

Research Article

Motivational Climate as Perceived by Subject Matter Specialists of Krishi Vigyan Kendras in North East India

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Abstract

A study on the motivational climate as perceived by Subject matter Specialists (SMS) of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in North east India was conducted with 76 Subject Matter Specialists drawn from 19 Krishi Vigyan Kendras of the eight north eastern states of India, through a descriptive research design, following a multi-stage, census cum criterion based purposive sampling plan. Assessing the existing motivational climate in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras as perceived by the Subject matter Specialists across the eight north eastern states of India was the main objective of the study. The study revealed that an overall Dependency-Control motivational climate existed in the KVKs of north east India, as perceived by the SMS. Enhancing job satisfaction and job involvement levels, creating a team management leadership style and developing a team work environment in the KVKs are some of the suggestions of the study to reduce this dominant motivational climate strength.

Keywords: Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Subject Matter Specialist, motivational climate, descriptive research design.

Introduction

The term 'motive' is derived from the Latin root *movere*, meaning 'to move' or 'to prod'. A motive is an inner force that moves a person to behave in a certain way in order to attain one or more specific goal(s). According to Berelson and Steiner (1964), a motive is an inner state that energizes, activates or moves (hence motivation) and that directs or channels behaviour towards goal(s). The dictionary meaning of 'climate' is ambience—the mental, moral, environmental or prevailing temper, outlook, set of attitudes of a body of people in respect of some aspects of life, policy etc., especially in climate of opinion, of thought (New International Dictionary, 1971). An organization is a structural system of relationship that co-ordinates the efforts of a group of people towards the achievement of specific objectives (Koehler *et al.*, 1976). Organizations are attributed with certain physical and socio-psychological characteristics which influence its members and differentiate one organization with another, in addition to creating a climate in the organization, referred to as organizational climate. At the organizational level, motivational climate influences work motivation. Motivational climate, conceptually, is the general culture of the organization, characterized by the dominant psychological needs (Pareek, 2002). It is the quality of internal environment that is experienced by its members that influence their behaviour. According to Hammer and Organ (1978), as any organization grows and develops,

more and more problems are manifested as people's problems such as power struggles, interpersonal conflicts, low job motivation, union-management relations etc. Organizational climate plays a critical role in motivating innovative behaviour, as it can create commitment among members of an organization in terms of believing in innovation as an organizational value and accepting innovation-related norms prevalent within the organization. An organization tends to attract and keep people on the basis of the prevailing climate. Because of these reasons, studies on organizational/motivational climate have become an inevitable part of theory and research in management. Hence, it is necessary to investigate and take some corrective measures for improving it, if needed. Motivational climate in the present study was operationalised as the environment prevailing in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), which activated, energized and directed the Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) towards the achievement of organizational and personal goals. After careful deliberation by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and the Planning Commission and as a follow up of the recommendation, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) appointed a committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta of Seva Mandir, Udaipur in 1973 for formulating the institutional design of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) for providing vocational training in agriculture.

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (Farm Science Centre), an innovative science based institution, were thus established mainly to impart vocational training to the farmers and field level extension workers. The effectiveness of the KVK was further enhanced by adding the activities related to On-Farm Testing (OFT) and Front-Line Demonstration (FLD) on major agricultural technologies in order to make the training of farmers location specific, need based and resource-oriented. The KVKs as district level technology backstopping mechanism, functions as a team of multidisciplinary experts, called Subject Matter Specialists (SMS), with a Programme Coordinator acting as the head of each KVK. Each KVK comprises of six SMS, who are drawn from diverse disciplines such as Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Fishery, Agricultural Extension, Home Science, Plant Protection, Horticulture etc., according to the need of the specific district. They provide direct interaction between farmers and scientist for effective technology dissemination and adoption. Besides, other related works are also expected from them for the benefit of farmers. The scientific team at each KVK thus becomes the reference and nodal point for expert scientific guidance at the district level for all the line departments. Ultimately, it is the teamwork, rapport, understanding and cohesiveness of the scientific staff of the KVKs, i.e., the SMS that determines the effectiveness and achievement of not only the KVKs themselves, but also other line departments of the districts. As such it is imperative that the SMS find themselves in a productive environment with a desirable motivational climate. Against this backdrop, the present investigation was undertaken with the following objective:

- To assess the existing dominant motivational climate in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras as perceived by the Subject matter Specialists across the eight north eastern states of India.

Materials and methods

Study area and sampling: The study geographically encompassed the eight north eastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim. The KVKs selected on the basis of adopted criteria, formed the units of study in the present investigation. A descriptive research design, following an *ex post facto* approach, was followed for the present study. A multi-stage, census enumeration cum criterion based purposive sampling plan was adopted for the investigation. Census enumeration was done to accommodate all the eight north eastern states of North East India in the study sample. Through a criterion based purposive sampling plan, it was proposed to include only those KVKs of the region in the sample for investigation, which had completed a minimum of five years of existence prior to data collection.

The reason for the same being the fact that it requires some reasonable time for a newly established set-up/organization to evolve its own motivational climate pattern through the interfaces of the organizational structure, leadership patterns, individual traits and role assimilation and performance. Accordingly, as per selection criteria, 19 KVKs of the North Eastern region were included in the study sample. The Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) of the KVKs were the specific subjects of data collection from the respective KVKs. Following a criterion based purposive sampling plan, it was proposed to include only those SMS of the selected KVKs, who had completed a minimum of three years of continuous service in the same KVK prior to data collection in order to provide them reasonable time for getting the feel of the motivational climate through role interactions and leadership appreciation. Accordingly, as per selection criteria, 76 responding SMS from the 19 sample KVKs comprised the actual study sample, out of a theoretical sample size of 89. Table 1 shows the sampling pattern of KVKs and SMS for inclusion in the study sample from the eight north eastern states.

Measurement of motivational climate: The main purpose of the study was to arrive at the dominant motivational climate as perceived by the SMS of the KVKs. Following Pareek (2002), motivational climate was measured on six motive dimensions, viz., achievement, affiliation, extension, dependency, control and expert power. Eleven organizational dimensions were also taken for the purpose of measuring the above mentioned motive dimensions. The eleven organizational dimensions against which the motivational climate was measured were: orientation, interpersonal relationship, supervision, communication, decision making, trust, managing problems, managing mistakes, managing conflicts, managing rewards and risk taking. On each of these dimensions, the climate was measured for the following six motive dimensions:

1. **Achievement:** Achievement refers to a concern for excellence with emphasis on achieving goals.
2. **Affiliation:** Affiliation refers to a concern for friendly, warm, affectionate and personal relationships.
3. **Extension:** Extension refers to a concern for other persons, groups and the society and helping people when such help is needed in times of need.
4. **Dependency:** Dependency refers to a concern and orientation to look for suggestion, help and solutions from seniors and to refer matters to them rather than attempting on one's own.
5. **Control:** Control refers to a need for personal aggrandizement and consolidation of one's own power.
6. **Expert power:** Expert power refers to a concern for achieving goals for organizational good, through expertise and its influence in the system.

Table 1. Sampling pattern of KVKs and SMSs for inclusion in the study sample.

Sl. No.	State	Number of KVKs sampled	Total strength of SMS	No. of SMS qualifying for inclusion in the study* (theoretical sample size)	No. of SMS actually responding	Actual sample size from respective state
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	04	04	03	03
2.	Assam	5	23	23	23	23
3.	Manipur	3	15	15	12	12
4.	Meghalaya	2	11	11	09	09
5.	Nagaland	3	14	14	12	12
6.	Sikkim	1	05	05	04	04
7.	Tripura	2	08	08	06	06
8.	Mizoram	2	09	09	07	07
Grand total		19	109	89	76	76

*Based on adopted study criteria.

Each of the eleven dimensions had six item statements, each inflecting one of the above six motives. The individual items in each dimension were properly worded to suit the present study without changing the intended meaning. In all, 66 items were selected for the motivational climate questionnaire. The questionnaire consisting of six statements in each of the eleven organizational dimensions listed above was administered for ranking. The respondents were asked to rank all the six statements reflecting six different motives in each dimension from rank I to rank VI, through rank II, rank III, rank IV and rank V with regard to their dominance in their respective KVKs. The scores assigned to these ranks (from I to VI) ranged from 6 to 1. Thus, any individual respondent could theoretically secure scores between 11 (minimum) and 66 (maximum) in each motive. The standardized mean score for each motive was arrived at by dividing the mean score of the motive by the total number of motive statements of the instrument, i.e., According to the instrument, a combination of an organization's highest or dominant score and its second highest or back-up score results in a basic characterization of that organization's motivational climate.

Data collection and analysis: Data collection for the investigation was done with the help of a pretested, structured, mailed research questionnaire, which was dispatched to all the sample respondents. Appropriate statistical measures were used to analyse and interpret the collected data.

Results and discussion

1. Perceived existing motivational climate strengths: For the purpose of description of the existing motivational climate as perceived by the SMS of the KVKs in north east India, the descriptive measures of the six existing climate motives is presented in Table 2.

A perusal of Table 2 reveals that the mean score of dependency climate motive (49.15) was the highest among the six motives, followed closely by control climate motive (47.52). These were followed by achievement climate motive (37.84), expert influence climate motive (36.42), extension climate motive (30.26) and affiliation climate motive (29.78) in decreasing order of existing motivational climate strength. It is thus observed that the strength of dependency climate was the highest as perceived by the SMS, followed by control climate. Hence it could be stated that an overall Dependency-Control climate existed in the KVKs of north east India, as perceived by the SMS. Based on the climate strengths as indicated by the mean scores, achievement, expert influence, extension and affiliation climates were ranked third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. A glance at the standard deviation and coefficient of variation values suggests that dispersion or variation of the scores from the mean as well as heterogeneity of response was the least in control climate, suggesting that the respondents were most homogeneous in respect of their perception of control climate with standard deviation of 3.48 and a coefficient of variation of 7.32%. It was followed by their perception regarding dependency climate with a standard deviation of 4.57 and coefficient of variation of 9.30%. Thus the respondents were mostly homogenous regarding their perceptions about the strongest existing motivational climates, i.e., dependency and control climates. On the other hand, as indicated by the standard deviation and coefficient of variation values, the respondents were relatively heterogeneous with respect to their perceptions about expert influence, extension, achievement and affiliation climates, in increasing order of their heterogeneity. The highest dispersion of scores from the mean as well as heterogeneity of response was observed in affiliation climate with standard deviation and coefficient of variation values of 7.71 and 25.88%.

Table 2. Existing motivational climate strengths and perceptual heterogeneity (N= 76).

Motive	Min. obtained score	Max. obtained score	Range	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of Variation (%)
Dependency	40.00	57.00	17	49.15	4.57	9.30
Extension	19.00	42.00	23	30.26	6.64	21.94
Achievement	24.00	54.00	30	37.84	8.56	22.62
Control	42.00	57.00	15	47.52	3.48	7.32
Affiliation	11.00	42.00	31	29.78	7.71	25.88
Expert	21.00	58.00	37	36.42	7.87	21.60

Table 3. Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to their existing motivational climate (N = 76).

Respondent category	Criterion	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Dependency climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 44	08	10.52
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	45 - 53	56	73.68
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	54 & above	12	15.78
<i>Extension climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 23	08	10.52
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	24 - 36	56	73.68
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	37 & above	12	15.78
<i>Achievement climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 29	16	21.05
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	30 - 47	48	63.15
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	48 & above	12	15.78
<i>Control climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 44	12	15.78
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	45 - 51	56	73.68
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	52 & above	08	10.52
<i>Affiliation climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 22	16	21.05
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	23 - 37	48	63.15
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	38 & above	12	15.78
<i>Expert influence climate</i>				
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - SD$	Up to 28	08	10.52
Medium	$\bar{X} - SD$ to $\bar{X} + SD$	29 - 44	60	78.94
High	Above $\bar{X} + SD$	45 & above	08	10.52

It is thus observed that SMS had more or less similar perceptual orientation regarding dependency and control climates prevailing in their respective KVKs.

2. Existing motivational climate wise distribution of respondents: The respondents were categorized against every climate motive on the basis of mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) scores in respect of each of the perceived existing motivational climate dimension and the frequencies and percentages of each of the categories for the different climates were estimated. The frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to their existing motivational climate scores are presented in Table 3. Table 3 shows that majority (73.68%) of the respondents were in the medium category with respect to their perceived existing dependency climate, followed by 15.78% in high category and only 10.52% figuring in the low category. Similar findings are revealed against perceived extension climate. In case of perceived achievement climate, it was observed that majority of the respondents were in the medium category (63.15%), followed by 21.05% in the low category and 15.78% in the high category. Perceived existing control climate had the majority (73.68%) of respondents belonging to the medium category while respectively 15.78% and 10.52% belonged to the low and high categories. In case of perceived affiliation climate, 63.15% of the respondents belonged to the medium category while 21.05% and 15.78% belonged to the low and high categories respectively. The proportion of respondents belonging to the medium category was the largest in case of perceived expert influence climate with 78.94% while an identical proportion of 10.52% belonged to the low and high perception categories. It was observed that by and large the respondents had medium level of perception for each of the six motive dimensions of the existing motivational climate. It was also observed that the highest proportion of respondents perceiving a low level of existing motivational climate (21.05%) was for the achievement and affiliation climate dimensions while the highest proportion of respondents perceiving medium level of motivational climate (78.94%) was for expert influence climate dimension. Equal proportions (15.78%) of respondents had perceived the motivational climate to be high for dependency, extension, achievement and affiliation climate dimensions.

Conclusion

1. An appraisal of the perceived existing motivational climate by the Subject Matter Specialists of the KVKs in the north eastern states of India, as elaborated in the foregoing sections, reveals that the dominant existing motivational climate pattern in the KVKs was Dependency-Control. In a dependency climate, people do not work on their own; rather, they look for orders,

suggestions and support from their superiors even in those situations where they could or should have shown initiative. Such a climate is characterized by observing regulations, strictly following orders and excessive leaning on the authority. A control climate indicates that people enjoy status, power and authority. Executives/leadership like to control their subordinates, communication is selective and used as power leverage. Decisions are made by a few and those who are powerful dominate others.

2. The findings broadly indicate that the SMS of the KVKs of the region are dependent upon the directives or instructions from the higher authority. They tend to perform their duties and devote their time to complete routine tasks. Initiative and dynamism are wanting and people in leadership positions tend to dominate them. The climate pattern suggests that mutual trust among colleagues within the KVK set up is lacking and persons in key positions are less concerned with accomplishment of organizational goals.
3. The gist about the existing motivational climate pattern in the KVKs of north east India would indicate an organizational structure having clear cut channels of communication and controlled by a few people (may be at various hierarchical positions) who ultimately make all the decisions.
4. Since a Dependency-Control motivational climate is detrimental for organizational growth, therefore, enhancing job satisfaction and job involvement levels, creating a team management leadership style and developing a team work environment in the KVKs may be some of the strategies to reduce this dominant motivational climate strength.

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