

The Interplay Between Personality and Organizational Climate

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Organizational climate refers to the collective behavioral tendencies of persons within an organization. It is an essential ingredient in determining business success, since the behavior of persons within an organization influences all types of interaction. At the same time, organizational climate also determines how much employees will dedicate themselves towards the achievement of their organization’s goal. However, although organizational climate is largely a product of organizational structure and leadership techniques, it remains significantly influenced by the personality traits of employees. Ideally, personality refers to the pattern of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors perpetrated by an individual over an extensive period. Personality is unique to every individual, but it could potentially impact organizational climate. That is because it determines whether individuals will comply with the climate of their organization. In this study, the aim will be to prove that personality affects organizational climate. Findings indicate that personality determines compatibility between individual and organization, indicating that some individuals are not good for some organizations and vice versa.

Keywords: personality, personality traits, organizational climate, performance

Introduction

The human factor is a key success determinant in any type of organization. However, it is relevant to consider how individuals within an organization influence the organization. Do the personality traits of employees shape the climate within an organization? Studies already show that organizational structure, authority, and social networks significantly impact organizational climate (Nuckcheddy, 2018). However, does personality traits also influence climate? In any organization, the human factor is at the helm of every activity. That is because they oversee administrative activities, human resource activities, customer interactions, production, as well as regulatory compliance (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). Therefore, given that personality represents the usual attitudes and habits of an individual, it will definitely shape how employees perform their duties. Through a thorough and comprehensive literature review, the study will prove that organizations must consider the impact of personality on organizational climate if they intend to improve their productivity. Considering that personality affects organizational climate, the study will move on to evaluate the implications of the findings to organizations and to employees.

Background

Ideally, organizational climate refers to the collective behavior within an organization. To a large extent, the climate of an organization exudes its personality (Nuckcheddy, 2018). However, organizational climate

may largely be influenced by the personalities of the individual employees. That is because personality affects how an individual perceives their organization. It also affects their performance, communication styles, as well as job satisfaction (Rad, Arzani, & Toozandehjani, 2018). Therefore, for organizations to perform exactly as intended, they must pay special consideration to the personality traits of their employees.

Prior to exploring how employee personality affects organizational climate, it is relevant to break down the meaning of personality. Personality is a word that finds its antecedence from the Greek language. In Greek, the word personality is “*persona*”, and it directly translates to “speak through” (Rad et al., 2018). The word personality refers to a set of traits, attitudes, and characteristics unique to an individual. Personality defines the role that an individual assumes in society. Every individual has distinct personality traits, and that allows everyone to occupy a different niche.

Personality is either inherited or learned. However, inherited traits do not play a major role in influencing organizational behavior, and the study will focus on the learned traits. Through social institutions such as schools, families, and religious groups, children interact with their environments, developing new traits in the process (Kawiana, Dewi, Martini, & Suardana, 2018). The learning occurs through the process of primary socialization, which postulates that nurture plays a significant role in influencing developmental outcomes.

The main learned characteristics that persons develop include perception, values, personality, and attitudes (Rad et al., 2018). Ideally, perception refers to an individual’s ability to process their environments through feelings and senses. Perceptions are largely controlled by values, which also determine the decision-making process. In an organizational situation, perceptions and decision-making largely determine how persons interact with their environments, indicating that organizations should give some considerations to personality traits.

As for the personality characteristic in learned traits, it influences an individual’s patterns of thought (Kawiana, 2018). In addition, personality also affects emotions, one’s ability to understand, as well as their behavior. Finally, when it comes to attitude, it largely affects expression as well as comprehension. Typically, there are two main attitudes that individuals may demonstrate. The two are positivity and negativity. In the literature review section, the study will focus deeper on personality and how it may impact organization behavior.

Methodology

The study is entirely qualitative. It is qualitative because it will rely on non-numerical data from secondary sources which address issues related to personality and organizational climate. At the same time, the study will be exploratory. That is because its main intention is to draw a correlation between personality and organizational climate. Thus far, it is not yet clear whether organizations need to consider employee personality before recruitment practices. Therefore, by evaluating whether there is a correlation, the study will gather more information on the topic.

Considering that the study will sample secondary resources, data collection activities will take place through the use of online academic repositories. Scholarly databases such as Google Scholar are abundant in academic articles on the topic, and it will be the main search database used in the study. All secondary sources must be published within the past five years, for credibility’s sake. Articles within the past five years will have updated information, indicating that they will play a huge role in improving the quality of the study. The secondary sources must also be peer-reviewed, or from reputable authors or organizations that have extensive

knowledge in the research topic. The cautionary measure is to ensure that the study only presents credible findings.

A critical evaluation will follow the data collection activity to formulate the findings of the study. Definitely, the literature review will generate large volumes of data, but it is imperative to break down the information so that it can provide meaningful results for the study. After the findings are apparent, the next section will discuss the implications of the study. If personality affects organizational climate, then what must organizations do? At the same time, how can professionals use the information for their benefit?

Literature Review

The Characteristics of Personality

Presently, the definition of personality is already apparent. Personality is the cumulative attitudes, ideas, and values unique to every individual (Rad et al., 2018). It is also clear that the prominent personality attributes are often learned as people engage with different social groups and institutions in life. However, it is pertinent to focus a little bit more on the defining characteristics of personality and how they may influence persons to behave within organizational settings.

For starters, personality traits are enduring. Unlike random bursts of energy, personality tends to remain the same throughout a significant part of an individual's life (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). Because personality persists throughout the better part of an individual's life, it can be an important determinant of how an individual will behave within a given situation. An individual who is naturally extroverted for instance may find it easy to interact with others, and they could flourish in jobs that require a lot of interpersonal interactions.

Another important aspect of personality is that it is influenced by social interactions. Because personality is learned, people develop their personality traits by hanging around certain groups or institutions (Rad et al., 2018). For organizations, such information is revolutionary since it promotes recruitment based on personality. If an organization is in search of specific characters, it can get them by exploring areas where such individuals are found. For instance, religious institutions may instill high levels of integrity on individuals, and businesses that consider integrity a major factor affecting employability can recruit employees with strong religious affiliations.

Personality also happens to be both psychological and physiological (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). Although it is the psychological aspect that shapes senses, emotions, perception, and decision-making, the physiological aspect of an individual also plays an important role. That is because biological needs may compel individuals to behave in certain ways. For instance, a drug user may become erratic when they crave drugs. As a result, they may find themselves consistently engaging in impulsive behaviors (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). Therefore, as organizations recruit, they must remain attentive to the biological demands of their employees and how they may impact their behaviors.

Main Personality Attributes That Influence Organizational Climate

Locus of control. At the workplace, there are aspects of personality that significantly influence interactions. As a result, they end up influencing organizational climate to a significant degree. The first personality attribute of interest is the locus of control. By definition, the locus of control is an individual's ability to control and regulate their code of conduct (Kawiana, 2018). The locus of control places persons into

two main groups. There are those whose conduct is determined internally, while there are those whose behavior depends on external factors.

Persons in the internal group consider themselves in control of their fates (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). Compared to those who depend on external stimuli, such persons are significantly motivated and can conduct themselves appropriately without any supervision. As for the externalists, their actions, decision, tendencies, and attitudes are determined by external factors. Managing such individuals at the workplace may be arduous since organizations require structures that compel them to behave appropriately (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). For instance, they may require strict environments to follow policies and regulations that govern their practice. Therefore, without a proper structure, persons with an external locus of control may negatively impact organizational climate. As for those with an internal locus of control, they are likely to motivate their peers to perform better, improving the culture of their organization.

Employing persons with an internal locus of control is essential since such persons are driven by achievements (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). They are likely to conduct extensive research by themselves before acting or making decisions, and that is because they desire control over their environments. Persons with the trait excel in job environments that are demanding and require complex information processing (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Considering that such persons are independent and with high initiative, they are more likely to take action than their externalist counterparts.

Employers must not refrain from those directed by an external locus of control since they perform better in some jobs. Because such persons are compliant to the forces within their environments, they are more likely to follow instructions (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). As a result, they perform better in structured work environments. An individual wishing to be the master of their environment on the other hand may fail miserably in such an environment since they rarely do things by the book.

Machiavellianism. Machiavellianism is another major personality attribute that affects individual behavior within organizational contexts. Persons with the trait are simply more practical compared to others (Nuckcheddy, 2018). As a result, such individuals may be emotionally distant, impacting their interpersonal relationships. Persons with Machiavellianism are more interested in the ends than the means, and they have limited considerations for others around them. Therefore, they may step on others around them so that they may get ahead.

One of the common traits of persons with Machiavellianism is their intense desire to win (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). Such persons are highly competitive, and they will use any means to attain whatever they desire. In addition, Machiavellianism makes people great at persuading others. Therefore, in some professions such as politics and sales, they may excel due to their ability to manipulate others. However, their traits may also create challenges in some organizational settings due to their ability to use others for their gain. In the event where an employee manipulates a colleague for their gain, they will destroy cohesion, implying that they will negatively affect their organizational climate.

Essentially, the following are traits that signify a high-functioning Machiavellian. For starters, they are more drawn to short and direct communication compared to long-winded communication (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Although the trait may provide considerable use in some professions, it is undesirable for positions that require extensive communications with clients. An example where such professions may create a disaster is in customer service. Such positions require patient individuals who will promote positive relations.

Machiavellians may perform better in professions where solitary work is possible, and persons do not have to constantly interact to ensure optimum performance.

Similar to people with an internal locus of control, Machiavellians also rely on themselves and their intuitions to make decisions (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). In a majority of the time, Machiavellians will prefer to improvise than to follow strict rules and guidelines. Such traits may be essential in professions that require complex problem-solving. However, when Machiavellians are employed in rigid work environments, they will potentially destroy the organizational climate. For instance, they cannot work in professions such as law enforcement where persons must follow strict rules and regulations (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018).

Perhaps a self-defeating aspect of Machiavellians is that they are sometimes impacted by the emotional details of an activity or project, affecting their attention (Nuckcheddy, 2018). Emotionally, Machiavellians are not as sensitive as the average individuals. However, they may fixate their attention on irrelevant emotional details, distracting them from the big picture. Such limitations may negatively affect their participation in work activities, meaning that Machiavellians may not be suitable for all work environments.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem is another aspect of personality that affects individual behavior within an organizational setting. Self-esteem refers to how much individuals like themselves (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Persons with high self-esteem tend to like themselves, while those with low esteem dislike themselves. Self-esteem is essential for human resource departments to consider while hiring individuals since it is linked to job satisfaction and the ability to achieve. Ideally, those with high levels of self-esteem always back themselves to succeed. They believe that they have whatever it takes to achieve great things, and that may serve as a wonderful motivation (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). According to evidence, people with high self-esteem are more likely to challenge themselves, meaning that they may provide immense benefits for their employers. Self-esteem is also highly infectious, indicating that persons with high self-esteem may encourage others to trust more in themselves and their abilities (Rad et al., 2018). Therefore, they may promote a conducive organizational climate that motivates people to work harder.

Compared to those with high self-esteem, those with esteem issues are largely susceptible to distractors within their environments. Instead of trusting their abilities, those with low self-esteem hope for the approval of others (Ardani, 2017). Sometimes, the approval may not be present, indicating that low self-esteem is potentially destructive. In addition to seeking validation, persons with low self-esteem are not authentic in their actions and decision-making. Instead, they rely on those they respect within their circles to set trends for them to follow. In an organizational environment, persons with low self-esteem may destroy the culture, reducing its productivity. Therefore, as organizations recruit, they must focus on persons with the ability to improve their productivity. That means that they should consider persons with the drive to do things by themselves to create positive results. According to studies, creativity and innovation largely determine the competitiveness of business organizations (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Companies such as Amazon are only as big as they are due to the boldness of their leaders. Therefore, if such organizations were led by persons with self-esteem issues, they would not have grown as big. Therefore, organizations must consider employees who are confident in their skills since they are more likely to drive them forward. At the same time, they may recruit high self-esteem individuals to help improve the esteem of docile members.

Self-monitoring. Self-monitoring is another personality trait that organizations must consider while recruiting employees. Essentially, self-monitoring refers to an individual's ability to control their behavior and

reactions to social stimuli (Nuckcheddy, 2018). Persons with high self-monitoring skills are significantly self-aware, and that enables them to assess social contexts with a high degree of accuracy. Therefore, they can adjust their behavior accordingly to improve how they interact with their environment. The trait is essential for business organizations to monitor since it impacts organizational climate. Persons with high self-monitoring skills excel in social contexts, and that is because they understand the clear distinction between private and public personalities (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). In public contexts, they can adjust accordingly, enabling them to conduct themselves professionally even in tense situations. Business organizations prefer individuals capable of conducting themselves professionally. That is because they are likelier to uphold the existing organizational climate, while also motivating their peers to improve their conduct. As for people with low self-monitoring skills, their ability to mask their personal desires is almost non-existent (Nuckcheddy, 2018). Such persons always demonstrate their personal persona regardless of the social context, and their attitudes might destroy organizational climate. Ideally, they conform to the mantra of “what you see is what you get”, and it may cause them to act out of context with important business stakeholders (Nuckcheddy, 2018). For instance, such an attitude towards investors, partners, customers, or other employees may create an unstable work environment, significantly affecting organizational behavior. The personality attribute proves that businesses must be wary of the individuals they recruit, since they could potentially have massive impacts on organizational climate.

Risk taking. The final personality attribute that organizations must consider is risk taking. That is because risk takers may potentially change the way people interact and behave within an organization. As the name implies, risk taking is the habit of leveraging risks for potential rewards. For instance, businesses are constantly taking risks when they take loans or invest tremendous amounts of their resources in activities that do not promise guaranteed results. For businesses to operate efficiently, it is essential for the management to minimize risks (Rad et al., 2018). The management must ensure that their risks are manageable so as to promote optimum performance. Although risk taking is more prominent among management personnel, it is the risk-taking trait in employees that businesses must give special consideration (Rad et al., 2018). That is because risk taking practices in employees affect how information moves from the employees to the management. If a company is abundant with risk takers, it means that there are periods when the management is operating in the blind side. Employees who take risks take charge and act or make decisions without the consent of the management (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). Although there might be potential benefits associated with the practice, it definitely does more harm than good. That is because when employees take risks, they give their organizations minimal time to react. As such, businesses may fall victim to situations they might have otherwise overcome. In the real-world, both types of employees may be necessary. Risk takers may provide better use for companies that require swift decision-making. Therefore, instead of relying on their superiors to decide how things will play out, such companies can grant their employees power to take risks and make decisions for themselves. However, in risky business environments where the administration must perform risk assessments before making moves, such employees may prove disastrous. Essentially, the personality attributes indicate that some personality types fit better with some organizations than with others.

Personality Factors

By now, it is apparent that personality affects organizational climate. However, what are the factors that influence personality? Also, how can businesses use the factors to their advantage during hiring practices? One

of the essential factors in shaping personality is the environment (Jiang, Wang, & Weng, 2021). Basically, the environment comprises the external factors that surround an individual during their developmental years. Therefore, it includes culture, family, schools, and social groups. It is through the environmental factors that people develop values, attitudes, norms, and perceptions (Rad et al., 2018). That is because traditions shape an individual's sense of what is right and what is wrong. For employers, understanding the environmental factors that potential employees were exposed to may help them assess whether an individual suits their ideals. For instance, if a company has been experiencing considerable success with individuals from a given learning institution, they may consider getting more employees from the same place.

Physical factors are also at play in shaping the personality of an individual. Ideally, the physical factors refer to the physical attributes of an individual. They may include height, weight, complexion, gender, beauty, and body language (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). Although personality traits are fairly consistent throughout the course of an individual's life, they slightly change. The changes are attributable to changes in the physical attributes. For instance, cosmetic surgeries or exercise may cause physical changes, resulting in personality changes. For organizations, understanding the physical determinants of personality is essential since it will help maintain the productivity of their workforce. For instance, when employees are in good shape, their self-esteem is also likely to improve. Therefore, business organizations can consider enrolling their employees to fitness programs that will improve their esteem and ability to influence organizational climate positively.

Finally, organizations need to properly assess the influence of situational factors on individual behavior. Once again, although personality remains consistent throughout an individual's life, some situations may compel individuals to act out of the ordinary (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Some personality traits are not readily visible. However, situational demands may cause persons to demonstrate aspects of themselves that are not directly apparent. For instance, persons may act differently when they are alone compared to when people are around. That is because when they are alone, they may be free to engage in activities that would have otherwise been frowned upon in their communities. In organizations, the management oversees determining the organizational situation (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). Therefore, if managers understand factors that compel employees to exhibit concealed traits, they may influence organizational behavior positively by deliberately designing the organizational situation to favor proper conduct.

Discussion

At the onset, the purpose of the study was to prove that personality impacts organizational climate. The literature review clearly shows that organizations must remain considerate of their employee's personality to avoid potential cultural challenges. According to the literature review, personality traits remain consistent throughout an individual's life (Rad et al., 2018). At the same time, everyone has unique personality traits that differentiate them from other individuals. Since personality represents how an individual conducts himself or herself, it is essential for organizations to consider the personality traits of their employees to ensure the collective behavior of the organization is conducive.

The literature review shows that personality traits compel people to behave in their unique ways, and some personality traits are more compatible with some careers than others. At the workplace, there are five major personality attributes that affect organizational climate. The five are: locus of control, Machiavellianism, self-esteem, self-monitoring, and risk taking (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). The study indicates that behavior is significantly influenced by how high an individual scores on the attributes. Each attribute is a

spectrum, and persons who are adept at Machiavellianism for instance are more likely to take charge of their work and improvise as compared to those who score low on the attribute. Different business organizations always have differing needs when it comes to their employees. Some would prefer employees who take matters into their hands, while others would prefer persons who follow rules and guidelines. Whichever the case, organizational climate determines the type of employees that a company will be after.

Therefore, for companies to maintain their culture, they must recruit persons that uphold the culture and enable it to function at an optimum. If an organization that requires obedient employees recruits persons with Machiavellian tendencies, they will destroy their culture since such persons will naturally conduct themselves contrary to the expectations of the organizational climate. The same applies for the other personality attributes such as locus of control, self-esteem, self-monitoring, and risk taking. For instance, persons with high self-monitoring skills will suit better in an organization that promotes professionalism, and that is due to their ability to observe themselves from an external perspective. Persons with high self-monitoring skills are adept assessing their behavior with respect to their external environments. As a result, they are better at following rules and fitting within professional constructs. The literature review indicates that organizations must assess the personality traits of potential employees since they could possibly have negative influences on organizational climate. That is especially true if persons get into fields not suited for them.

Organizations must also understand the factors that influence personality traits to ensure that their employees do not suddenly change. That is because personality determinants may cause persons to act improperly, negatively affecting organizational climate. One of the factors' influencing personality is the environment. That is because environmental pressures may negatively influence behavior. At the environmental level, there are things such as friends, family, school mates, and colleagues. Most people desire to fit into their circles, and that may compel them to adopt the behaviors of others around them. For instance, persons may start smoking tobacco if they constantly hang around other tobacco smokers. That is because social institutions influence attitudes, perceptions, norms, and values (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018). It is essential for business organizations to recognize the influence of such factors on personality since they may negatively influence their employees. In the long run, it is their organizational climate that will experience the most detriment since the employees will influence it negatively. Therefore, in addition to environmental factors, business organizations must pay close attention to physical and situational factors. That is because they also influence personality. Physical factors such as appearance may impact self-esteem, which in turn impacts an individual's ability to perform at their job. When organizations are aware of the factors that influence personality, they can proactively influence their culture by motivating employees to perform better.

Implications of the Findings

Thus far, the study has been successful at proving its premise. Currently, it is evident that the personality of persons within an organization affects organizational climate. However, what does that mean for organizations and their potential employers? For organizations, the findings indicate that they must consider the personality of new recruits. Businesses must not recruit blindly since persons who lack the ideal personality traits will negatively influence organizational climate. After businesses decide their ideal culture, it should be the onus of the human resource department to identify the personality types that will excel in such positions. Considering that evaluating personality traits may be an arduous task, organizations should pay special

consideration to the factors that influence personality development. For instance, when businesses pay attention to environmental factors in the development of their employees, they may predict whether an employee will suit into their work environment. By inquiring on the educational background of employees for example, businesses will know whether potential employees might satisfy their desires.

The findings also have considerable implications for employees. That is because personality traits determine an individual's compatibility with an employer. For employees to perform at their optimum, job satisfaction is paramount (Yanita, Rahmat, & Ihsan, 2018). However, it is impossible for them to get satisfaction if they are working in professions that are not fulfilling. Take for instance an individual who is a problem-solver and has high levels of initiative. Such persons are better off working in organizations that permit them considerable freedom. They must be capable of expressing themselves without regulations from their employer. However, if such persons find themselves in a highly rigid profession, they may be unable to fully use their talents and skills. As a result, it is probable that they will not get the maximum satisfaction from their job, resulting in the wastage of useful skills. Therefore, if employees want to get the most out of their jobs, they should select their employers wisely. The best employer is one who allows employees to conduct themselves freely.

Conclusion

The purpose of this explorative study was to confirm the relationship between personality and organizational climate. Presently, it is evident that the personality traits of employees significantly affect organizational climate. That is because the collective behaviors of persons within an organization eventually shape organizational climate. Therefore, for organizations to maintain their culture, they must focus on recruiting compatible individuals. That means they should desist from persons whose personality traits are at friction with the expected organizational behaviors. However, given that assessing the personality traits of employees may be difficult during hiring processes, organizations should rely on personality determinants. The study indicates that most personality traits are learned, meaning that there are factors that influence behavior. One of the factors' influencing personality is the environment. Persons tend to adopt the same values, idea, and beliefs as other people in their environments, and businesses can determine whether employees will be beneficial by assessing the environments they emanate from. Some learning institutions are famed for the professionalism of their graduates for example, and when organizations rely on such institutions during recruitment practices, they will positively impact their organizational climate. In addition, businesses must create conducive environments for their employees to ensure they do not act inappropriately. Due to situational factors for example, persons may act inappropriately. For instance, stressors at work may have negative impacts on behavior. Therefore, businesses must provide employees with the appropriate environment to ensure they conduct themselves accordingly. The research concludes that personality may significantly affect organizational climate, and it is important for businesses to properly screen new employees. The human factor is indispensable in achieving business success, and organizations must learn to properly recruit.

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