

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AS A PART OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: ANALYSIS OF FOUR INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes social environment as part of the organizational climate in four institutions. We describe how this factor influences the total organizational climate through a representative sample of members of the various organizations. These organizations consisted of two schools from two universities from different countries, a Municipal Presidency and a governmental institution. The study begins with frequency analysis followed by a correlation analysis. The analysis also compares the results of different internal groups' analysis by chi-square tests. We conclude there are four factors that determine the characteristics of social environment that affect the organizational climate. The four institutions produce similar results. We find four factors of groupings. The first is the support provided to each other by members of organizations, the second is conflict resolution conditions, the third is existing information they can use and the fourth teamwork. Similar results are obtained between the questionnaires, validating the questionnaire designed by the researchers.

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KEYWORDS: Social Environment, Organizational Behavior, Universities, Town Council

INTRODUCTION

The author of this article has dedicated the past few years to identifying characteristics that make up the organizational climate. Several institutions of different sizes and conditions were studied to observe what each reveals with regard to aspects studied. We tried to formulate the organizational climate through various factors, divided into several parts, in such way that it is easier to study. We take into account necessary aspects to emphasize the identity of diverse organizations. This work takes into account one of the aspects, we identify called social environment factor. We observe how coexistence with the other members of the organization can improve. We studied four institutions that made possible an analysis of variability of this factor with respect to organizational climate. The organizations examined include two university schools, one in Zacatecas, Mexico and the other in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the third institution of analysis is the Town Council of Zacatecas (Presidencia Municipal de Zacatecas) and the fourth is the Board of Conservation and Maintenance of Colonial Monuments and characteristic areas of Zacatecas. The latter is a dependency of the government of the State of Zacatecas. Obtaining this information is important from several points of view. This research deepens academic knowledge by reinforcing the theory of organizations. We also examine the impact that this factor has as part of a whole that tries to study the organizational climate. The third objective is to compare the organizations.

This article is structured with a literature review. Because there is no similar study, we reinforce our theories with subjects from areas of study in different circumstances, and in different regions of our planet. Later we describe the methodology used to obtain our information, used to examine different questions we used to obtain the data. The study is mixed and transformed into an understandable social objective study. To

do this, we used a correlational analysis and Chi squared comparison. Finally, the discussion focuses on what we identify as the main differences in the institutions. We also want to highlight what all have in common.

Our objective is to identify the differences existing in the various organizations with respect to the social environment factor. Our hypothesis is that perception of the social environment by various institutions is homogeneous.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We consider social environment to be a combination of different situations that results with coexistence with various people. The optimal situation is to generate positive working conditions and a favorable and productive treatment. Some researchers have examined this issue which allows us ratify or rectify these conditions. Tabak et al (2015) reported that “there were differences in health behaviors and socio/organizational environment by gender, race, age, income, and worksite size, and said that there was agreement with the statement the ‘company values my health’ was highest among whites, older employees, and higher income workers”. If worksite size increases, the frequency of seeing coworkers doing several types of healthy behaviors increased. These researchers suggest that some “social/organizational characteristics of the workplace environment, particularly feeling the company values the workers’ health, and seeing co-workers engaging in healthy behaviors, may be related to nutrition and PA behaviors and obesity. These findings point to the potential for intervention targets including environment and policy changes”.

In Brazil, the general objective is to analyze the predictive power of the locus of control in work on personal well-being in organizations. The goal is to evaluate whether the worker perceives himself or herself as the controller of a situation or perceiving others as holders of this control interferes with their level of well-being. The results indicated that interiority positively predicts personal well-being in organizations. This finding emphasizing its capacity of prediction on the indicator of identification with the work. The results contribute to a better understanding of the micro-organizational processes, identifying antecedents that facilitate promotion of the well-being of workers by planning intervention strategies in work contexts (Carneiro y Pereira; 2015).

The social environment generates an impact in cultural conditions as proposed by Reyes Arellano (2016). He explains that in the process of cultural evolution, “these generate an immune system that attracts those practices, values and systems that are consistent with the central cultural system, while repelling those that are not in accordance” (Reyes Arellano 2016). This generates structures that seek preservation of the system and rejection of other ways of acting and thinking. An organization that arose from the need to meet challenges of the industrial revolution is dysfunctional to the current challenges. Somehow, these organizations meet their adaptive purpose with an evolutionary purpose. These two forces are the paradoxical constant the organizations must overcome to succeed in changing conditions of today's world (Reyes Arellano 2016). In France, Parent-Rocheleau's (2016) team shows that control locus has a moderating effect on the relationship between affective commitment and perceptions of procedural fairness and organizational pride. This leads to more emotional engagement in people who believe they have control over their environment. The results points to the importance of investigation into the interaction of individual and organizational factors in the prediction of work attitudes and behaviors. These results help understand labor relations to better understand employees' reactions to the perception of organizational justice (Parent-Rocheleau et al 2016).

In analyzing what happens with these type of conditions in Kuala Lumpur, researchers led by Wong Sek Khin showed that there is a more participatory style of management by SMEs. SME's have a less formalized organizational structure and the culture of the workplace are healthier and have a positive influence on the

effectiveness of communication within the organization. They also established that the relationship between supervisors and subordinates, known as Guanxi, has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between leadership style, organizational structure and workplace culture on one hand and effectiveness of communication within of the organization on the other hand. They conclude the attitude of management in the organization and participation of employees, the formalization of health structure and culture plays an important role in fostering effective communication and Guanxi relationships between supervisor and subordinate (Wong Sek Khin et al, 2016).

Kamran Nawaz et al. found that no significant relationship existed between home environment and social behavior. They concluded that all variables of their study have no significant relationship with our objective of this study. The results show that home environment has no relationship with social behavior of secondary school students which means that Home Environment and Social Behavior are not related with one another. The aim of their study was to examine the relationship of home environment with social behavior of the students and show that no significant relationship exists between home environment and social behavior of the students. Regional and racial prejudices may also be the reason. Similarly, our schools focus of attention is only on intellectual development. So, the social aspect of the students may be given due consideration (Kamran Nawaz et al, 2015).

Kasim e Indram developed a framework for organizational justice, “this study assesses the impact of organizational justice on job performance and job satisfaction of unskilled expatriate employees in the Arabian Gulf region” (Kasim; Indram, 2015). The paper investigates the impact of demographic variables, such as nationality of workers and multicultural factors, on organizational justice. Further, they explore various organizational models to identify the most suitable model for organizational justice in the region. Given the findings reported in this study it can be argued, “organizations and employers in the Middle East need to understand the significant role that justice plays in influencing employees’ behavior and work outcomes (Kasim; Indram, 2015). They further need to continuously ask questions such as whether the outcome of a decision was fair, especially if the organization is undergoing change, downsizing or restructuring. To change or improve their monitoring of the social environment and the extent of borders, organizations develop the use forecasting, futuristic, social audits, opinion polls and attitudes. They add constituents to committees and the board of directors, and employ consultants and research institutes. Management's social values and objectives can be modified through training, organizational development activities, changes in reward structures and staffing practices, and the hiring and dismissal of managers (Strand, 1983).

Trillo and Holgado (2008) develop an index to measure organizational culture. This index is formed according to the following criteria. Work environment calculates the average valuation of this work environment. It is a means for knowledge management in organizations. Knowledge increases intellectual capital and, at the same time, the cohesion of the elements through the culture of the company. The cultural power of companies, together with the resources they have, is the main source of value creation. This value creation is important in the deployment of strategic business actions (Trillo; Holgado, 2008). Luhmann et al (2015) studied a group who show that when there is loneliness, people try to find others. This situation generates a vicious cycle among lonely people. They found that after studying a lonely group, the behavioral consequences of trying to join lonely or happy people and the solitary activities were not significant. The patterns remain unchanged until a spouse was present. But, not if the spouse was absent. These findings suggest that conditions that activate the vicious cycle of loneliness are specific to persons and situations (Luhmann et al 2015).

Peršič (2016) identifies the importance of implementation of standards of socially responsible management and their impact on the business performance of organizations. He confirmed correlations among the natural and sustainable development of the broader social environment. The research was done in the Republic of Slovenia, and confirmed the link of a larger number of employees and achieved higher income from

operations with the understanding of management standards in organizations. They found that implementation of principles of social responsibility has a positive impact on sustainable development. As a consequence, the financial indicators of the organization like profits, business growth, productivity and cost-effectiveness in operations have been confirmed (Peršič and Peršič, 2016). In the Arabic culture, Hejazi (2016) examined the relationship between managers' cognitive style and their leadership type as moderated by organizational culture. The perceptions of subordinates were surveyed to explore the relationships. While adaptive cognitive style could be a predictor of producer, hard driver, regulator, and monitor leadership types, the innovative cognitive style could not predict any leadership type. Findings of the current research contribute to the study of behavioral complexity in leadership by introducing a new paradigm in which the effectiveness of managers originates from the coordination between their adaptive cognitive styles and compete and control oriented leadership types (Hejazi, 2016).

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The organizations in this study are public institutions but at different levels. The largest is the Faculty of Economics of the University of Buenos Aires (FCE UBA). According to official data it has an enrollment of 60,000+ students and 5,000+ teachers. Next, the Academic Unit of Accounting and Administration of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas (UACA) has 2,200+ students and about 100 teachers and 50 non-teaching workers. The third institution is the Zacatecas City Town council (Presidencia Municipal de Zacatecas) (PMZ) with a staff of 1,350 people. Finally the Board of Conservation of Colonial Monuments and characteristic areas of the State of Zacatecas (JMC) has a staff of 60 individuals. The UACA is part of a university of 35,000 students and 3,500 teachers and 2,000 non-teaching workers is influenced by the actions and interaction of members with other faculties such as Medicine, Engineering and the Language Center. The samples used for this work are diverse because they come from different survey moments and also different survey application options. In FCE UBA, despite the magnitude of the population, only 67 people were interviewed because of difficulty associated with getting close to the people. In UACA, 372 persons were interviewed, in the Zacatecas Town council (PMZ) 276 and in the JMC 49 of 60 employees. Table 1 shows how the sample is distributed among the different institutions. FCE UBA has a large population, but for communication and time problems the sample was small. To avoid large differences, the comparisons is made using ANOVA that allows the homogenization of means and standard deviations. The interviews were done in different years, UACA and FCE in 2013, PMZ in 2015 and JMC in 2016.

Table 1: Distribution Sample

Institution	Population	Sample
FCE UBA	60,000 +	67
UACA	2,000 +	372
PMZ	1350	276
JMC	60	49

Table 1. Distribution Sample. It can be seen that the four institutions have different sizes and, also the samples do not correspond proportionately due to the facility giving access to people who would answer the questionnaires.

A questionnaire was used to measure the organizational climate. For this study, we take into account only questions related to the factor analyzed in this research. The questionnaire was designed by the authors and has been applied and validated in the usual ways. The questions use a Likert 5 scale and the answers are sorted from least to greatest on a scale of 1 to 5. The data analysis used frequency analysis of the general data and analysis of correlations by Spearman's value because they are non-parametric data. The reliability value is high because we used a Chronbach alpha to identify the value. Finally, comparisons between groups are performed after they have met the normality levels required in each sample.

RESULTS

The gender of participants is 43.8% male and 56.2 % female. Students and first level workers represent 68.1% of the sample. Faculty and second order workers constitute 26.4% of the sample. Higher level managers constitute 5.5% of the sample. Table 2 shows the frequency analysis which shows the different results of the variables completing the social environment factor.

Table 2: Frequencies of Results That Integrate the Social Environment Factor

Variable	Minimum	Minor	Intermediate	High	Maximum
The level of help among partners is	5.6	4.8	17	29.7	42.8
The response to help is	3.1	5	19.1	28.5	44.2
Partnership influences on everyday activities	4.3	5.4	20.7	26.6	43.1
I let everyone assume the responsibility to solve problems	22	14.8	26.6	22.5	14.1
Before solving disagreements, agreements are solved	7.3	8.2	34.7	29.3	20.4
The solutions taken are convenient for everyone	2.6	7.5	24.7	31.9	33.2
Whatever is done to avoid useless frictions	5.6	6.4	29.8	27.7	30.4
Dislikeable situations are avoided	4.3	8.1	21.1	31.4	35.1
The organization’s media are well known	9.8	11.9	21.2	29.2	27.9
The information flows normally by institutional media	8.5	10.5	30.2	26.3	24.5
Organizational affairs are solved by teams	7.7	10.5	31.3	25.3	25.3
Its comfortable to work in teams	4.6	3.5	18.1	28.5	45.3

Table 2 shows the different options. Variables are spread through different choices. Higher answers are in the maximum possible, so the results integrate a good social environment.

Help among partners produces a maximum level of 42.8%. Almost all the people are willing to help their partners. When we asked how is the response to help, the answers reached a maximum value of 44.2%. This second answer produces approximately the same percentage as the prior question. It is also high, indicating that if people ask for help they get a favorable answer. Partnership influences every day activities. Partner influences shows a result of 43.1% for the maximum option. So, it seems that having a mutual goal within the organization is important to every day actions. To be willing to act when its necessary, influences the conduct of the people. So, we asked if respondents left the responsibility to others. The most popular answer was the middle choice with 26.6% of results. It seems the answer is dispersed across the choices, not all the decisions are taken by themselves and they don’t take all the responsibility. This situation may be viewed in many ways.

People may disagree or agree on the decisions. Of interest is how hard they discuss agreement before the disagreement? The answer was mainly in the intermediate option with a 34.7% of responses. So the arguments are discussed no matter what the disagreements are. After discussing any matter, the solutions are focused on the whole organization. When asked about the decisions, they are taken in a way that is convenient to all parts of the organization. The highest frequency is the maximum choice with a 33.2% of responses. This result shows that the organization’s interests come first before personal needs. Discussion generates friction among parts. Persons answer to the question saying that they have done as much as necessary to avoid friction. Respondents choose at a 30.4% rate the maximum option. So it appears that people are discussing to solve matters with respect to others. We assume the discussion is according to the organization goals.

With regard the question: The people discuss carefully the matters, avoiding conflicts or dislikeable situations, the highest choice is in the maximum situation with a 35.1% response. Again, discussions in these organizations don’t have to lead to conflicts. Rather, they are doing their best to remain in favorable agreement and with no conflicts. People in these organizations are connected by different media, so we asked if the integrant knows which are used by the organization. The highest frequency is in the high option with at 29.2%. It seems that not all media are known. This condition may be used to improve organization skills.

We asked about the flow of information. We supposed that formal ways are the main options for information flow. Surprisingly we found that the highest frequency was the medium choice with at 30.2 %. Information flows in different ways, which may not be a good situation. Messages could be misunderstood. Problems are not somebody else’s matter, they may affect several people. We asked if people work on teams and if these are a good way to solve problems. The highest frequency was in the medium choice at 31.3 %. We know that the grouping situation depends on matter. Thus, we ask if it is comfortable to work in teams. The highest answer was for the maximum choice at 45.3% (the highest option in the entire questionnaire). Because people work fine in teams, the answer was in accordance with the other questions. After making decisions, agreement is something that the people try to do to help everyone. The answer given to us by respondents was highest for the maximum option wat 40.2 %. We found that the decisions may take a long time when trying to find agreement among participants.

To identify how the variables are correlated with each other, we used Spearman’s correlation. The main correlations show that all variables have at least 9 high correlations to others with an average of Spearman correlation level of 0.3. The highest correlations are between “asking for help” and “the response to help” with a coefficient 0.65 and a 0.01 p-value. After running some tests to reducing some dimensions we found that using only coefficients higher than 0.5 we have a four-component matrix with variable reduction. Table 3 shows how the components are grouped into four main components, to achieve this matrix different conditions were analyzed.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix to the Variables That Integrate the Social Environment

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
The level of help among partners is			0.794	
The response to help is			0.796	
Partnership influences on everyday activities			0.732	
I let everyone assume the responsibility to solve problems				0.899
Before solving disagreements, agreements are solved	0.514			0.511
The solutions taken are convenient for everyone	0.681			
Whatever is done to avoid useless frictions	0.776			
Dislikeable situations are avoided	0.770			
The organization’s media are well known		0.839		
The information flows normally by institutional media		0.876		
Organizational affairs are solved by teams		0.699		
Its comfortable to work in team	0.522			
The decisions are taken when everyone agrees	0.629			

Table 2: Matrix Extraction Method: main components analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization. Four groups were found a) Teams, b)Media, c) Help and d) Responsibility

To determine the normality of the data obtained, Kolmogorov Smirnoff statistic was calculated as 0.240 with a p value of 0.000 indicating a normal distribution. Thus, ANOVA can be used to find some differences or similarities between the organizations. We tried to identify differences between the groups of analysis, so we ran some normal tests to allow using ANOVA in the group comparison. Table 4 shows that the significance value is very small, as low as 0.000.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy	0.860
Bartlett’s sphericity test	Aprox. Chi-square
	3640.064
	gl
	78
	Sig.
	0.000

Table 4 provides results about the significance that allows applying the ANOVA tests. We found a very low significance, under 0.000.

After running the tests, we choose the results where we could find differences among the groups FCE, UACA, PMZ and JMC, Table 5 shows the variables having statistical differences among the groups.

Table 5: Synthesis of ANOVA Comparisons Among Groups

Variable	Group	Is different to	Statistic Value	p-value
The level of help among partners is	FCE	JCM	0.554	0.470
The response to help is	FCE	All	0.197	0.005
Partnership influences on everyday activities	UACA	PMZ	-0.395	0.001
I let everyone assume the responsibility to solve problems				
Before solving disagreements, agreements are solved				
The solutions made are convenient for everyone				
Whatever is done to avoid useless frictions	UACA	FCE PMZ	0.089	0.001
Dislikeable situations are avoided	UACA	PMZ	0.280	0.009
The organization's media are well known	UACA	All	0.187	0.000
The information flows normally by institutional media	UACA	FCE PMZ	0.167	0.000
Organizational affairs are solved by teams	PMZ	UACA JCM	0.541	0.000
Its comfortable to work in team				
The decisions are taken when everyone agrees	JCM	UACA	-0.455	0.035

Table 5 shows that not all the variables display differences among the diverse groups. But, UACA presents more differences than other groups. FCE is different from all others in response to help, and UACA is different from all others about knowing the organization's media.

CONCLUSIONS

All respondents feel great in helping, and the response to others is as good when they know that somebody is willing to help. Sometimes we may think that groups are resisting asking for help, but in these four cases they feel free to ask for assistance. In the same way, the response to the help is good when they asked for it. We assume that it is a nice circle of cooperation. I respond to help, so they request it from me. FCE, produces different results from all other organizations. However, that all others are in the city of Zacatecas. When an organization depends on partnerships it will be easier to ask or offer help. Different organizations who state this situation are UACA and PMZ. We found a group of questions where all the variables have the same results. They have to do with responsibility. This situation gives us the knowledge that no matter what happens inside, responsibility remains the same. They say that it is very comfortable to work in teams. UACA differs from all others regarding media. Despite it being a university with a communications department, it differs from others at flowing information by unofficial channels, perhaps via gossip.

Most variables are highly correlated. We find a high correlation index and a high significance except for one. We infer the questionnaire is well structured. Nevertheless, any variation affects all of the others. The closest variables are Ask for help and responding to help. Four components are found a) Help, b) Responsibility, c) Discuss favorably and d) Teamwork. The social environment could be studied in four small parts. We found that there are differences among the organizations, but there are more similarities among them than unequal situations. After analyzing this data we don't have statistical evidence to reject the hypotheses that says "The perception of the social environment by several institutions is homogeneous". These results may be used later in an effort to understand what happens inside an organization and if social environment implies some other results that benefit all parts of the organization. The results here are one step toward understanding the implications for all organizational behavior.

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