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## Article

# The effect of innovative organizational climate on employee job satisfaction

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## THE EFFECT OF AN INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION

**Abstract.** Innovation has critical importance in making a difference in the competitive environment of organizations and countries. Organizations that produce similar products or services in the same market need to be innovative to make a difference to their competitors. For increasing innovation in organizations, first of all, the management approach should be in a way that supports innovation. Organizations that determine their organizational policies by considering the demands of the employees within an organizational structure suitable for the modern age and employee expectations are more advantageous in this regard. It is not easy to achieve sustainable success in organizations where employees' ideas are not given importance, and only certain people make decisions and implement them. In this respect, the suggestions put forward by all employees should be considered in solving problems and improving product and service quality. Organizations also need to allocate supporting resources so that employees can improve existing processes or introduce new initiatives. In organizations with an innovative climate, employees are involved in critical processes. Their ideas are considered essential, and financial support is provided for their suggestions and ideas in product development and problem-solving. Although some research on the effects of an innovative climate on organizational performance has been carried out, few studies examined the effects of the innovative climate on employees' attitudes towards work. In this regard, this study it is aimed to examine the impact of innovative climate perception of white-collar employees working at middle and upper levels on job satisfaction. Quantitative research was designed to achieve this aim. A total of 222 employees from the food, textile, and automotive sectors participated in the research. A questionnaire form including scales whose psychometric properties were tested previously and a personal information form was created. The questionnaire form was delivered to the participants online. Within the scope of the research, frequency, internal consistency, factor, independent samples T-test, and correlation analysis were applied. The findings showed a positive and strong correlation between the innovative organizational climate perception of the employees (including the sub-dimensions) and their job satisfaction. The innovative climate perception of the employees did not differ according to the variables such as the position in the organization (middle and lower level) and whether they have a managerial role. The obtained results were discussed, and some research suggestions were made.

**Keywords:** innovation, innovative organizational climate, job satisfaction, white-collar, managers

**Introduction.** Managers try to use organizational resources effectively in line with organizational goals. At this point, many different factors play a role in achieving organizational goals. When each function of the business is managed according to age, the possibility of organizations reaching their goals increases. In this respect, each business sub-function, such as accounting, finance, production, marketing, public relations, and human resources management, contributes to the sustainability of organizations with the logic of the system approach.

On the other hand, the effective management of each function is feasible if the employees working in these departments have a peaceful and efficient working environment. Ensuring this relates to the well-being of formal and informal groups in working life and the effective pursuit of psychological processes (Lawson et al., 2009). The healthy execution of these processes is possible with managerial success in organizations. For successful managerial practices to be implemented and sustained, the psychological atmosphere in the working environment must be positive and encourage all employees (Noordin et al., 2010; Permarupan et al., 2013). Therefore, one of the essential factors in the success of the management is that the psychological atmosphere in the working environment should encourage innovation and

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creativity. Organizational culture is one of the most deep-rooted factors that cannot be understood quickly in most organizations but that determines the quality of human relations in the working environment in the background (Schein, 1990). Organizational culture distinguishes the organization from its competitors regarding how things work. Organizational culture is the critical indicator of how employees communicate, sincerity of human relations, and professionalism with customers (Tutar, 2016). Since organizational culture is an indicator of how people in an organization communicate with each other, it also affects the climate in organizations. Organizational climate refers to employees' psychological atmosphere in the working environment. When employees perceive the working environment as positive, energetic, cheerful, and warm, it is expected that their attitudes towards work will also be positively affected (Tutar, 2016).

On the contrary, a hostile atmosphere would be created in a rigid and harsh working environment. Thus, this hostile climate might adversely affect employees' attitudes towards the organization and work (Tepper, 2000). This study aims to examine the effect of the innovative organizational climate perceived by the white-collar employees, consisting of middle and upper-level employees, on employee job satisfaction. In addition, the effects of the creative organizational climate perceptions on job performance would be compared in terms of employees who have a managerial role and who do not have a managerial role. Although many empirical studies already exist on innovative organizational climate (Ahmed, 1998; Glisson, 2015; Liu et al., 2020; Sarros et al., 2008), few studies have been conducted to examine the effect of the innovative organizational climate on employees' perceptions and job satisfaction (García-Buades et al., 2015), especially on the sample of white-collar employees and managers in Turkey. Since the findings obtained in social sciences differ from cultural factors, the probability of presenting new perspectives to the field increases with the findings obtained in different cultures. Within the scope of the study, first of all, concepts such as organizational culture, organizational climate, creative organizational climate, and job satisfaction are defined briefly. Then, the research hypothesis was formulated based on the findings of the studies examining the relationship between the related variables in different cultures and samples. Following this, the research findings were shared. Finally, the obtained findings were discussed theoretically and empirically. The research limitations, contributions, and future research suggestions were considered.

**Literature Review.** The climate formed in organizations is closely related to the cultures of the organizations in the background. For this reason, to better understand the organizational environment, the relationship between organizational culture and climate should be emphasized. Organizational culture refers to values, norms, and assumptions shared by organizational members (Schein, 1990). Organizational culture is far beyond only the material elements observed directly in organizations. It includes many critical issues such as how communication is provided in organizations, the quality of relations between managers and subordinates, the sincerity of colleagues, and the interaction of employees with customers (Tutar, 2016). When the organizational culture has a structure that supports creativity, innovation, people values, and different ideas, it is expected to contribute to creating an innovative climate (Laforet, 2016).

Organizational climate refers to employees' perception of the psychological atmosphere of the working environment (Tutar, 2016). It expresses employees' shared perceptions about the organizational practices, followed processes, and functioning in the organization (Imran et al., 2010). It is possible to have a more consistent and positive organizational climate when supported by a robust organizational culture (Reichers and Schneider, 1990) and a managerial approach that meets employee expectations. A positive climate would potentially contribute to the achievement of many positive outcomes in organizations as it increases solidarity, tolerance, and cooperation. Also, when the organizational climate supports innovation, creativity, and different ideas, it increases synergy and efficiency. Especially nowadays, the concepts of innovation and creativity are becoming more critical. Both social life and professional working life are becoming more and more dynamic since the changes in technology, and the

introduction of new applications is possible by supporting innovation (Carayannis, 2013; West and Farr, 1990). Employees' general attitudes towards their jobs express job satisfaction when considering all the components related to their job. When all the factors related to their jobs are considered, the positive attitude towards the job indicates job satisfaction, and the negative attitude indicates job dissatisfaction (Locke, 1976). Although briefly defined, job satisfaction is essentially a complex and dynamic attitude. It is complex because many factors affect employee satisfaction with their jobs. Such as employees' relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and customers, the psychological pleasure they derive from their work, the reputation of the job in the eyes of society, financial income, and physical and social working conditions. Since job satisfaction is an attitude, it includes three essential components of attitude. These are cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. For example, an employee satisfied with his job thinks that organizational practices are fair, that managers apply practices that meet expectations, and that working conditions are favorable. The affective dimension expresses the strong and positive feelings of the employee towards his/her job. The behavioral dimension expresses the employee's desire to continue working in the current job and organization (Özsoy, 2015). For employees to work with a high level of motivation, organizations must understand the necessity of supporting innovation, transferring resources for innovation, and psychologically supporting employees. Once employees perceive that their organization is investing in innovation, they think these investments create opportunities for the organization and themselves (Baykal, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to build a systematic structure to support innovation in organizations. First of all, to have an innovative climate, practices and policies that hinder creativity in many aspects must be eliminated. Innovation is a process with several stages. In this process, ideas must first be collected and compiled. Then, the originality of these ideas, their possible contributions, and the possibility of their implementation should be examined. Then, the appropriate ones should be put into practice and tested, and their results and effects should be measured (Thomas, 2006). Supporting new ideas and suggestions, rewarding original ideas, and allocating financial and temporal resources to new ideas in organizations are essential to strengthening the innovative climate (Scott and Bruce, 1994). The climate formation gives positive outcomes such as effective communication channels in organizations, making sound decisions, and efficient use of resources growth (Ekvall, 1996). It has been revealed in a previous meta-analysis that organizations supporting employee creativity and innovation are more likely to be successful (Harter et al., 2002).

Studies on innovative organizational climate focused on measuring innovative climate (Scott and Bruce, 1994), ways of creating an innovative climate (Humble and Jones, 1989), and the contribution of innovative climate to the organization (Panuwatwanich et al., 2008). The attempt to create and maintain an innovative organizational climate is possible by having an organizational culture where employees are seen as the most valuable part of the organization. In this respect, it is necessary to examine the reflections of the innovative climate perception on the employees' attitudes towards work. In previous studies, the innovative organizational climate has been associated with variables that directly benefit the organization, such as organizational performance and organizational productivity (Panuwatwanich et al., 2008; Waheed et al., 2019). Employees in organizations with an innovative organizational climate are expected to be satisfied with their jobs because their ideas, thoughts, and suggestions are supported (Brimhall and Mor Barak, 2018; Park et al., 2016). However, if there is a work environment that is overly competitive and where only certain people are more supported because they offer more creative suggestions, in this case, some employees may not be satisfied with this situation. In this respect, this study focuses on examining the effect of employees' creative organizational climate perceptions on job satisfaction to understand the effects of innovative climate better. Although an overly competitive organization might be too challenging to keep up with this pace for some employees, in general, in an innovative climate, employees are also highly supported. Thus, it is assumed that the innovative organizational climate's perception will positively affect employees' job satisfaction.

**Methodology and research methods.** This research aims to examine the effect of an innovative organizational climate on employees' job satisfaction. Innovative organizational climate has been previously studied in different samples and cultures to answer various research questions. However, the effect of white-collar employees' and managers' innovative organizational climate perception on their job satisfaction has not been adequately examined. Within the scope of the literature review, the theoretical and empirical foundations in formulating the hypothesis are discussed. Accordingly, the hypothesis of the research was determined as follows.

H1: The innovative organizational climate perception of the employees positively affects their job satisfaction.

The quantitative research method was used to realize the research purpose. In this context, a questionnaire form including scales with previously tested psychometric properties (innovative organizational climate and job satisfaction scales) and personal information questions was prepared. The questionnaire form was prepared online and sent to the employees of private sector enterprises (automotive and food sector) operating in Sakarya (Turkey) via e-mail. It was shared in the questionnaire form that participation in the research is optional, and personal information (phone, e-mail, name-surname, date of birth) would not be requested. Data were collected between December 2021 and January 2022. Two attention test questions were added to the questionnaire: «Please tick «1» if you are reading this question» and «Please tick «3» if you are not a bot». Eight questionnaire forms determined through these questions were not included in the final dataset. In addition, 11 questionnaires were not analyzed because they were filled incompletely and sloppy. Although the information that only white-collar employees should be included in the research was shared in the survey information form, nine questionnaires were removed from the data set to determine the blue-collar employees participating in the research. After all these processes, 222 valid questionnaires were subjected to the relevant analysis. Frequency analysis, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency test, descriptive statistics, factor analysis, independent samples T-test, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data.

The Turkish version of the climate for innovation scale (Sönmez et al., 2017) developed by Scott and Bruce (1994) based on the scale developed by Siegel and Kaemmerer (1978) was used to measure climate for innovation. The original scale consists of 22 items and two sub-factors (i.e., support for innovation and providing recourses). As a result of its adaptation to Turkish (Sönmez et al., 2017), some items were removed from the scale, and the Turkish version was reduced to 14 items. Unlike the original, it was defined as three instead of two dimensions. Thus the Turkish form has 14 items and three sub-factors (support for innovation – five items, preventing innovation – six items, and providing recourses - three items). In the adaptation study, it was concluded that the scale's psychometric properties were supportive after the relevant changes, and the Turkish version was found to be valid and reliable (Sönmez et al., 2017). In the current study, support for innovation and providing recourses dimensions of the Turkish version of the scale were used only. That is, eight items and two dimensions were used as in the original scale. A total climate for innovation score was obtained with an average of eight items. The average values for the sub-factors were obtained by collecting the relevant items of each dimension and used in the related analyses. The scale was used on a five-point Likert scale (1 – Strongly Disagree, 5 – Strongly Agree).

The Turkish translation (Özsoy and Ardic, 2017) of the 5-item version of the general job satisfaction scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was used to measure general job satisfaction. In their study, in which the Turkish translation of the scale was used, Özsoy and Ardic (2017) concluded that the factor structure of the scale strongly supports the single-factor structure (factor loads ranged from 0.51 to 0.89) and the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency score (0.84) was acceptable. The scale was evaluated with a five-point Likert type (1 – Strongly Disagree, 5 – Strongly Agree). Two items in the scale were reverse coded before the analysis, the relevant items were reverse coded, and the average job satisfaction score was obtained.

**Results.** Table 1 presents the personal information about the participants. 58.1% of the participants were female, 57.7% were married, 94.3% were middle-level, and 7.7% – senior-level employees. 24.4% had a managerial role, and all of them were white color. The participants' educational status distribution is as follows: high school – 9.9%, associate degree – 21.2%, undergraduate – 64.4 %, and graduate – 4.5 %. Employees' age (Mean = 31.90, SD = 5.39) and tenure (Mean = 9.5 SD = 6.28).

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	93	41.9
Female	129	58.1
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Married	128	57.7
Single	94	42.4
<i>Education Level</i>		
High School	22	9.9
Associate Degree	47	21.2
Undergraduate	143	64.4
Graduate	10	4.5
<i>Category</i>		
Middle Level	205	94.3
Senior Level	17	7.7
<i>Managerial Role</i>		
Yes	54	24.4
No	168	75.7

Sources: developed by the author.

According to the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) findings, the Climate for Innovation scale was grouped under two factors. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) of Sampling Adequacy value was determined as 0.89. In other words, the current sample size is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.000 > 0.05$ ), Approximate Chi-Square = 1982.57. Factor loadings coefficients were determined between 0.79 and 0.89 for the Support for Innovation dimension and 0.68-0.88 for the Providing Recourses dimension. The total variance explained was 86.82% (71.47% for Support for Innovation, 15.35 for Providing Recourses). The Initial Eigenvalue was determined as 5.72% for the Support for Innovation dimension and 1.23 for the Providing Recourses dimension. All these findings support the two-factor structure. The job satisfaction scale was gathered under a single factor. The KMO Sampling Adequacy value was determined as 0.87, which shows that the sample size is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.000 > 0.05$ ), Approximate Chi-Square = 1265.90, factor loadings coefficients were determined between 0.79 and 0.83. The total variance explained was 79%, and the Initial Eigenvalue was 4.28. All these findings support the single factor structure. Table 2 shows the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients (0.76-0.87) of the scales are in the acceptable range.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics and internal consistencies**

Variable	Mean	SD	$\alpha$
Climate for Innovation (Total Score)	3.52	1.01	.82
Support for Innovation	3.55	1.06	.80
Providing Recourses	3.47	1.22	.76
Job Satisfaction	3.50	0.96	.87

Note. N = 222

Sources: developed by the author.



Participants' innovative climate perceptions and job satisfaction levels were also medium (the mean value is between 3.47 and 3.55).

As expected, a very high correlation coefficient was obtained between the climate for innovation total score and the sub-dimensions of the scale, support for innovation, and providing resources. Again, a solid and positive relationship was obtained between the climate for innovation total score and support for innovation and job satisfaction. A moderately strong but still positive relationship was obtained between providing resources and job satisfaction.

**Table 3. Correlation Findings**

Indicators	CI	SI	PR	JS
Climate for Innovation (Total Score) (CI)	-			
Support for Innovation (SI)	.90***	-		
Providing Recourses (PR)	.86***	.63***	-	
Job Satisfaction (JS)	.51***	.55***	.34***	-

Note.  $N = 222$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Sources: developed by the author.

There was no significant difference in the climate for innovation, support for innovation, providing resources, and job satisfaction scores of employees with and without a managerial role. Similarly, the mean values of the variables included in the research did not differ significantly between middle-level and senior-level employees ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Conclusions.** Although innovation has become a much more popular concept in the last 30 years, essentially, the concept of innovation has been ancient throughout human history. As a result of innovations, our world has become what it is today. With the effect of modernity, the perception could be formed as if innovation is attributed to the last half circle. However, the emphasis and importance given to innovation are much older. As Rumi said, «Everything about yesterday has gone with yesterday. Today, it is needed to say new things». In this respect, innovation is a concept that never loses its importance. Although some innovations have had devastating consequences for humanity, innovative capabilities have become the dynamo of competition in professional working life. The current study examined the effect of the innovative climate perceived by white-collar employees (who are expected to provide more support to innovation processes and innovation processes in organizations) on their job satisfaction. This research is essential in examining the effect of innovation on the employee's attitude towards his/her job rather than the organizational results, as an innovative climate could provide many positive outcomes for the organization's benefit. However, an innovative climate does not always mean that employees will work in the organization in peace. In building an innovative climate, rewarding only the innovations and creative ideas may undermine some employees' loyalty to the organization. They may not have a positive effect on employees in all cases. For this reason, studies to be conducted in different samples and cultures have the potential to contribute to the field.

This study aims to examine the effect of the innovative climate perceived by white-collar employees working in the middle and upper levels of the organizational hierarchy on their job satisfaction. According to the findings, the innovative climate perceptions of the employees positively affected their job satisfaction. Similar findings were obtained in previous studies conducted in different cultures and samples (García-Buades et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2014). Therefore, both this study and previous studies conclude that the possible negative effects of competition among employees in organizations where innovation is supported are not destructive. Furthermore, the innovative climate perceptions of the employees did not differ according to their managerial role and position in the organizational hierarchy. The reason for this may be that all participants are white-collar employees. Overall, findings show that a climate supportive of innovation in organizations increases employees' level of satisfaction with their jobs. It could be explained

by organizations' following a policy that encourages, rewards employees, and transfers resources when necessary.

The main limitation is that the research sample is not focused on a specific sector or organization. For this reason, the study was able to present only a limited descriptive finding. In previous studies, it has been found that the innovative climate serves outputs for the organization's benefit. This study concluded that the innovative climate serves positive outcomes for the employees themselves. In this respect, it is expected that qualitative and quantitative studies will contribute to the field in determining the problems encountered in constructing an innovative climate in future studies and bringing a set of suggestions for the solutions to these problems. In addition, in this study, only white-collar employees were included in the study, assuming that more innovative initiatives would be applied to white-collar employees. However, blue-collar workers observe the problem in practice most closely in some cases. In this regard, future research should also include lower-level employees.

To sum up, in this study, which was carried out depending on many constraints, it was determined that the creative organizational climate perceptions of the employees serve positive outcomes. Future research on the antecedents of the creative climate and problems in constructing a creative climate will also allow the opportunity to look at the subject from a broader perspective.

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**Вплив інноваційного клімату компанії на рівень задоволеності її працівників умовами праці**

У статті висвітлено особливості впливу інновацій на створення конкурентних переваг компанії на регіональному та міжнародному ринках. Авторами наголошено, що організації, які постачають аналогічні продукти та послуги на один ринок, мають розвивати власну унікальність та диференціюватись шляхом впровадження інновацій. Своєю чергою, інноваційний розвиток організації потребує інноваційно орієнтованої системи управління, що враховує запити працівників та відповідає їх очікуванням. У роботі наголошено, що ігнорування ідей персоналу та прийняття управлінських рішень певною групою людей, є бар'єром на шляху досягнення сталого успіху організацій. Таким чином, необхідним є врахування думки та ідей усіх працівників при розв'язанні певних проблем та пошуку нових варіантів покращення якості продукції та послуг. Організаціям варто виділяти додаткові фінансові ресурси на розвиток ініціативності серед працівників та забезпечення інноваційного клімату в організації. Це передбачає залучення співробітників до процесу прийняття рішень, участі у важливих організаційних процесах, врахування їх пропозицій та ідей при розробці продукції. У статті систематизовано дослідження щодо впливу інноваційного клімату на ефективність роботи організації. За результатами систематизації наукових досліджень визначено, що лише декілька робіт підіймали питання впливу інноваційного клімату на трудові відносини. Метою статті є визначення впливу інноваційного клімату організації на задоволеність умовами праці серед білих комірців середньої та високої ланок. Для досягнення поставленої мети проведено онлайн-анкетування 222 працівників харчової, текстильної та автомобільної галузей. У рамках кількісного дослідження застосовано аналіз частотних характеристик, внутрішньої узгодженості, факторний аналіз, t-критерій Стюдента та кореляційний аналіз. За результатами дослідження встановлено значну позитивну кореляцію між сприйняттям інноваційного клімату організації працівниками та їх задоволеністю трудовими умовами. При цьому у ході дослідження не виявлено залежності між задоволеністю умовами праці, позицією працівників (середня чи низька ланка) чи виконання ними управлінських повноважень. Авторами сформовано низку практичних рекомендацій щодо формування позитивного інноваційного клімату організації з урахуванням запитів працівників.

**Ключові слова:** інновації, інноваційний клімат організації, задоволеність умовами праці, білі комірці, менеджери.