



Professional Development and Organizational Climate: Twin Pillars of Teacher Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

Teacher effectiveness is a decisive factor as far as student achievement and overall school success are concerned. This paper examines the professional development and organizational climate as two free-spirited foundational pillars that support teacher performance and outcomes to meet the complex demands of the Gen-Z generation. An effective, well-planned teacher training initiative encourages professional competence and dedication through a structured, collaborative, and self-examining approach. Professional development is not only helpful in strengthening the educators' teaching practices but also keeps a great command over the content knowledge, instructional practices, and flexibility to meet the pedagogical requirements. In a similar manner, the role of an affirmative reinforcement of organizational climate in the professional development of an individual can't be ignored. Organizational climate can be associated with mutual trust, collaboration, mentoring, guiding, and supportive leadership accompanying the shared vision, comprising motivation, job satisfaction, and retention among employees. However, its impact is generally influenced by the inclusive organizational climate within which teachers work. A positive organizational climate includes collegial relationships, supportive leadership, trust, and shared decision-making that ultimately provide the psychological and



structural conditions that enable teachers to apply new knowledge and sustain professional growth. Considering the prominent theoretical perspectives and empirical research, this paper argues that the interplay between professional development and organizational climate is quite important to enhance teacher motivation, performance, and retention. Those schools where in culmination of professional learning, smudged with a participatory climate, are better positioned to achieve instructional excellence, along with nurturing and providing improved student outcomes. The study proposes an integrative framework that situates teacher effectiveness within a systemic context, emphasizing the need for coherence between individual professional learning initiatives and institutional support structures. Ultimately, fostering teacher effectiveness requires a balanced investment in both professional development and organizational climate, as the mentioned twin aspects are necessary for sustainable educational improvement and innovation. Based on past research experiences and theoretical frameworks, this study exemplifies how the complementary relationship between continuous professional learning and a nurturing school environment creates the conditions necessary for sustained teacher growth and optimal performance. The findings highlight the importance of aligning institutional support structures with teacher development initiatives to build a resilient, competent, and motivated teaching workforce.

Introduction

In today's dynamically changing work environment, the organisations competing in the world market have to face persistent pressure to research, innovate, and adapt to the changes to lead in the market. To accomplish these targets, organisations generally rely on their experienced, skilled, and motivated workforce. When the concept of effectiveness is stretched towards the education industry, the teachers' quality and efficacy are the crucial factors as far as the student outcome, schools' performance, and improvement are concerned. In essence, school-based variables that influence teacher effectiveness are of cardinal interest. These two predominant variables are professional development and organisational



climate. Professional development encompasses the continuous processes through which teachers earn, refine, and enlarge the circle of their knowledge, skills, and competencies required to stand one step ahead of their peers. Along with the professional development, Organisational climate covering the terms and policies of the institution, positive work environment, cooperation among staff members, and support also have considerable influence on the overall growth of the organisation. In most of the former studies, the individual parameters such as Professional Development (PD) or Organisational Climate (OC) have been studied separately as far as their impact is concerned on organisational growth. It has been noticed through previous studies that though these have a moderate influence on the better outcome of an institution, but if they work as twin pillars, they both may support teacher effectiveness and ultimately the development of the organisation as well. The purpose of this paper is to express how and why both parameters should be interrelated and how impactful their individual outcomes may be for teacher effectiveness.

Professional Development

Professional development refers to a continuous process of improving an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance job performance and career growth. It may take place in many forms, such as training programs, workshops, seminars, mentoring, continuing higher education, and on-the-job learning. The concept of professional development extends beyond traditional training; it emphasizes lifelong learning and adaptability in a constantly evolving work environment. Investing in professional development benefits both employees and organisations. For employees, it provides opportunities for career advancement, personal growth, and increased job satisfaction. When employees feel that their organisation values their growth, they are more likely to be engaged, loyal, and motivated. For organisations, professional development helps ensure that staff possess up-to-date skills and knowledge, which in turn leads to improved performance, innovation, and competitiveness.

Professional development plays a vital role in the life of a teacher. He/she should pay keen attention to the knowledge, skills, competence, and conduct that are held in high esteem in society. Professional development is defined as “activities that develop an individual's skill, knowledge, expertise, and characteristics as a teacher (Singh & Chavan, 2021). Mizell (2011) mentions that “professional development is the practical tool in the educational system to increase the effectiveness of learning and better classroom management by engaging the learners in the well-organized manner” (p.2). In today's educational setup, professional development is a necessity of every educational society. Professional development in the broad sense refers to the progression of a person in his/her professional role more



intentionally. Teacher development is the professional growth of teacher achievers through gaining increased experience and examining his/her teaching systematically (Glatthorn, 1995). Darling, Hammond, and McLaughlin (2005) put forward that professional development considers two parameters overall. The first one is to make the teaching process effective by making the educator's understanding deep enough, which tends to better educational practices and the self-development of teachers. The next phase is to turn the learning effective for students by bringing those practices into the classroom atmosphere. The focus of professional development is to improve the pedagogical knowledge and procedures and overcome the shortcomings in its path. Gusky (1995) stated that "professional development is systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and the learning outcomes of the students" (p.381). This definition highlights the features of better learning outcomes and their role in moulding the instructors' behaviour by reflecting professionalism, improved pedagogy and training, and getting proactive, which eventually leads to the betterment of students.

Teacher professional development is more than just attending a workshop, completing a course, or attending a conference. It is a continuous process of reflection, learning, and action. It is designed to elevate your teaching practice and ultimately, drive student outcomes. At its core, professional development empowers you to engage in self-reflection and critically analyse your teaching methods and strategies to identify areas for improvement.

Reeves (2010) determined the three important attributes that straightaway affect professional development in an educational setup: 1) Target the student learning; 2) Monitor the formal decisions; and 3) project the people/practices against the programs (p.21). Professional development is mainly focused on student learning, and it can be effective only and only when it fills the gaps between the actual performance of the individual and the expected one. Hence, the main concern of professional development is to facilitate teacher learning with certain practices, such as teacher training, improved pedagogy, and better infrastructure and facilities to promote student learning. Professional development is one's self-development relating to their profession, and it is attainable only and only if people keep themselves updated with recent developments in their profession. Such a development can be achieved through various formal education training courses, and large-scale centrally supported professional development programs including conferences, seminars, and courses (Subhranath & Roy, 2015).

However, to make the theoretical perspective of technology practical and bring things on paper into practical life is possible only with teachers' positive attitude and organizational support. To make



classroom learning effective, the organizational climate should be congenial. "Re-defining Teacher Education for Digital-age Learners Summit (2009) emphasizes the equal importance of teachers' participation in making learning effective by having a proper command over certain aspects of technology and becoming tech-savvy. Nevertheless, the technology assistance has a great impact on the present educational system. Both the participants inside the classroom whether the students or the teachers, must be ready to adopt the change in classroom settings for the sake of betterment; only then is the practicality of such a dream possible. Such kind of approach will lead to the teachers' professional development, which ultimately turns out to be the best products in the form of students. However, a wide gap in organizational climate exists between private and government schools. Generally, every employee has a certain perception of the working atmosphere or the environment of a company, even before becoming an employee/joining the organization. The organizational climate has an everlasting impact on employees, which ultimately leads to overall workplace satisfaction. Postholm (2012) concluded in his study that both individual and organizational factors influence teachers' learning. Teacher cooperation is important for how they develop, and some of the teachers can lead such learning activities themselves. Moreover, a positive atmosphere in school, along with the cooperation among teachers and with external resource persons, may lead to the teachers' professional development.

Organisational Climate

Organisational climate refers to the collective perceptions and attitudes of employees regarding their work environment. It encompasses various elements such as leadership style, communication, teamwork, recognition, fairness, and organisational support. In simpler terms, the organisational climate represents "how it feels" to work within an organisation. It influences how employees interact, perform, and respond to challenges.

A positive organisational climate is characterised by trust, respect, open communication, and a sense of belonging. In such an environment, employees feel valued and supported, which enhances morale and productivity. Conversely, a negative or toxic climate—marked by poor communication, lack of recognition, or rigid hierarchies—can lead to low motivation, stress, and high turnover rates.

Leaders play a crucial role in shaping organisational climate. Their behaviour, attitudes, and decision-making directly affect how employees perceive the organisation. Transparent communication, supportive supervision, and recognition of employee contributions are key elements in fostering a positive climate. Moreover, an inclusive and equitable environment encourages collaboration and creativity, which are vital for organisational success.



Meena and Agarwal (2014) studied the inter-dependence of vibrant parameters such as organizational climate, job satisfaction, and happiness of the workforce of educational institutions. To conduct the same, 90 professional teachers were shortlisted from different educational establishments. The result showed a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational climate. The other outcome showed a similar kind of relation between organizational climate and happiness. The astonishing fact was that when job satisfaction and happiness were analysed based on correlation; it showed a negative trend in that relation.

Smitha (2015) studied psychosocial status and academics among teachers of secondary schools to bring out the correlation between various constituent units. The sample consisted of 900 teachers of Kerala teaching in various institutions. The substantial outcomes of the research were that no significant relationship was seen between institutional climate and the individual happiness of the teacher concerned. Further studies also didn't reveal any significant difference between gender, educational qualifications, place of residence, and workplace happiness.

The Relationship between Professional Development and Organisational Climate

There is a strong interconnectedness between professional development and organisational climate as both are mutually reinforcing. A supportive and mutually cooperative organisational climate encourages employees to engage in professional development activities; on the other hand, opportunities for development lead to a more positive and motivating climate.

The organisations that keep investing in employees' development indicate a clear message that growth and learning are highly valued in such esteemed places. Such of work environment helps to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and commitment, raising the standard of organisational climate. To lead such examples, those organisations that induce the training session for their employees, mentors, and provide career rising opportunities are more vulnerable to be empowered and appreciated. This, in turn, fosters a climate of motivation, engagement, and continuous improvement.

Likewise, an affirmative work climate in any organisation improves the effectiveness of professional development initiatives. Such kind of environment, where employees are free to learn, ask queries, and are liberal to do experimentation to bring out the desired results, professional development becomes more impactful. The overall growth of the Employees can be observed as they are more open to getting feedback, align towards learning, to get training regarding new advancements, and adapt new knowledge in job placement.



Correspondingly, the union between professional development and organisational climate come up with success at the individual and Organisational point as well. The employees practising in such a workplace get a boon in confidence, proficiency, and job satisfaction at a personal level, whereas the organisations attain welfare because of an enhanced level of innovation, performance, and retention.

The **interrelationship between professional development and organisational climate** is strong and multidimensional — each influences and reinforces the other.

Influence of Professional Development on Organisational Climate

Aspects	Influence on Organisational Climate
Employee Growth and Motivation	The opportunities for better career growth and learning prospects induce the feeling of self-esteem, being valued, motivated, and committed among individuals concerned with the job.
Morale and Confidence	Well-trained and advanced-skilled persons possess better command while performing their duties with minimum stress and pressure of the job, as high morale and confidence help to tackle the work floor duties efficiently.
Leadership Skills Enhancement	Professionally developed leaders have better control over emotional intelligence, inclusion, and transmission - the foundation of a sound organisational climate.
Innovation and Adaptability	Continuous learning and on-the-job training enhance the adaptability skills, making the organisational climate more open to change and innovation.

Influence of Organisational Climate on Professional Development

Aspect	Influence on PD
Supportive Environment and Work Culture	A climate that promotes learning and growing, a tendency to have an experimentation helps to earn a higher scale of professional development and motivates its employees to engage in better prospects.
Leadership Behaviour and Trust	The leaders who value development more are quicker to allocate resources, time, and recognition, creating better conditions for professional development.
Psychological Safety and	A mutual trust among the workforce helps to find the loopholes in the system and on an individual level, and to create a feedback mechanism, necessary for genuine



Collaboration	growth.
Fair reward and recognition system	If the climate acknowledges and provides rewards to the learners, in such organisations, participation in PD becomes part of the organisational norm.

In the schooling system, while teachers learn new teaching strategies, a higher level of professional development is attained among the teaching fraternity, and they feel highly valued and competent. This stimulates collaboration, trust, and shared purpose — all hallmarks of a positive organisational climate. In turn, that supportive climate motivates teachers to participate in future PD opportunities, enhancing overall school performance. Together, they form the foundation for organisational effectiveness, innovation, and employee well-being.

IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ON EMPLOYEES’ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Learning Forward (2011) defines professional development as a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student standards (p.2). *Mizell (2010)* adds that the deliberate grinding work of improving the educators’ performance requires their sustained learning. The ultimate test of that learning is whether it enables teachers to more effectively address gaps in what their students know and can do” (p.2). In the mainstream, professional development is a wide field in the educational system concerned with the developmental change both in teachers and in students. It contains learning in a regular classroom with a formal educational setup, and continuing the education by filling the gaps through better training and pedagogical practices.

A positive climate in any organization often leads to an increase in the level of motivation, commitment, and special focus on work issues, contributing to employees’ performance.

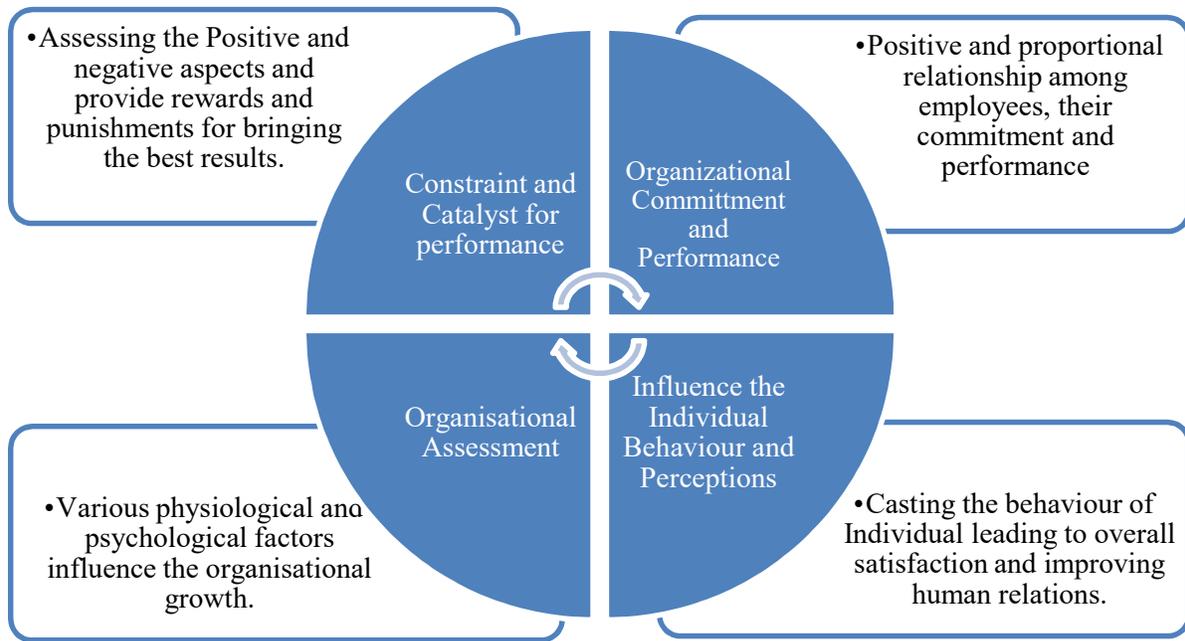


Fig.1: Impact of Organizational Climate on Employees' Professional Development

- 1. Organizational Commitment and Performance:** The statistical findings in the former studies put forward the outcomes that the organizational commitment of the individual has a strong influence on organizational climate. The studies conducted in the past have revealed that the organization whose organizational climate rating is high has a constructive contribution to organizational commitment. A strong commitment is the basic necessity for the improved performance of an organization. Such kind of atmosphere provides better opportunities to make the concerned organizations' performance better than that of competitors.
- 2. Influence the Individual behaviour and perception:** Organizational climate has a significant impact on shaping the behaviour of an individual by moulding as on the situational demands and forming their perceptions towards the organization. This perception makes the individual's behaviour favourable to an organization. Hence, a positive organizational climate is worthwhile in increasing the overall satisfaction of employees, maintaining and improving human relations, along with enhanced productivity for an organization's betterment.
- 3. Organization Assessment:** Organizational climate is favourable not only for its employees but also for the organization. The various factors within an organization can have varying impacts on people's behaviour physiologically as well as psychologically. It helps to assess the behaviour of individuals and the entire working force, which ultimately leads to organizational growth.



- 4. Constraint and catalyst for performance:** A system of constraints in an organization's climate acts positively as well as negatively. It helps to assess employees by acknowledging, penalizing, and continuously keeping an eye on their performance. It includes rewards and punishments at different phases, which keep an individual attentive and active towards work. These catalysts help to arouse the person's motivation and bring out one's best for the betterment of the organization.

Organizational climate has been validated to have an everlasting impact on a broad range of individually desired and organizational outcomes. The studies conducted in the past have confessed that organizational climate affects the performance, productivity, commitment, self-confidence, and ethical behavior as far as the individual outcomes are concerned (Ritchie 2000). The studies conducted in the recent past have revealed that organizational climate significantly affects an organization – employees' motivation and its performance. In short, organizational climate is all about human transformation in terms of attitude and behaviour, which leads to a healthy work environment, containing a happier workplace atmosphere, psychologically fit for the mind, and socially respectful. It is not written like a constitution; it is based on the behaviour of every individual who is a part of an organization, regardless of the post he/she hold. A positive organizational climate affects professional development by generating support, better learning opportunities, and a conducive environment for growth. It provides immense opportunities for employees to boost the growth of their careers by developing their skills in alignment with both personal and organizational goals.

Implications for Practice

- **School Leadership:** School leaders should pay attention to climate: build trust, involve teachers in decision-making, provide collaborative time, recognition, and support for innovation. Without these, PD may fail to translate into practice.
- **Designing PD:** PD should not be a one-off event; it needs sustained duration, active participation, follow-up, and alignment with school goals. In addition, it should be embedded in the school's work, allowing teachers to collaborate. However, even well-designed PD needs the context of a positive climate.
- **Aligning PD and Climate:** Schools should coordinate PD efforts with climate building: e.g., begin with leadership development, team building, establishing professional learning communities, then roll out PD initiatives.



- **Evaluation:** When evaluating teacher effectiveness interventions, researchers and practitioners should assess both PD and organisational climate as part of the context.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

- Much of the empirical work is correlational; causal pathways need further exploration (e.g., via longitudinal or experimental designs).
- Most studies treat teacher effectiveness via self-report or proxy measures (e.g., teacher efficacy, innovation), rather than direct classroom practice and student outcomes — more rigorous measurement is needed.
- The interplay of culture, climate, PD, and teacher beliefs requires further unpacking; how do these dynamics play out in different national and cultural contexts (including India)?
- More research is needed on how PD transforms organisational climate (rather than only how climate enables PD).
- Investigation on cost-effective models for climate improvement and PD in resource-limited settings is particularly relevant.

Empirical Evidence on Teacher Effectiveness

OC and Teacher Effectiveness

Several studies exhibit that organisational climate correlates with various dimensions of teacher effectiveness. For instance, a study conducted among the secondary schools in India found that organisational climate had a significant impact on not only professional but also social and academic dimensions of teacher effectiveness as well. In one study, it was also acknowledged that school climate positively predicted teacher efficacy and job satisfaction, which are important outcomes for effectiveness.

PD and Teacher Effectiveness

While this review emphasises OC, PD remains fundamentally important. Research shows that when teachers engage in sustained, well-designed PD, their instructional practices improve, and student outcomes can improve. For example, teacher-learning communities are associated with greater organisational commitment and teaching effectiveness.



Conclusion

Teacher effectiveness is affected by multiple means. This paper argues that professional development and organisational climate should be regarded as twin pillars: each having its own importance, but interacting in enormous ways. A positive organisational climate acts as an improved field in which seeds of professional development can give a ripe fruit. Professional development gives a boost to teachers' skills and competence wherever the climate of learning and collaboration is reinforced. The schools going for the advancement of teachers and policy makers seeking high-quality teachers must work on both these aspects. Making a blind eye towards either of the dimensions may lead to the overall deterioration of the quality of teacher effectiveness. By critically investing in climate and professional development, educational institutions can boost effective teaching, improve student outcomes, and promote sustainable development of the school. The professional development anchors on enrichment of individual skills and competencies, whereas organisational climate surrounds the overall atmosphere and shared perceptions within the workplace. Together, they form the foundation for employee satisfaction, productivity, and long-term organisational success.

In conclusion, professional development and organisational climate are essential components of a successful and sustainable organisation. Professional development empowers employees by equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet evolving demands, while organisational climate shapes their attitudes, motivation, and commitment. The interaction between the two creates a virtuous cycle—professional development fosters a positive climate, and a positive climate, in turn, enhances learning and growth. Therefore, organisations that prioritise both elements are better positioned to achieve long-term success, adaptability, and employee well-being in an increasingly dynamic world.

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