



Perception of the Subject Matter Specialists about the Motivational Climate Existing in Krishi Vigyan Kendras in Assam

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to measure the existing motivational climate as perceived by the Subject Matter Specialists (SMSs) of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) under Assam Agricultural University (AAU). The study was conducted at the KVKs functioning under the administrative control of the Directorate of Extension Education, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Assam. Motivational climate as perceived by SMSs was measured by MAO(C) scale developed by Pareek (1981). Findings revealed that the mean score of dependency climate motive (41.69) was the highest among the six motives, followed closely by control climate motive (40.84). These were followed by achievement climate motive (38.73), expert power climate motive (35.52), affiliation climate motive (33.29) and extension climate motive (32.87) in decreasing order of existing motivational climate strength. Hence it could be stated that an overall dependency-control climate existed in the KVKs under AAU, as perceived by the SMSs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Organisation is a social unit of people that is structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals. Organisations are open systems; they affect and are affected by their environment. "As any organisation 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" [1]. Among different factors, motivation is one of the most dominant factors which affect the performance of an individual in an organisation. Motivation is an inner state which energizes, activates or moves and directs or channels behaviour towards goals. Motivation is that set of attitude which predisposes a person to act in a specific, goal directed way [2]. At organisational level, motivational climate influences work motivation. Motivational climate activates, energizes and directs (hence motivates) the SMSs towards the achievement of organisational and personal goals. According to Pareek et al. [3], motivational climate is the general culture of the organisation characterized by dominant psychological needs (motives). Effective motivational climate encourages the employees to their work that ultimately influences the growth of an organisation. This is more so, and very much important to an organisation like KVK.

KVK (also known as Farm Science Centre), an innovative science based institution; was established mainly to impart vocational training to the farmers and field level extension workers. It is an organisational framework that caters the need of farmers in a district. Training, On Farm Testing and Front Line Demonstration are the major three mandates of KVK. KVKs provide training not only in agriculture and allied vocations but also in other income-generating activities that may supplement the income of farm families. Previous studies on the behavioural aspects of agricultural development organisation were mostly confined to Government Departments of Agriculture, and to some extent voluntary organisations. There has been dearth of research studies dealing with motivational or organisational climate of KVKs in India. It is presumed that the study will provide some valuable results which may add to our knowledge in the field of management of KVKs.

The present study on the concept of motivational climate may lead to a better understanding on, how far the organisation serves a meaningful psychological environment for its employees resulting from a conscious education of their job experiences. The outcome of the study might act as guidelines for the SMSs of KVKs to perform their job duties more effectively and help and serves as a feedback to the management authority, so as to readjust and streamline their efforts for effective management of work and personnel in the organisation. Moreover, the concept of motivational climate serves as important criteria in evaluating the organisation. Findings of the study will throw light on the prevailing motivational climate of the KVKs and attempt to explore the desired motivational climate that will facilitate the administrators to make necessary improvements for healthy working environment for the SMSs of KVKs. This study would enable the programme planners and policy makers to gear up their activities towards improving perceived motivational climate of the KVKs. Keeping this in view, the present study was undertaken with an objective to measure the existing motivational climate as perceived by the SMSs of KVKs under AAU. Motivational climate in the present study was conceptualized as the environment prevailing in the KVKs, which activates, energizes and directs (hence motivates) the SMSs towards the achievement of organisational and personal goals. This was a part of Master of Science (Agriculture) study on "A study on motivational climate as perceived by the Subject Matter Specialists of Krishi Vigyan Kendras under Assam Agricultural University".

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the KVKs functioning under the administrative control of the Directorate of Extension Education, AAU, Jorhat, Assam. A multistage purposive sampling method was followed for selection of the respondents of the study. All the 23 KVKs functioning under the administrative control of the Directorate of Extension Education, Assam Agricultural University were selected purposively for the study. The total strength of SMSs in 23 KVKs was 126 at the time of planning the study. Initially, it was decided to include all the SMSs working in 23 KVKs as respondents of the study. Later on only those SMSs who have completed a minimum of 2 years of service and a minimum of 1 year service at the present place of posting

were included as respondents of the study. The number of SMSs fulfilling these criteria was 112. The major tool used for collection of primary data in the study was a structured pretested questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was prepared in accordance with the objectives of the present study to collect pertinent and relevant information from the respondents. The questionnaire for collection of data was mailed through registered post to 112 SMSs working in 23 KVKs. Further, the questionnaire was also sent to each SMS through e-mail and then follow up was made by sending e-mails and telephonic messages. Some of the KVKs were visited by the investigator for collection of the filled-in questionnaire. Each respondent was contacted at least twice or more. Despite all efforts, the total number of SMSs returning the filled-in questionnaire was 65. Finally, 65 SMSs from 18 KVKs constituted the sample of respondents for the study.

The main purpose of the study was to arrive at the dominant motivational climate as perceived by the SMSs of the KVKs. Following Pareek [3,4], motivational climate was measured on six motive dimensions, viz, achievement, affiliation, extension, dependency, control and expert power. Eleven organisational dimensions were also taken for the purpose of measuring the above mentioned motive dimensions. The eleven organisational 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 eleven organisational dimensions, the motives were measured for the following six motive dimensions:

1. Achievement or a concern for excellence with emphasis on achieving goals.
2. Affiliation or a concern for friendly, warm, affectionate and personal relationships.
3. Extension or a concern for other persons, groups and the society, and helping people when such help is needed in times of need.
4. Dependency or a concern and orientation to look for suggestions, help and solutions, from seniors and to refer matters to them rather than attempting on one's own.
5. Control or a need for personal aggrandisement and consolidation of one's one power.

6. Expert power or a concern for achieving goals or organisational good through expertise and its influences in the system.

Each of the eleven organisational dimensions had six statements, each reflecting 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 organisational 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 (both 'actual' and 'desired') 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., 11. According to the instrument, a combination of an organisation's highest or dominant score and its second highest or back-up score results in a basic characterization of that organisation's climate.

The distribution of the SMSs on seven selected socio-personal and organisational variables was worked out. These variables included age, educational qualification, service experience, level of aspiration, job involvement, job satisfaction and attitude of SMSs towards KVK. The Pictorial Self Anchoring Ladder Scale developed by Kilpatrick and Cantrill, [5] was used to measure the level of aspiration of the SMSs and Job involvement was measured by using the scale developed by Lodahl and Kejner [6]. Job satisfaction was measured by using the job satisfaction scale developed by Daftuar [7]. Attitude of SMSs towards KVK was measured by the attitude scale developed by the investigator for the study.

Various descriptive statistical measures used for analysis and interpretation of data included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation (SD) and coefficient of variation (CV).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the study have been discussed in the following paragraphs.

The distribution of respondents according to selected socio-economic and organisational characteristics is presented in Table 1. A perusal of the Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents (67.69%) belonged to the middle age category. As far as education was concerned, a vast majority of the respondents (78.46%) were Master degree holders. In case of service experience, 56.92 per cent of respondent had medium service experience. Significantly, majority of the respondents (60%) were with medium level of aspiration. Findings also indicated that majority of the respondents (66.15%) perceived medium level of job involvement. In case of job satisfaction, majority

of the respondents (55.38%) perceived medium level of job satisfaction. In so far as attitude towards KVK was concerned, majority of the respondents (66.15%) had favourable attitude towards KVK. The values of coefficient of variation (CV) indicated that respondents were mostly homogeneous with respect to the variables of job satisfaction and job involvement. This was followed by attitude towards KVK and age. On the other hand, respondents were relatively heterogeneous or scattered in their responses on the variables of level of aspiration followed by, service experience and education level.

For the purpose of description of the existing motivational climate as perceived by the SMSs of the KVKs under AAU, the descriptive measures of the six existing climate motives are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Distribution of SMSs based on selected socio-economical and organisational characteristics

Category	Criterion	Score range	Number (n=65)	%	Mean	S.D.	CV
Age							
Young	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	28 to 35 years	12	18.46	40.78	5.94	14.57
Medium	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	36 to 46 years	44	67.69			
Old	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	47 to 54 years	9	13.8			
Education level							
M.sc degree		1	51	78.46	1.24	0.43	34.83
PhD degree		2	14	21.53			
Service experience							
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	2 to 4 years	25	38.46	7.01	3.08	44.04
Medium	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	5-10 years	37	56.92			
High	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	11 - 14 years	3	4.61			
Level of aspiration							
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	0 to 1	17	26.1	2.43	1.32	54.40
Medium	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	2-3	39	60			
High	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	4 -10	9	13.8			
Job involvement							
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	17 to 60	14	21.53	66.86	7.02	10.50
Medium	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	61-73	43	66.15			
High	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	74 to 85	8	12.30			
Job satisfaction							
Low	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	19 to 63	18	27.69	71.35	9.11	12.77
Medium	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	64-80	36	55.38			
High	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	81 to 95	11	16.92			
Attitude towards KVK							
Less favourable	Up to $\bar{X} - 1$ SD	20 to 72	12	18.46	77.96	6.31	8.10
Favourable	$\bar{X} -$ SD to $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	73 – 84	43	66.15			
Highly favourable	Above $\bar{X} + 1$ SD	85 and 100	10	15.38			

Table 2. Existing motivational climate strengths and perceptual heterogeneity

Motive	n=65					
	Minimum obtained score	Maximum obtained score	Range	Mean	SD	CV (%)
Dependency	25	55	30	41.69	7.72	18.91
Extension	14	49	35	32.87	7.20	21.91
Achievement	11	60	49	38.73	9.77	25.22
Control	28	60	32	40.84	7.72	18.91
Affiliation	13	45	32	33.29	7.43	22.32
Expert power	16	60	44	35.52	10.15	28.57

A perusal of the Table 2 revealed that the mean score of dependency climate motive (41.69) was the highest among the six motives, followed closely by control climate motive (40.84). These were followed by achievement climate motive (38.73), expert power climate motive (35.52), affiliation climate motive (33.29) and extension climate motive (32.87) 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 SMSs, followed by control climate. Hence it could be stated that an overall dependency-control climate existed in the KVKs under AAU, as perceived by the SMSs. On the other hand, the lowest perceived strength was observed in case of extension climate (mean score 32.87). Respondents were more or less homogeneous with respect to their perceptions about the dominant motivational climates, as indicated by their standard deviation scores and values of coefficients of variation. Based on the climate strengths as indicated by the mean scores, achievement, affiliation, extension and expert power climates were ranked third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Similar findings were also reported by Kalita [8].

4. CONCLUSION

An appraisal of the perceived existing motivational climate by the SMSs of KVKs revealed 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/leaders 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. The findings broadly indicated that the SMSs of the KVKs of the study area were dependent upon the directives or instructions from the higher authority. They tended to perform their duties and devote their time to complete routine tasks. Initiative and dynamism were wanting and people in leadership positions tended to dominate them. Findings implied that mutual trust among colleagues within the KVK set up was lacking and persons in key positions were less concerned with accomplishment of organisational goals. Further, a decrease in the climate motives of dependency and control was desired by the respondents over the existing climate. Steps should be taken to reduce the effect of such motivational climates on the SMSs of the KVKs and effort should be made by the concerned authority to provide such type of climate where SMS would perform their duties and responsibilities with excellence and help each other in developing greater skills.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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