

# Organizational Climate & Commitment: An Analysis of Food Processing Industry of Punjab

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*The organizational climate exerts a significant influence on individual as well as organizational level outcomes. This paper examines the relationship between the organizational climate and organizational commitment and explores the factors that impact the level of organizational commitment at workplace. The sample consisted of 509 respondents working in 10 large scale food processing companies of Punjab in India. Results revealed that overall organizational climate has a strong positive correlation with organizational commitment. The major dimensions that impact the commitment levels are: welfare, supervisory support, pressure to produce, clarity of organizational goals, performance feedback, tradition, participation, integration, training, quality, effort, efficiency, innovation and flexibility.*

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## Introduction

Today's organizations are facing far more challenges than ever before, regardless of their structure or size. In order to meet these challenges and to be more effective and productive, it becomes important for them to stay focused on their employees. The most successful organizations in the world are those that consider their employees as the most important assets and manage them well (Peters et al., 1982). For the employees to perform well and be loyal to the organization for long term, it is important for an organization to embrace a positive and conducive working environment which leads to better productivity and overall organizational success (Patterson et al., 2004; Iqbal, 2008; Purang, 2008).

Present day organizations have started paying more attention in comprehending the perception of employees towards internal working environment and how such environment evokes commitment towards the organization. The commitment of employees has become a crucial issue because organizations need to ensure that those individuals who add

value to organizational success have desire to be committed with the organization and they wish to continue to pour their effort into their job for long term (Brown & Leigh, 1996).

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Thus, it becomes paramount for an employer to understand the veil of commitment and the factors that affect its level. Organizational commitment refers to the loyalty and bond which an individual has with his/her organization (Randhawa & Kaur, 2014). Previous research has indicated that the organizational commitment is influenced by a number of factors such as responsibility, autonomy (Baron & Greenberg, 1990), job content, performance appraisals (Sharma & Joshi, 2001), management style (Meyer & Allen, 1997), work environment (Brown & Leigh, 1996) etc. The committed workforce performs efficiently to achieve the targets and it can be possible only if the environment in which the employees spend most of their time, strive them to do so. In fact, the commitment can occur only when an individual finds the environment in which he or she performs tasks is supportive, cooperative and energetic. Therefore, better understanding of the factors that affect commitment levels will likely remain an important area of concern for the organizations, academicians and practitioners and it also becomes a subject of strategic issue for the Indian food processing industry.

Food processing is a sunrise industry in India which has gained immense importance in the national economy in recent years due to its huge potential for employment generation opportunities and export revenue. India is ranked fifth in the world in terms of production, consumption and export of processed food (IBEF, 2017). Out of the 29 states of India, Punjab, generally known as food bowl of India, has the highest number of food processing companies as well as highest food production and consumption levels. In fact, food processing industry of Punjab is regarded as a hope on which India will become self sufficient in food sector in the coming years. However, due to changing lifestyle and varied demands of consumers the industry is facing challenges that are as diverse as products they produce. These challenges include increased investment in new product development, threat from substitute products, and arrival of new marketing strategies as well as increased attrition rate, increased demand for trained and skilled staff, better working conditions, changing labor laws, etc (Kumbhar, 2008; Power, 2014). To survive in such a turbulent business environment and to successfully cope with these challenges, the food processing industry has to focus on creating positive organizational climate and loyal and efficient workforce for long term success.

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## **Literature Review**

The study of organizational climate becomes an interesting subject for researchers as well as organizations due to its ability to influence a number of other job related outcomes and one such outcome is organizational commitment (Permarupan et al., 2013). The environment of the organization where the employees spend most of their time plays a key role in defining the level of commitment which they show while performing various organizational tasks. It has been found that the employees who work in a positive and healthy environment apply all their efforts in their job in order to have greater efficiency and better performance (Gonzalez & Grazzo, 2006; Saeidipour, 2013). Thus, it becomes important to understand the relationship between these two variables.

Numerous researchers have studied the relationship between these two constructs and most of them found a strong positive association between them (McMurray et al., 2004; Langueta, 2006; Noordin et al., 2010). DeCotiis and Summers (1987) found that there exists a significant positive correlation between climate dimensions and organizational commitment. The dimensions of climate like cohesiveness, pressure, support, and autonomy could be used to predict the affective component of organizational commitment. Similarly, Guzley (1992) found a strong association between the factors of climate such as organizational clarity, participation and superior-subordinate communication and commitment in a large service organization. Further, the study

of Decruz (1997) conducted in a cement factory also pointed out that the climate dimensions as cohesiveness, innovation, and support were strongly and positively correlated with commitment but the dimensions of work pressure and recognition were negatively correlated with commitment.

The study by Iqbal (2008) suggested a strong positive correlation between these two constructs, and dimensions of organizational climate such as ‘challenge and involvement’ and ‘trust and openness’ had positive relationship, ‘conflict’ had negative relationship and ‘risk taking’ had insignificant relationship with organizational commitment. Similarly, Delgoshaei et al. (2008) also reported a meaningful effect of organizational climate factors such as group spirit, intimacy, engagement, consideration and thrust on organizational commitment. In contrast to the above discussed studies, the research conducted by Thomas (2006) on faculty, and staff perceptions of their organizational climate and their organizational commitment in Christian higher education institutions had indicated a negative and statistically significant correlation between total climate and their expressed level of commitment.

## **Objectives of the Study**

Need for the present study arises as most of the previous studies, based on these two constructs have been conducted in the service sector, specifically, in nursing and education sectors. Further, these studies have focused on

very few dimensions of organizational climate that influence commitment and ignored a wide range of other climatic factors that exerts significant impact on the levels of commitment. Thus, the lack of scholarly research on the food processing industry in India and particularly in the Punjab state devoted to its internal environment and commitment linkages, argue convincingly for the value of this study. So the present study attempts to fulfill these research gaps. The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To measure the level of organizational commitment prevailing in the large scale food processing companies of Punjab.
2. To examine the relationship between organizational climate and organizational commitment of employees.
3. To examine the influence of dimensions of organizational climate on the commitment of employees.

### **The Sample**

The sample of the study consisted of respondents working in large scale food processing companies of Punjab. Ten companies have been selected from a pool of 75 large scale companies using stratified random sampling based on the data of fixed investment. Approximately 20% of employees from each company were considered for collection of data. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed as per the plan of the study and received 509 completed questionnaires which were used for the purpose of data

analysis. Average age of respondents lies between 31 and 40 years. The number of male participants (n=418) was higher than that of females (n=91). The majority of respondents were graduates and most of the respondents have experience of 6-15 years.

### **Organizational Climate Measure**

The 'Organizational Climate Measure' developed by Patterson et al. (2004) has been used to measure the organizational climate of food processing industry of Punjab. The scale consisted of 17 subscales with a total of 82 items. The 17 subscales, known as dimensions of organizational climate, were labeled as – autonomy, clarity of organizational goals, formalization, effort, efficiency, innovation and flexibility, integration, outward focus, participation, performance feedback, pressure to produce, quality, reflexivity, supervisory support, tradition, training, and welfare. The respondents were asked to tick mark the appropriate score on a four point continuum ranging from definitely false to definitely true. Thirty two statements were negatively worded; so the scores of these items were reversed. The internal consistency of scale has been measured by using Cronbach's alpha which came out to be .864.

### **Organizational Commitment Scale**

The organizational commitment of the respondents has been measured using an 'Organizational Commitment Scale' developed by Cook and Wall (1980). The scale consisted of 9 items which deter-

mine the degree of commitment with the organization. The response is in a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The reliability of the instrument has been determined by using Cronbach's alpha which came out to be 0.773. Three statements were negatively worded and therefore, the score of these items have been reversed.

## Results

The data collected had been analyzed using mean, one sample t test, Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis techniques and the results are presented below:

*Overall Organizational Commitment:* The overall organizational commitment has been calculated using total score. The organizational commitment scale contains 9 items, with the score on any item ranging between 1 and 7. Therefore, the total score has a range from the lowest 9 to the highest 63 with a neutral point of 37. The score less than 37 indicate lower commitment level and a score greater than 37 represent higher commitment levels. Whether the difference between the lower and higher commitment groups is significant or not has been determined by one sample 't' test taking test value as 37. The results are presented in Table 1. From the mean score, it can be inferred that a moderate level of organi-

zational commitment has been prevailing in the large scale food processing industry of Punjab (mean = 47.46, S.D. = 4.214). The one sample 't' test has indicated a significant distance from the neutral point which implies that a significant difference exists between committed and non-committed respondents.

**The overall organizational climate has a strong positive correlation with the organizational commitment.**

*Correlation between Organizational Climate & Organizational Commitment:* Pearson correlation analysis has been applied in order to study the correlation between organizational climate and organizational commitment. Table 2 shows the results of correlation between seventeen dimensions of organizational climate, overall organizational climate and organizational commitment. It can be inferred that the overall organizational climate has a strong positive correlation with the organizational commitment ( $r = .702, p < .01$ ). The dimensions of organizational climate that has indicated most significant positive correlation with organizational commitment are participation ( $r = .523, p < .01$ ), clarity of organizational goals ( $r = .453, p < .01$ ), welfare ( $r = .449, p < .01$ ) and performance feedback ( $r = .444, p < .01$ ).

**Table 1 Organizational Commitment Statistics**

Parameter	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Test value = 37			
				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Organizational commitment	509	47.46	4.214	56.005	508	.000	10.462

**Table 2 Correlation between Organizational Climate & Organizational Commitment**

S. No.	Parameter	r	S. No.	Parameter	r
1	Autonomy	-.009	10	Performance feedback	.444**
2	Clarity of organizational goals	.453**	11	Pressure to produce	.008
3	Formalization	.396**	12	Quality	.364**
4	Effort	.355**	13	Reflexivity	.299**
5	Efficiency	-.068	14	Supervisory support	.380**
6	Innovation and flexibility	.266**	15	Tradition	-.056
7	Integration	.337**	16	Training	.366**
8	Outward focus	.315**	17	Welfare	.449**
9	Participation	.523**	18	Overall organizational climate	.702**

Note : \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Significant correlations have also been observed between the dimensions, formalization ( $r = .396$ ,  $p < .01$ ), supervisory support ( $r = .380$ ,  $p < .01$ ), training ( $r = .366$ ,  $p < .01$ ), quality ( $r = .364$ ,  $p < .01$ ), effort ( $r = .355$ ,  $p < .01$ ), integration ( $r = .337$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and outward focus ( $r = .315$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The correlation between rest of dimensions of organizational climate and organizational commitment has been found to be weak or no correlation at all.

*Impact of Organizational Climate Dimensions on Organizational Commitment:* The impact of organizational climate dimensions on organizational commitment has been examined using multiple regression analysis and is presented in Table 3. In the model summary, the value of 'R Square' indicates that the dimensions of organizational climate explain a significant level of variance (56.6 per cent) in organizational commitment. The value of R Square and adjusted R Square are found to be fairly close, indicating minimal over fitting problems. The F-value shows the overall regression model is a good fit for the data ( $F(17,491) = 37.696$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

**The dimensions which have most significant influence on organizational commitment are welfare and supervisory support.**

The values of non-standardized regression coefficients as given in Table 3 indicate that the thirteen dimensions of organizational climate have shown a significant impact on organizational commitment. The dimensions which have most significant influence on organizational commitment are welfare ( $B = .324$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and supervisory support ( $B = .303$ ,  $p = .000$ ). The other dimensions that have shown significant influence on organizational commitment are pressure to produce ( $B = .243$ ,  $p = .000$ ), clarity of organizational goals ( $B = .225$ ,  $p = .000$ ), performance feedback ( $B = .208$ ,  $p = .000$ ), tradition ( $B = .207$ ,  $p = .001$ ), participation ( $B = .205$ ,  $p = .000$ ), quality ( $B = .201$ ,  $p = .009$ ), integration ( $B = .191$ ,  $p = .000$ ), training ( $B = .185$ ,  $p = .027$ ), effort ( $B = .175$ ,  $p = .003$ ), efficiency ( $B = .149$ ,  $p = .011$ ), and innovation and flexibility ( $B = .106$ ,  $p = .019$ ). The other dimensions of organizational climate that have not shown any

**Table 3 Multiple Regression Coefficients Taking Organizational Commitment as Dependent Variable and Dimensions of Organizational Climate as Predictor Variables**

Model summary						
R Square = .566						
Adjusted R Square = .551F						
(df=17,491) = 37.696 (p = .000)						
Model		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	8.222	2.211		3.718	.000
1	Autonomy	-.060	.046	-.042	-1.321	.187
2	Clarity of organizational goals	.225	.047	.168	4.824	.000
3	Formalization	.112	.059	.069	1.898	.058
4	Effort	.175	.058	.102	3.011	.003
5	Efficiency	.149	.058	.085	2.562	.011
6	Innovation and flexibility	.106	.045	.088	2.359	.019
7	Integration	.191	.054	.117	3.510	.000
8	Outward focus	.022	.056	.015	.394	.694
9	Participation	.205	.053	.151	3.900	.000
10	Performance feedback	.208	.059	.131	3.551	.000
11	Pressure to produce	.243	.048	.163	5.073	.000
12	Quality	.201	.088	.093	2.618	.009
13	Reflexivity	.021	.064	.012	.333	.739
14	Supervisory support	.303	.046	.227	6.609	.000
15	Tradition	.207	.061	.112	3.373	.001
16	Training	.185	.083	.081	2.224	.027
17	Welfare	.324	.068	.176	4.793	.000

significant impact on organizational commitment are autonomy, formalization, outward focus and reflexivity.

## Discussion

A moderate level of commitment has been perceived in large scale food processing companies of Punjab which is favorable for these organizations. It has also been supported by the study of Randall (1987) where he suggested that a moderate level of commitment results in balancing both individual and organizational needs. High level of commitment is reported to pose some risks for both individuals and the organization as as-

serted by Mowday (1998) and Hunt et al. (1989) the reason for which is that it sometimes makes the employees blind to evaluate whether the job they are performing is ethical or otherwise.

The present study has indicated a positive relationship between organizational climate and organizational commitment which has also been supported by previous research studies by Taravian (2006), Smith (2009), Yusof (2012), Talukdar (2013) and Douglas (2010). Specifically, the present study pointed out that better welfare facilities as well as supervisory support are the most important factors that induce commitment

among the employees. Welfare facilities are conducive to commitment (Gupta, 1981) as they fulfill the care needs which make employees more confident towards performing duties and satisfied at work. Further, the care given by the supervisor is perceived as that given by organization that builds up a committed workforce. This makes the employees more adaptable to change and take some additional roles in the organization (Kidd & Smewing, 2001; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

**It is important to manage the work pressure on the employees that keep them busy as well as motivated.**

The next important factor to induce commitment is managing the pressure to produce. That the low workload on employees leads to high commitment levels is a true adage (Vance, 2006) but sometimes, low level of workload on employees make them feel stagnant, less challenged, low in creativity and hence leads to lower commitment level. Therefore, it is important to manage the work pressure on the employees that keep them busy as well as motivated. Clarity of organizational goals and a timely performance feedback has also put significant impact on commitment levels. Clear organizational goals give clear direction to the employees to perform which leads to satisfaction and loyalty (Lee et al., 2010). Further, Shahnawaz and Juyal (2006) reported that a fair performance appraisal helps in developing trust and commitment among the employees. Previous research

studies have also supported that the participation of the employees in decision making eventually increases the willingness and ability to work in organization and hence increases employees' commitment (Bhatti et al., 2011). According to Tor (1999), the participation of employees in development and implementation of strategies leads to the feeling of ownership to organizational goals as well as belongingness and pride and hence increases their commitment with the organization.

The other dimensions of organizational climate also play significant role in influencing commitment and are well supported in literature. The importance of training opportunities for growth of employees also increases workforce commitment (Bartlett, 2001; Cooper, 2012). Oeij et al. (2012) explains that innovation is a characteristic of organization and not of a person and, innovative work environment leads to high level of commitment. Yeoman (2014) highlighted that integrated and cooperative work culture embraces loyalty.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of the present study clearly indicate that organizational climate and its various dimensions play a key role in influencing organizational commitment of employees. More favorable and positive the organizational climate is, the better will be commitment of the employees towards the organization or we can say, 'positive climate aggrandize commitment'. The study pointed out that better welfare facilities and supervisory

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support are the most important factors that induce commitment among the employees. The other climate factors such as low level of pressure to produce, clarity of organizational goals, timely performance feedback, tradition, participation, integration, training, focus on quality, effort, efficiency, and innovation and flexibility has significant impacts in influencing the commitment of employees. To conclude, it can be inferred that it is not just the monetary based benefits that makes an employee faithful to an organization but surely there are some other aspects also that motivate and enhance employees' commitment at workplace and the most important is to nourish the best working environment that improvise to enhance organizational commitment and it is evident that the organizations which develop committed workforce have a significantly better chance to combat the dire circumstances.

### Managerial Implications

It is anticipated that this study acts as a baseline for the food processing companies regarding organizational climate and commitment. The committed workforce performs efficiently to achieve the targets and it can be possible only if the climate of the organization drives them to do so. As the positive organizational climate encourages the employee attachment with the organization, it is impor-

tant for these organizations to understand the organizational climate factors that create positivity as well as address those factors that induce negativity and reduce commitment in the organization. The study has indicated problematic areas that reduce commitment levels like management and supervisory behavior sometimes create such an environment at workplace that they unknowingly push the employee for deviant acts and disloyalty. Therefore, the organizations should redesign and address such problems by providing supportive supervision, appropriate pressure to meet the targets/deadlines, increase the level of participation in various work related decisions, enhance integration, training, efficiency and innovation and flexibility at work place, and clearly define and communicate organizational goals to the employees.

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