship is observed between them. These findings are congruent with Amabile's results (2000) which consider high supervision as factors that affect negatively creativity in the organization. High mean of manager's directive behavior represents manager's extreme supervision on employees and in this investigation. This is one of the reasons for low employee creativity may be extreme and close supervision. The mean of perceived restrictive behavior in the organizational climate is low; we can say that because managers act the organizational guidelines and directives, they can less impose irrelevant duties to employees and ask them something that isn't their main task and affects their work. Therefore, when manager's behavior hasn't become restrictive, it also has no effect on employees' creativity.

Employee's behavior with each other is cooperative and friendly. This is made us to observe the effect of working groups on the creativity and significant relationship between employees' behavior and increasing their creativity. The results are consistent with Amabile et al. (2004) and Noorae, et al. (2006) studies, which have shown the importance of supportive and friendly relationship and cooperative atmosphere to increase employee creativity. They also consistent with Alavi et al. (2003) findings, which found that by increasing consensus and effectiveness of employees' communications in organization, their creativity will be increased. The relationship between employees' friendly behavior and their creativity has not been significant and obtained mean is 2.94 in friendly behavior dimension, which shows that although intimacy perceived by employees is higher than average, it is not high enough to be able to affect creativity. However, the results indicated no significant relationship between two studied variables. The relationship between employees' pretending to job behavior and their creativity is not significant. According to the mean obtained in this aspect, we can argue that employees have not perceived very un-committedly their cooperative behavior. Accordingly, regression results indicate the lack of relationship between employees' pretending to job behavior and employees' creativity.

References

- Alavi, S. H., Khezri, M., & Ghezelayagh, M. (2003). The relationship between employee's creativity and organizational climate. *Message of Successful Management Journal*, 7, 8.
- Amabile, T. M., Schatzel, E. A., Moneta, G. B., & Kramer, S. J. (2004). Leader behaviors and the work environment for creativity: Perceived leader support. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(1), 5-32.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Reichenbacher, L. (2008). Effects of personality and threat of evaluation on divergent and convergent thinking. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42(4), 1095-1101.
- Chen, C. J., & Huang, J. W. (2007). How organizational climate and structure affect knowledge management—The social interaction perspective. *International Journal of Information Management*, 27(2), 104-118.
- Dollinger, S. J. (2007). Creativity and conservatism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 43(5), 1025-1035.
- Ghaffari, P. (2003). The relationship between organizational climate and employee creativity of Semnan Medical Sciences University, master of public administration dissertation, Semnan Public administration education center.
- Ghaseminejad, A., Siadat, A., Noori, A. (2005). The relationship between organizational climate and job stress and job satisfaction of Shahr Kord's teachers. *Journal of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ahvaz Chamran University*, No. 1.

- Hernández, T. J., & Seem, S. R. (2004). A safe school climate: A systemic approach and the school counselor. *Professional School Counseling*, 7, 256-262.
- Hosseini, A. (2002). *The nature of creativity and its development practices*, Mashhad: Ghods Razavi.
- Hosseini, A. (2007). What is creativity?, *Teacher Growth Monthly Magazine*, 9, 20-31.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (Eds.). (2004). *Educational Administration, Policy, and Reform: Research and Measurement (HC)*. IAP.
- Imani, M., & Ranjbar, A. (2005). Creativity and preparation for its growth. *Tarbiat monthly Magazine*, 4, 60-62.
- Jeddi, S., Zanjani, M. (2001). Corporate entrepreneurship development in Iran. *TADBIR journal*, 120.
- Jung, D. I., Chow, C., & Wu, A. (2003). The role of transformational leadership in enhancing organizational innovation: Hypotheses and some preliminary findings. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(4), 525-544.
- Kahai, S. S., Sosik, J. J., & Avolio, B. J. (2003). Effects of leadership style, anonymity, and rewards on creativity-relevant processes and outcomes in an electronic meeting system context. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(4), 499-524.
- Kordnaeech, A., & Shams, S. (2007). *The role of higher education in entrepreneurship development and job creation in the country*. Article Collections of the First Conference of Employment and Higher Education, Tehran: Publication of University Jihad Organization, department of Tarbiat Modarres.
- Loukas, A., & Murphy, J. L. (2007). Middle school student perceptions of school climate: Examining protective functions on subsequent adjustment problems. *Journal of school psychology*, 45(3), 293-309.
- Noorae, T., Amirtash, A., Tondnevis, F., & Behrangi, M. (2006). The relationship between educational philosophy, managers' leadership styles and organizational climate in Physical Education Faculties. *Movement Science and Sport magazine*, 4(7), 37- 52.
- Rezaee, K. (2003). A comparative study of the relationship between organizational climate and teachers' creativity in Shahrood secondary school, *Master's thesis of public administration dissertation*, Semnan Public administration education center.
- Rice, G. (2003). The challenge of creativity and culture: a framework for analysis with application to Arabian Gulf firms. *International Business Review*, 12(4), 461-477.
- Rice, G. (2006). Individual values, organizational context, and self-perceptions of employee creativity: Evidence from Egyptian organizations. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(2), 233-241.
- Robbins, S. P., & Langton, N. (2007). *Organizational behaviour: Concepts, controversies, applications*. prentice Hall.
- Samadi, P., & Shirzadi Esfahani, H. (2006). The relationship between organizational climate and entrepreneurial spirit in students, *Scientific and Research Quarterly Journal of Educational Innovations*, 6, 164- 187.
- Samadi, P., Shirzadi Esfahani, H. (2006). The relationship between school climate and entrepreneurial spirit in the second and third grade female students in Isfahan high schools. *Quarterly of Educational Innovation*, 16, 5th ed.
- Seyed Javadin, S. R., & Karami, A. (2007). Flourishing applied creativity. *TADBIR monthly magazine*, 183, 14-17.
- Shahae, B. (2007). *Entrepreneurship education and development challenges: Take the role of personality traits*. Tehran: National Conference on Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Future Organizations.
- Siadat, A., Bakhtiar Nasrabadi, H., & Salimi, G. (2005). The relationship between organizational climate and personality characteristics of Isfahan secondary schools' principals at 2000-2001 school year. *Journal of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ahvaz Chamran University*, 12th ed., 4, 101- 121.
- Ward, T. B. (2007). Creative cognition as a window on creativity. *Methods*, 42(1), 28-37.
- Williams, D.J. (1979). *Change & Stability in values and values systems: a sociological perspective*. In M. Rokeach (Ed.), *Understanding human values*. pp. 15-46. New York: Free Press.