



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF THE STAFF IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPORT AND YOUTH OF GILAN PROVINCE, IRAN

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### **Abstract:**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between organizational climate and mental health in the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan Province. The present research is a descriptive – correlational research. In terms of purpose, this study is applied research and the data were collected in a cross sectional study in 2017. The population of this study included all male and female experts in the department of sport and youth in Gilan province, which 123 individuals were randomly selected using Morgan table. The data collection tool was a standard organizational climate questionnaire and mental health questionnaire. The content validity as well as the form of the questionnaire were approved by the experts and the reliability of the standard questionnaires in this study was 0.83 and 0.88, respectively. Descriptive statistics and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, Pearson correlation and linear regression tests were used for data analysis. The results of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate with mental health and its components such as depression, anxiety, physical complaints, psychosis, allergy and aggression of research samples. The results of linear regression also showed that about 59% of the dependent variable variations (mental health) are related to the independent variable (organizational climate). Finally, since the relationships between variables are confirmed, it is suggested that to provide a healthy and intimate atmosphere and increase and maintain the morale and reduce the incidence of mental disorders of the employees and consequently, the obligated performance of individuals in order to attain the goals of the department of the sport and youth of Gilan province.

**Keywords:** organizational climate; mental health; staff; department of sport

## 1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, the world today is the world of humans, and humans are the custodians of various organizations. Organizations do not have any functions without humans and it is impossible to administrate them. On the other hand, the social life of humans requires cooperation, mutual support and fulfillment of needs. This has led to the division of works and development of various specialties and skills, and has increased the quantitative and qualitative progress and expanded its social and organized relations in the form of institutions, agencies, organizations and specialized units. The staff performance in the organization depends on the type of personality, the role of the organization and the organizational situation. This situation or condition has been studied as an environment, culture, feeling, tone or climate. These terms refer to the quality of the organization, as experienced through its members. In contrary to the expectations of research results, psychological stress and its consequences are one of the most critical issues in the work careers in this complex world (1). However, organizations use multiple energy sources that one of the most important resources is the mental energy of the staff. This energy increases when employees feel successful psychologically, and in order to achieve this, it is imperative that they always try to create new opportunities to recognize and accept their talents and others. According to the research, recognition and acceptance of these talents cannot be realized unless in a healthy and compatible climate. Therefore, since mental health is the aspiration of all people, the psychology task is to define mental health, identify the harm causes, and provide solutions to address the harms that endanger the mental health.

It should be noted that the mental health of the individuals is influenced by several factors. Although factors are studied separately, but they are affected by each other. It means that the people are subjected to variations in their balance and mental health due to particular environmental conditions or individual factors, and the greater the severity of these factors, the greater their impact and threat. Factors such as failure to meet basic needs, frustration, stress, learning, social issues, and mass media are the main factors that affect mental health. In today's organizations, much attention is paid to mental health and self-esteem of employees to create a positive climate and many managers consider that the effectiveness of their organizations depends on the dedication and commitment of the employees. On the other hand, in the employees' point of view, managers are responsible for their intellectual and emotional issues. Of course, more positive and appropriate organizational climate leads to easier human relationships and conversely, isolated organizational climate leads to distraction and stress in the staff. Today, research in sports organizations has also highlighted the need to pay attention to organizational climate. Seyyed Ameri et al. (2008) argued that the success of an organization and sport organization depends on the creation of a favorable organizational climate by sports managers. Moradzadeh (2009), in his

research, considers the attention of managers to organizational climate as an essential factor in the interest and the desired job performance of sport teachers (6).

Arentez (2016) considers the mental health of the staff is one of the factors that is influenced by the internal climate of the organization and he emphasized on the need to provide a relaxed climate and avoid mental stress from organizational managers and authorities. According to the findings of the Harvard School of Public Health, World Health Organization and World Bank, mental disorders are one of the most important and important components of the overall burden of diseases. Overall, 10.5 to 11 percent of the total burden of diseases is related to mental illness, and it is anticipated that in the next two decades, the current percentage will reach 15 percent of the global burden of diseases. A report from the International Labor Organization shows that out of three staff, one mentions the struggle between work and the family as one of the greatest problems of life. It should be noted that the unpleasant feelings that people face in different age groups varies over time. Sometimes these feelings are signs and symptoms of mental disorders that are very strong and lasting, and sometimes the short periods of sadness that everyone experiences it. Among these unpleasant feelings are anxiety, depression and physical dissatisfaction, which weakens self-confidence of the individual and disrupts his social functions and interpersonal relationships. Regarding the problems that cause mental disorders for these people and the heavy costs imposed on societies, they have to take measures to prevent, detect and treat these disorders. According to research, the factors in the workplace are largely related to the health and illness of the staff. Of course, each organization has its own cultures, traditions, methods of work, which creates its overall space. Some organizations are vibrant and others are unobtrusive. Some organizations are very humanistic, while others are cool and rigorous. According to various studies, so many people suffer from various daily stressful occupational stresses. These stresses can lead to various malformations in long term and show their negative impact on mental health of the individual and, as a result, his daily life. This is where the space and working conditions should be provided such that employees, in the stability situation, use all their potential to achieve organizational goals. Dezfuli's research (2009) showed that mental health of individuals is one of the effective and important factors in job attachment and job success of sports teachers. According to the results of this study, managers should create a healthy and friendly work environment to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Since these variables are effective factors in the performance of organizations, and because of limited researches in this field in sport organizations, especially the Department of Sport and Youth, it is necessary to carry out research in this area. Certainly, the mental health of the members of the organization can have a significant impact on the better performance of these staff. Obviously, in order to perform its beneficial and positive impact, the organization needs a healthy climate and staff that is in a good mental state. Among the sports organizations in our country, the prominent and key role of the Department of Sports and Youth is not overlooked. As this organization is one of the governmental and service organization and due to complexity

raising in organizations in recent years and common characteristics of organizations and numerous news about the prevalence of stress and mental illness in the working environment of employees, so the present study aims to investigate the relationship between organizational climate and mental health of employees working in this organization. In this regard, the researcher hopes that the results of this study, in addition to investigate the relationship between the organizational climate and mental health of the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, improve the status of the organization and help the senior managers of this organization to better understand the organizational factors.

## **2. Methodology**

Regarding the nature of the research subject and in terms of strategy, this research is a descriptive - correlation type. In terms of purpose, this research is applied research and data in this cross-sectional study were collected in 2017. The study population included all male and female experts who work in department of sport and youth in Gilan province, both contractual and formal, and they are 190 people based on the latest statistics from the department of sport and youth of Gilan province. Over 123 individuals were selected randomly from the population and according to the Kregcie & Morgan sample volume table. The main variables of this research are organizational climate (independent variable or predictor) and mental health (dependent variable or criterion). Library methods and questionnaires were used to collect data for this study. Data gathering tool was a questionnaire including personal information questionnaire, organizational climate questionnaire (OCQ), Sussman & Deep (1989), and mental health questionnaire (SCL-90-R). The content and formal validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts. The reliability of the standard questionnaires in this study was 0.83 and 0.88. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were used to estimate the normal distribution of research data, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between organizational climate and mental health components as well as linear regression test was used to predict the variables.

## **3. Results**

The descriptive findings of this study showed that 58% of the samples were male and 42% were female. Of these, 14% are single and 86% are married. The highest frequency of research samples is for bachelor's degree and the least frequency is for Ph.D. degree. The average age of respondents was about 42 years old. Finally, according to the significance level in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the findings indicated that organizational climate and mental health variables were in normal distribution.

**Table 1:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and mental health

Variable	Mental health		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	0/774	0/001	123

Since the significance level is 0.001, which is less than 0.05 and the Pearson coefficient of 774/0 was obtained, there is a positive and significant relation between organizational climate and mental health of the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, mental health increases among employees.

**Table 2:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and depression

Variable	Depression		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/713	0/001	123

Since the significance level is 0.001, which is less than 0.05 and the Pearson coefficient of -0.713 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and depression among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, depression reduced among employees.

**Table 3:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and anxiety

Variable	Anxiety		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/697	0/002	123

Since the significance level is 0.002, which is less than 0.05 and the Pearson coefficient of -0.697 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and anxiety among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, anxiety reduced among employees.

**Table 4:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and physical complaints

Variable	Physical complaints		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/587	0/05	123

Since the significance level is 0.05, and the Pearson coefficient of -0.587 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and physical complaints among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, physical complaints reduced among employees.

**Table 5:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and psychosis

Variable	Psychosis		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/710	0/001	123

Since the significance level is 0.001, and the Pearson coefficient of -0.710 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and psychosis among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, psychosis reduced among employees.

**Table 6:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and sensitivity

Variable	Sensitivity		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/698	0/01	123

Since the significance level is 0.01, and the Pearson coefficient of -0.698 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and sensitivity among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, sensitivity reduced among employees.

**Table 7:** Pearson test to examine  
 the relationship between organizational climate and obsessive-compulsive (disorder)

Variable	Obsessive-compulsive		
Organizational climate	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
	-0/698	0/01	123

It is seen in table 7 that according to significance level of 0.09, there is no significance relationship between organizational climate and obsessive-compulsive disorder in the staff of the department of sports and youth of Gilan province, so that with improvement of organizational climate, there was no significant reduction in obsessive-compulsive disorder in staff.

**Table 8:** Pearson test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and aggression

Variable	Aggression		
	Correlation coefficient	Significance level (two interval)	N
Organizational climate	-0/698	0/01	123

Since the significance level is 0.001, and the Pearson coefficient of -0.691 was obtained, there is a significant and inverse relationship between organizational climate and aggression among the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth of Gilan province, so with improvement of organizational climate, aggression reduced among employees.

**Table 9:** Pearson correlation test to investigate  
 the relationship between organizational climate and mental health

	Dependent/independent variable	Purpose	Role	Reward	Procedure	Relationship
Mental health	Pearson coefficient	0/73	0/63	0/69	0/74	0/81
	Significance level	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001
	N	123	123	123	123	123

It is seen in table 9 that according to significance level of 0.011 and the amount of Pearson correlation coefficient, there is positive and significance relationship between organizational climate and mental health of the staff in department of sport and youth of Gilan province.

**Table 10:** Summary of regression model in relation  
 to research variables (organizational climate and mental health)

Model	Correlation coefficient	Determination coefficient	Normalized determination coefficient	standard error of estimate
1	0/774	0/599	0/137	0/268

It is seen in table 10 that the determination coefficient is 0.559 and it indicates that about 59 percent of dependent variable variations (mental health) is related to independent variable (organizational climate).

**Table 11:** Analysis of variance of regression model in relation  
 to organizational climate and mental health

	Sum of squares	Average of squares	F	Significance level
Regression	1/997	1/977		
Residual	12/605	0/323	6/116	0/002
Total	14/582			

Table 11 includes regression analysis of variance to investigate the certainty of the existence of a linear relationship between the two variables, so that since the significance level is less than 0.05, so the linearity assumption of the relationship between the two variables is confirmed.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the organizational climate and mental health of the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth in Gilan province. In other words, creating favorable conditions for staff in the department of sport and youth reduces the amount of psychiatric disorders in the experts. Therefore, according to the results of the research, the change in organizational climate dimensions can lead to mental and desirable health among the staff of the organization. For example, it is possible to meet satisfaction and consensus on procedures and practices as well as the effectiveness of relationships between staff to perform operation and provide their mental and desirable health by clarifying goals and roles in an organization. These findings are consistent with the research findings of Shirani et al. (2010), Niedermer et al. (2015), Chester et al. (2016) and Neil et al. (2013), that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and mental health.

The findings of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and depression among employees of the department of Sports and Youth in Gilan province. In other words, the rate of depression also decreases by creating the right conditions to govern a suitable organizational climate and decreasing the depression of the organization's employees and promoting mental health will improve their job performance. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Bardar's (1375) and Niedermer et al. (2015) research that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational climate and depression that is one of the eighth dimensions of mental health. But it is inconsistent with the study of Fooladvand (2006) that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and depression. The difference in the research tool and the dimensions of the organizational climate variables and therefore the different responses of the subjects in the two studies, can be the cause of this difference. The results indicated that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and anxiety among employees of department of sport and youth of Gilan province.

In other words, the level of anxiety of the organization's experts decreases with favorable situation of the organization's climate in the department of sport and youth. According to the result, if there is satisfaction with the implementation of healthy affairs and interpersonal relationships, the amount of anxiety, which is one of the dimensions of mental health, decreases. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Diverd et al. (2015), Boglicis (2007) and Chester et al. (2016), which found a significant relationship between organizational climate and anxiety. But the findings in the Fuladvand's (2007) and Fazeli (2002) are inconsistent with the findings of this research. The inconsistency can be attributed to the structure, administrative system, goals and roles that are assigned to individuals, as well as the reward system and the type of inter-organizational communications that are different. The findings also show that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and physical



complaints of Gilan Sports and Youth Department. In other words, by creating the appropriate conditions for governing the appropriate organizational climate in the Sports and Youth Department, it is possible to reduce the incidence of physical complaints by the statistical community, that is, the staff of the organization. Findings show that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and psychological disorder among staff of the Department of Sports and Youth. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bigdley et al. (2006) and Fooladvand (2007) that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and psychosis. On the other hand, the findings of this study are not consistent with the results of Arntez et al. (2016), that there is no significant relationship between organizational climate and psychosis. The findings of the research showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and sensitivity in the interpersonal relationships of the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth. Along with the results of this research, Diver et al. (2015) showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and sensitivity in the interpersonal relationships of the subjects.

The findings show that there is a relationship between the different dimensions of organizational climate (goal, role, reward, procedure, relationship) and mental health of the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth. The findings are consistent with the study by Ramezaninejad et al. (2004) so that the most prevalent predictor of stress is the reward system. However, the results of the research are not consistent with the findings of Shirani (2009) that among organizational dimensions, organizational culture and then social system have the highest predictive power of mental health among the dimensions of organizational climate. Also, the results of this study are not consistent with the findings of Grant (1990) that the various dimensions of the organizational climate affect mental health. The reason for these inconsistencies can be attributed to the use of a different measurement tool of this research, which results in different questions. For example, organizational climate questionnaire used in the study by Shirani et al (2009) was a researcher-made questionnaire with 52 questions and with different dimensions (organizational culture, facilities and services, educational issues, and social system).

It was previously thought that the supply of people's demands from the resources and facilities of the organization was reduced. But today, this theory has been totally abolished. Experts now believe that if the climate of the organization is not agreed upon by most employees and their real needs are properly understood and valued, it leads to psychological symptoms and reduces productivity in the organization. From long time, stress has been known as a phenomenon associated with physical and mental health deterioration. In addition, there is evidence that there is a relationship between stress and occupational performance. According to the findings of this research and other researches about the impact of organizational climate on mental health of individuals and considering that the department of the sport and youth play a critical role in all aspects of sport, this performance is not realized unless with commitment, effort and the responsibility of the staff who incorporate mental health.

Therefore, it is necessary to try to increase and maintain morale and reduce the incidence of mental disorders of the employees and, consequently, the obligated performance of individuals to achieve their goals. The realization of this will be more complicated by the extension and expansion of organizations, in particular the parent organizations of each sector that has been changed in rules, types of communications, practices, roles, and, to some extent, some minor goals. Undoubtedly, the staff of the Department of Sports and Youth is not asking for a climate in which the roles and objectives are not clear, they will not agree with an unfair reward system. Perception of the climate of the organization indicates that employees can recognize that how much their organizations pay attention to them. One of the other benefits of healthy organizational climate for the sports and youth department is its positive and desirable impact on employee professional relationships, which can create a close and close relationship between employees and as research shows, it reduces the incidence of disruptive mental symptoms associated with undesirable organizational climate. Increasing employee self-esteem has a positive impact on the growing trend of the organization. It is hoped that the officials of the Department of Sports and Youth will provide a well-defined and precise schedule for all the staff to feel comfortable and satisfied.

According to the results of the research, since there is a positive and significant relationship between the organizational climate in the department of sport and youth and mental health: a) It is suggested to the officials of the Departments of Sports and Youth to provide a healthier and more friendly climate for the experts working in this organization, which is necessary for the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. According to the results of the research that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate and anxiety and physical health, it is recommended to them to pay more attention to the role resolution (the goals that the organization seeks to achieve), satisfaction with the rewards (salaries and rewards paid by the organization), satisfaction and agreement on procedures (the manner and method of operation in the organization) and the effectiveness of communication (the relationship that exists between employees in the organization) and provide conditions to create an appropriate organizational climate that is one of the effective factors of mental health. It is also recommended that the officials of the Departments of Sports and Youth draw attention to the findings on the organizational climate of other organizations and their consequences, and if possible, to optimize the organizations that make use of the benefits of proper organizational climate. It is also recommended that the officials of the Department of sport and youth should work on improving the organizational climate of this department and hold regular meetings and encourage staff to attend meetings and express problems and shortcomings in the workplace.

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