

Influence of Organizational Climate on Prosocial Organizational Behavior

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Organizations continuously seek to create an environment where employees go beyond their job brief and engage in others' welfare enhancing behaviors that eventually contribute to higher standards. The study aims to examine the relationship between organizational climate (OC) and prosocial organizational behavior (PSOB). Using social exchange theoretical premise, three dimensions of OC such as warmth, standards and identity were used to examine their relationship with PSOB. The data was drawn from 387 nurses working in two non-profit hospitals in a southern state in India. Results indicate that all three dimensions of OC (warmth, standards and identity) significantly predict PSOB in non-profit hospitals. It imparts important insights to researchers and managers of non-profit hospitals about OC dimensions that have to be given much attention to institutionalize PSOB.

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Introduction

Healthcare sector is one of the most resource intensive and knowledge-based sectors (Bartram & Dowling, 2013). The quality of healthcare delivery often depends on a healthy work environment where employees feel respected, recognized, identified and get opportunities for developing their potentials that are aligned with organizational success. Due to the clinician centric model of health care system (McBride & Mustchin, 2013; Khatri, Wells, McKune & Brewer, 2006), people related issues are paid lower attention as compared to the financial and structural transformation issues (Buchan, 2004; Khatri et al., 2006). For instance, almost for last two decades, reforms in healthcare systems have been focused mainly on cost containment, structural change and introduction of market mechanisms. Consequently, healthcare organizations undergone challenges with respect to organizational and managerial issues for instance, commitment issues, lack of job satisfaction and poor quality service (Leggat, Bartram & Stanton,

2011). Allied to this, prosocial organizational behavior i.e., employee's willingness to take extra effort for the benefit or welfare of others became a major concern.

Empirical researches suggest that attention on human resource management (HRM) and HR practices can positively impact employee attitudes and behaviors (Lee, Lee & Kang, 2012; Hyde, Harris & Boaden, 2013; Shantz, Alfes & Arevshatian, 2016). However, rather than relying on individual HR activities like compensation, performance appraisal, training and development etc, we posit that larger emphasis has to be given to shared perception of employees about the working environment, i.e., organizational climate. It is important for enhancing prosocial organizational behavior of employees particularly in the healthcare context. Although, extant literatures demonstrate the relationship between organizational climate and different work outcomes (for instance, Parker, Baltes, Young, Huff, Altmann, Lacost & Roberts, 2003; Benzer & Horner, 2015), limited studies have addressed the relationship between employee's perception about organizational climate and prosocial organizational behavior. By using the theoretical premise of social exchange theory, this study aims to understand the relationship between organizational climate and prosocial organizational behavior (PSOB) among nurses working in non-profit hospitals in India.

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate (OC) is defined as the shared perception of employ-

ees about the working environment. It is the meaning and reflection that employees attach to the procedures, policies, events and practices that they experience at the workplace (Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey, 2013). OC is often discussed as attitudes, feelings, norms and values that employees have about the organization and work environment. OC is a set of measurable properties of work environment that is either implicitly or explicitly perceived by the employees that influences their attitudes and behaviors (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). In other words, it is the shared perceptions about the "the way things are around here" (Reichers & Schneider, 1990: 22). OC is considered as a construct that has significant implications on employee behavior and performance. It determines the individual's as well as group's behaviors in the organization (Garcia-Garcia, Ramos, Serrano, Cobos & Souza, 2011). It is the organizational attribution perceived by members of the organization (Castro & Martins, 2010) regarding the kind of attitudes and behaviors that are recognized, supported and finally rewarded.

Employees make sense of work environment through the socialization and interaction process among members of the organization (Moran & Volkwein, 1992). The difference in the shared perceptions among employees about the work environment of the organization could result producing different perspectives on organizational climate. Studies have demonstrated that OC plays a crucial role in influencing individual as well as organizational outcomes (Kopelman,

Brief & Guzzo, 1990). Employee perception about organizational climate is associated with various outcomes at various levels such as individual, team and organization (Patterson, West, Shackleton, Dawson, Lawthom & Maitlis, 2005). It includes turnover (Ryan, Schmit & Johnson, 1996), job satisfaction (Ahmad, Jasimuddin & Kee, 2018), employee satisfaction (Molina et al., 2014) and perceptions of customer regarding service quality (Schneider et al., 1998). OC has critical role to play in which employees of the organization behave or are influenced to exhibit prosocial organizational behavior.

Prosocial Organizational Behavior (PSOB)

Behaviors at workplace generally are of two types. First is the job -related behaviors which are described in the job description. Second type is behaviors which are beyond the call of duty and are not mentioned in the job description, for instance, talking favorably about the organization to outsiders, showing cooperation with colleagues, take actions to protect organization from unexpected danger situations etc. (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). The combination of these two types of behaviors play a crucial role in improving the organizational performance. The second type of behaviors has been denoted by different terms such as extra role behavior, contextual performance, organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1990) etc. We use prosocial organizational behavior because it is an umbrella concept and encompasses both in role and extra role behav-

iors. It covers behaviors that can be considered informal reward system (Lee, 2001).

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“Prosocial organizational behavior is behavior which is (a) performed by a member of an organization, (b) directed toward an individual, group, or organization with whom he or she interacts while carrying out his or her organizational role, and (c) performed with the intention of promoting the welfare of the individual, group, or organization toward which it is directed” (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). Such kind of behaviors “include helping customers with personal matters; representing the organization favorably; assisting co-workers with job-related matters, volunteering for activities outside the usual job role; providing services to customers in organizationally consistent ways; putting in extra effort; staying in an organization despite hardship; suggesting procedural matters, administrative or organizational improvements; showing leniency in personnel decisions; complying with organizational values, policies and regulations; assisting co-workers with personal matters” (Brief & Motowidlo 1986: 713-16). The distinction between organizational citizenship behaviors, prosocial organizational behavior and organizational behavior is given in Table I.

Table 1 Behavioral Construct and Dimensions

Behavioral Dimension	Behavioral Construct		
	OCB	PSOB	Organizational Spontaneity
Organizationally functional- Organizationally dysfunctional	Includes functional behaviors	Includes functional and dysfunctional behaviors	Includes functional behaviors
Role prescribed-extra role	Includes role-prescribed and extra-role behaviors	Includes role-prescribed and extra-role behaviors	Includes extra-role behaviors
Possibility of financial remuneration	Behaviors cannot be recognized by formal reward system	Behaviors can be recognized by formal reward system	Behaviors can be recognized by formal reward system
Active-passive	Includes active and passive behaviors	Includes active and passive behaviors	Includes active behaviors

Note: OCB= Organizational citizenship behavior, PSOB= Prosocial organizational behavior
Source: George & Brief (1992)

Theoretical Framework & Hypothesis Development

Social Exchange theory (SET) has been used to understand employee's willingness to take extra role behaviors. SET is based on norms of reciprocity and relies more on reactive aspect. It argues for a balanced relationship that is mutually rewarding (Howard & Hollander, 1997). Individuals engage in helping behaviors when it is mutually rewarding to both parties. The positive behavior is reciprocated with positive one and negative with negative behaviors. The link between job satisfaction and performance is stronger when the performance was characterized using behavioral components that are beyond the call of duty or core jobs (Dekas, Bauer, Welle, Kurkoski & Sullivan, 2013).

Employee behavior in an organization depends on the individual traits as well as work environment of the organization.

The job attitude of employees is influenced by a variety of organizational characteristics as well as social interactions in the work environment. Various dimensions of organizational climate have been found in the literature that have an influence on employee motivation and performance. It includes warmth, organizational structure, support, identity, reward system, responsibility, conflict, standards and risk (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). Since this study is placed in the context of non-profit hospitals, we believe that specific dimensions of OC should be examined separately to better evaluate its impact on PSOB. NPOs work for a social mission (Drucker, 2012) and it is important for NPOs to have an OC that makes employee feel proud in

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being associated with organization, encourage friendly work atmosphere and maintain standards in service delivery and performance. Hence, we focus on Litwin and Stringer's (1968) three dimensions of OC such as warmth, standards and identity in this study.

Warmth

Warmth refers to the friendly work environment that prevails among members in the organization. It relates to a caring atmosphere where feeling of positive fellowship prevails among employees (Liou & Cheng, 2010). The climate that promotes a collaborative work environment increases employee satisfaction due to the care and support they get (Deshpande, 1996) and have direct impact on team performance (Carless, 2004). The climate that is perceived as warmth by employees leads to have positive behavioral outcomes particularly in the context of healthcare settings. It is because in the service delivery, there are higher task interdependence, uncertainty, complexity and work is often depended on the contextual or spontaneous act of employees (Nielsen et al., 2012). Hence, a nurse may often involve in PSOB acts to cater to the best needs of the patients and to ensure better service delivery. Hence, we hypothesize that employee perception of organizational climate for warmth plays a crucial role in enhancing PSOB of employees.

Hypothesis 1: Employee perception of organizational climate for warmth is positively related to prosocial organizational behavior

Standards

Standards define that employees perceive the importance of implicit and explicit goals of the organization and understand the clearly defined performance standards required to achieve those goals (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). The work environment that upholds standards in service delivery improves the confidence level of employees. Organizationally directed behaviors that are continuously pushed for superior performance by managers apparently accomplish discretionary behaviors (Turnipseed & Rassuli, 2005). However, in the healthcare context, often, nurses have to exhibit prosocial behaviors rather than standardized acts to provide better service delivery (Hyde et al., 2013). Hence, the climate that allows to sustain the performance standards along with freedom to exhibit PSOB indicates a better organizational performance. Therefore, we formulate our next hypothesis as given below:

Hypothesis 2: Employee perception of organizational climate for standards is positively related to prosocial organizational behavior

Identity

Clearly, when employee feels proud of belonging to the organization, the performance level will be high (Bandura, 1986). Identity indicates the sense of belonging to an organization as a valuable member (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). The identity of an employee is crucial to understand the employee behavior.

Employees who strongly identify with their organizations appear to have their sense self- defined in terms of the organizational identity. Situational influences play a determinant role in associating the identity (Van Dick et al., 2006). Moreover, the work characteristics (Torroca, 2005) and work environment can influence the employee feeling of being part of a well-functioning team. This in turn strengthens work motivation and encourages employees take part in in-role and extra-role behaviors. Hence, we frame our next hypothesis as follows:

Situational influences play a determinant role in associating the identity.

Hypothesis 3: Employee perception of organizational climate for identity is positively related to prosocial organizational behavior

Background & Research Setting

The study was conducted in non-profit hospitals located in one of the southern states in India. The state has attained remarkable recognition and is an epitome for the world in terms of its achievement in human development areas such as health, education and welfare measures (Isaac & Tharakan, 1995). The state has achieved top rank in India for its significant progress in healthcare performance. The Health Index Report 2018, jointly prepared by World Bank and Niti Ayog ranked the state in the top position for this achievement (The New Indian

Express, 2018)¹. The wider network of hospitals in the private and public sector together contributed to this greater achievement in the state (Dilip, 2010). Along with government and profit oriented private hospitals, the presence of non-governmental organizations also contributed significantly to the remarkable achievement of health performance of the state (Parayil, 2000).

We focused on non-profit hospitals that are privately owned. We set three criteria for selection of hospitals for this study. First, the hospital should be registered under either The Indian Trusts Act, 1882, or The Societies Registration Act, 1860. Secondly, the hospital should have at least 300 beds and more than 500 employees and finally the hospital should have been functioning for more than 15 years. Based on these criteria, we selected two hospitals in a district from the selected state.

Methodology

Data was collected from nurses of these two selected hospitals and the questionnaire was administered through nursing superintendent of nursing staff working in hospitals. 600 questionnaires were distributed in total and 444 (73.7 percent) were received back. After removing the questionnaires which were inadequately answered, a sample of 387 turned out to be in usable form. To measure the study variables such as organizational climate and prosocial organizational behavior, we relied

¹<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=176418>

on standard scales. The Litwin and Stringer (1968) scale was used to measure OC. Dimensions such as Identity, Warmth and Standards were used to study OC in non-profit hospitals. Two kinds of PSOB were used for this study. PSOB-Altruism was measured by three items (Organ, 1988) and PSOB- Service Quality was measured by three items (Peccei & Rosenthal, 1997). All the items were scored on a 7- point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7 with strongly disagree to strongly agree. The reliability of the measurement instruments was analyzed before doing the hypothesis testing. Cronbach's Alpha was used to evaluate the internal consistency of the items. Cronbach's Alpha of OC construct was 0.859 and of PSOB was 0.860 satisfies the requirement (Nunnally, 1978). The scores were more than 0.7 and showed a strong reliability of the questionnaire content.

Table 2 Demographic Details

Demographics Variable	Sample N= 387	Percentage
Age		
20-25 years	129	33.33
26-30 years	130	33.59
30 years and above	128	33.07
Gender		
Male	72	18.6
Female	315	81.4
Education		
Nursing Degree	157	40.57
Nursing Diploma	230	59.43
Work Experience		
2-5 years	224	57.88
6-10 years	100	25.84
10 years and above	63	16.28

Table 3 shows the variables used in the study and the mean, standard deviation and variance. Table 4 displays the correlation between dimensions of OC

The collected data was analyzed using SPSS 22 version. The hypothesized model was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. The study aimed at examining the relationship between employee perceptions of OC climate of warmth, identity and standards (independent variables) and PSOB as altruism and service quality (dependent variables).

Descriptive Analysis

Table 2 shows the demographic details of the respondents. The percentage of female nurses is higher (around 81%) than male nurses and 59% of the respondents hold Nursing Diploma as their qualification. We considered nurses with at least two years of experience because this period will provide a reasonable understanding the about organizational climate.

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Table 3 Descriptive Statistics - Mean, Standard Deviation & Variance of Dimensions of OC & PSOB

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Warmth	4.921	1.088	1.184
Standards	4.732	1.154	1.333
Identity	4.919	1.082	1.171
PSOB	5.379	1.034	1.070

PSOB has the highest mean of 5.379 with a standard deviation of 1.034 followed by warmth with the mean of 4.921 and a standard deviation of 1.088. Standards have the lowest mean of 4.732 with a standard deviation of 1.154 followed by Identity with a mean value of 4.919 and a standard deviation of 1.082.

Table 4 Correlation between Warmth, Identity, Standards and PSOB

	Warmth	Identity	Standards	PSOB
Warmth	1	.597**	.662**	.446**
Identity	.597**	1	.691**	.445**
Standards	.662**	.691**	1	.416**
PSOB	.446**	.445**	.416**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis shows that all variables are positively correlated with each other.

Analysis

We used SPSS 22 to conduct hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypothesis. In the initial step, for dependent variable PSOB, we entered control variables such as age, gender, qualification and experience. We next entered independent variables such as warmth, standards and identity respectively. Regression analysis shows that warmth is a significant positive predictor of PSOB ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < 0.01$) and there by supports hypothesis 1. Standards ($\beta = 0.109$, $p < 0.01$)

is a significant positive predictor of PSOB and therefore supports hypothesis 2. Identity is a significant positive predictor of PSOB ($\beta = 0.208$, $p < 0.01$) and hence supports hypothesis 3. Table 5 exhibits the results of hierarchical regression.

Discussion

This study substantiates that although employees' job attitudes better predict PSOB (Hyde et al., 2013), organizational climate also plays an important role in evolving positive attitudes and behaviors among employees. Hence, it becomes extremely important for organizations to create a climate that is conducive to pro-

Table 5 Hierarchical Regression Results

	Step 1	Step 2
Control Variable		
Age	-.004	-0.017
Gender	-0.052	-0.182
Experience	0.001	0.011
Qualification	-0.107	-0.105
Warmth		0.245**
Standards		0.109**
Identity		0.208**
Fit Statistics		
Adjusted R Square	0.002	0.264
Δ Adjusted R square	0.012	0.266
F Change	1.155	46.471**

N= 387, All reported regression coefficients are unstandardized. **P<0.01. Dependent Variable= PSOB

mote prosocial organizational behavior of employees. The dimensions such as warmth, standards and identity measure employees' perceptual and subjective responses about the organizational environment.

This study is posited in the context of non-profit organizations (NPOs). NPOs work on a social mission and give priority to deliver for social mission over superior financial gains (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003). The organizational climate and work environment in NPOs would be fundamentally different from for profit organizations because of its differences in the goals and strategy (Ridder & McCandless, 2010). As compared to for profit organizations, NPOs often fail to have sophisticated employee related policies and practices (Kellner et al., 2017). For instance, salaries or other benefits given to employees in NPOs will be comparatively less than in for profit organizations (Lynn, 2003). Results reveal that OC dimensions such

as warmth, standards and identity enhance PSOB of nurses working in non-profit hospitals.

At a time for an individual to have an altruistic mindset to ensure better service quality appears to be placed in the opposite direction, where individualization of work relationships is rampant. However, in the context of service sector, for instance in a hospital setting, integration of these two factors of PSOB became very crucial. Altruism refers to extending a hand to a person and helping him or her in an organizationally relevant task with concern of empathy or welfare or benefit of colleagues, clients or customers. When an employee behaves altruistically, he or she goes for more interactions and exchange of information. This essentially creates an emotional bond between employees and customers. Voluntary helping of a fellow employee in work or non-work -related matters, opens up more communication between them and brings down the intensity of conflicts

and disagreements. This will result in reducing negative perceptions at workplace. More importantly, integration of altruism in work ensures a morally superior engagement at work level than doing a mere job.

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The second important aspect of PSBO is from service quality perspective, which is important in the healthcare industry context. It is important to notice that behavioral dimensions rank higher in the weightage in deciding the service quality provided to a patient (client). For instance, if an employee struggles with work overload and if a co-worker willingly assists to finish the work, it ends up in ensuring better service quality from the patient (client) perspective. Therefore, it is important to have an OC that promotes warmth, standards and identity which will in turn enhance employee's PSOB acts such as altruism and service quality. The findings shed important insight for managers and other stakeholders of non-profit hospitals regarding the areas to focus on, for institutionalizing PSOB.

Limitations & Conclusion

Findings of this study offer an initial step to understand the relationship between employee's perception of OC of warmth, standards and identity and PSOB amongst nurses working in two non-profit hospitals located in a southern

state in India. However, generalizability of findings of this study is limited because of the sampling method used. In order to increase the generalizability, it is recommended to have a random sampling method that covers nursing workforce in different geographies in India. Moreover, this study also has the limitations of cross-sectional design.

Developing positive employee attitudes that result in exhibiting behaviors that are beyond the formal job requirements has become very crucial to organizations in this globalized era. PSOB which refers to the willingness of employees to engage in positive acts and which goes beyond the call of duty, has been recognized as a significant contributor to organizational performance. This is true especially in the service industry where requirements of human connect are very high, and employee behaviors directly impact the client. Obviously, there are employees in any organization who demonstrate PSOB by virtue of their internal traits. However, rather than relying on the individual traits as a source of PSOB, organizations should turn their attention towards institutionalizing such behaviors. This mandates creating appropriate organizational climate that facilitates such behaviors. Better experience of organizational climate by the employees can act as a conduit to instill positive employee attitudes.

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