

THE ETHICAL CLIMATE AND WORK COMMITMENT OF EMPLOYEES OF A MUNICIPALITY IN PERU

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ABSTRACT:

The objective of the research was to determine the relationship between the ethical climate and the work commitment of the staff of the Incentive Program Area of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna in 2022. The study had its scope in the municipal entity, and for this purpose, a basic type of research was considered, at the methodological level, with a correlational level and a non-experimental, transversal and prospective design, using the survey as a technique and the questionnaire as an instrument, directed to a sample of 239 workers. The results of the study allowed us to find that 60% of workers perceive a moderately positive ethical climate, reflecting a certain ethical robustness although with room for improvement. Regarding work commitment, approximately 65% of workers show moderate commitment, indicating ties of loyalty, but also highlighting the need for strengthening through organizational improvements. As for the correlation, the Rho-Spearman test, with a significance value of 0.05, confirmed a statistically significant relationship between ethical climate and work commitment, highlighting that aspects such as adherence to professional codes and institutional rules directly influence work commitment in an affective and moral way. This link points to the importance of cultivating an ethically sound environment to enhance work dedication.

KEYWORDS: Ethical climate, work interest, professional laws and codes, work independence, institutional rules, work commitment

1) INTRODUCTION:

In the organizational context, the ethical climate and work commitment are two fundamental aspects that influence the efficiency and effectiveness of an institution. Organizational ethics provides the framework of values and principles that regulate the conduct of workers, while work commitment reflects the degree of identification and dedication of personnel to their institution. In this sense, it is crucial to analyze the relationship between both variables within public institutions, especially in the municipal context.

This research focuses on the study of the ethical climate and work commitment in the staff of the Incentive Program Area of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna in the year 2022. At the international level, various studies have shown that the ethical climate has a significant impact on employee engagement, influencing both their performance and their perception of the organization. For example, research such as that of Gorsira et al. (2018) has shown that a deficiency in the organizational ethical climate can increase the propensity for dishonest behavior and negatively affect employee morale. Likewise, studies in the educational and administrative fields have highlighted the need to strengthen professional ethics to improve institutional commitment and management (Bolívar & Pérez, 2022; Paredes et al., 2021).

At the national and local levels, previous research has identified that the ethical climate is a key factor in improving organizational commitment and job performance in government entities. For example, Tuesta (2022) found that a solid ethical climate favors compliance with standards and values in health institution workers, while Domínguez (2022) highlighted the influence of professional ethics on the work performance of officials of the Regional Government of Tumbes. In the context of Tacna, Mamani (2022) evidenced a positive relationship between

professional ethics and administrative management in the Regional Government, which reinforces the relevance of studying the topic in the Incentive Program Area of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna.

Given the above, this study seeks to analyze the relationship between the ethical climate and work commitment in this municipal context, providing valuable information to strengthen organizational ethics and improve staff performance. This analysis will generate recommendations for the implementation of strategies that promote an ethical and committed work environment, which is essential to guarantee efficient and transparent public management.

2) METHODS AND METHODOLOGY:

This research is of a basic type, since it seeks to generate theoretical knowledge about the relationship between the ethical climate and work commitment in the area of the Incentive Program of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna in the year 2022. According to Hernández Sampieri and Mendoza (2019), basic research aims to broaden and deepen existing knowledge without the immediate intention of practical application. In this sense, the study is based on established theories to test them in a specific context and evaluate their applicability.

The study has a correlational level, since its main objective is to determine the relationship between the ethical climate and work commitment. Correlational research makes it possible to establish associations between variables without manipulating them, analyzing the way in which one variable may be linked to the other (Hernández Sampieri & Mendoza, 2019). In this case, it will be analyzed whether the ethical climate within the organization influences the degree of work commitment of the workers.

The research design is non-experimental and cross-sectional. In non-experimental design, variables are not deliberately manipulated but are observed in their natural environment to analyze their relationship. In addition, as it is a cross-sectional design, data collection will be carried out at a single time, which allows obtaining a snapshot of the variables under study (Hernández Sampieri & Mendoza, 2019).

Likewise, the study is prospective in nature, since the findings obtained could contribute to the design and implementation of a new code of ethics for the Municipality.

3) RESULTS

Results of the Ethical Climate variable

General analysis

In the general evaluation of the ethical climate of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna, the information collected reflects that most of the respondents perceive a high level of ethical compliance in various dimensions, with the ethical climate variable obtaining 39.33% in the high category and 3.35% in the very high. This overall picture suggests that workers feel that there is a strong ethical foundation in their workplace.

Analysis by Dimensions

Dimension: Interest

The "Interest" dimension was evaluated through seven indicators: General Interest, Collective Well-being, Altruistic Concern, Search for the Good of Others, Right for Consumers/Public, Efficiency as a Norm and Efficient Work.

- **Overall assessment:** 45.19% of the participants consider that the entity has a high level of interest in the aspects evaluated, and 7.11% consider it very high.
- **General Interest:** 41.01% believe that the entity focuses on the best for everyone.
- **Collective Well-being:** 47.28% perceive concern for the well-being of all.
- **Altruistic Concern:** 49.37% see a high concern for others.
- **Pursuit of the Good of Others:** 49.79% consider that the well-being of others is actively sought.
- **Right for Consumers/Audience:** 46.44% believe that doing the right thing is promoted.
- **Efficiency as a Standard:** 44.93% of high responses.
- **Efficient Work:** 43.52% consider that efficiency is promoted.

These results reflect a strong institutional commitment to general welfare, altruism, and efficiency.

Dimension: Professional Laws and Codes

Evaluated based on four indicators: Legal and Professional Compliance, Ethical/Legal Priority, Regulatory Adherence and Legal Concern.

- **Overall rating:** 44.35% perceive high compliance, and 7.53% consider it very high.
- **Legal and Professional Compliance:** 49.79% consider it high or very high.
- **Ethical/Legal Priority:** 43.94% believe that the entity prioritizes the law and the code of ethics.
- **Regulatory Adherence:** 48.11% rate this aspect as high or very high.
- **Legal Concern:** 46.45% believe that the entity cares about legal compliance.

This shows an organizational culture strongly oriented towards legality and ethics.

Dimension: Institutional Rules

Evaluated with the indicators: Rules and Procedures, Regulatory Fidelity, Correctness and Success, and Obedience to Policies.

- **Overall rating:** 44.35% consider it high and 10.88% very high.
- **Rules and Procedures:** 46.86% give high or very high ratings.
- **Normative Fidelity:** 53.14% perceive loyalty to the norms.
- **Correctness and Success:** 45.61% associate success with adherence to standards.
- **Obedience to Policies:** 48.12% feel a strong obligation to comply with them.

It demonstrates an environment where rules are respected and valued.

Dimension: Toolkit and Means

It includes the indicators: Self-Interests, Personal Value, Absence of Personal Ethics, Company Interests, Focus on Business Interests, Company Standards and Interests, and Cost Responsibility.

- **Overall rating:** 44.35% consider it high and 5.86% very high.
- **Self-Interests:** 48.96% believe they can protect their interests.
- **Personal Value:** 53.56% feel that they are valued.
- **Absence of Personal Ethics:** 44.94% perceive that personal ethics can be overshadowed.
- **Company Interests:** 43.93% feel pressure to prioritize them.
- **Focus on Business Interests:** 50.21% rate it high or very high.
- **Company Standards and Interests:** 40.17% see it as a priority.
- **Cost Responsibility:** 49.38% highlight efficient cost management.

This indicates a strong orientation towards institutional interests, but with opportunities for improvement in personal ethics.

Dimension: Independence

Analyzed from Moral Autonomy, Personal Judgment, Concern for Right and Personal Ethics.

- **Overall rating:** 32.22% consider it high and 5.02% very high.
- **Moral Autonomy:** 35.15% believe that their personal morality is respected.
- **Personal Judgment:** 35.98% feel free to make ethical decisions.
- **Concern for Rightness:** 43.09% believe that the entity promotes ethics.
- **Personal Ethics:** 46.03% feel that the entity promotes their individual ethics.

This reflects a balance between institutional regulation and the moral autonomy of employees.

Results of the Work Commitment variable

Dimension: Affective

This dimension measures the emotional connection of employees with the entity. 40.59% show a high affective commitment and 8.37% consider it very high.

- **Personal Development:** 46.03% perceive opportunities for growth.
- **Importance of Work:** 54.39% value their work.
- **Institutional loyalty:** 45.61% express a desire to stay.

Dimension: Identification with objectives and values

Assesses employee alignment with the institutional mission. 55.65% have a high identification and 7.95% a very high one.

- **Motivation for Vision:** 50.63% feel inspired.
- **Contribution to the Mission:** 51.88% believe their work is meaningful.
- **Shared Values:** 48.12% align with organizational values.

Dimension: Moral

Analyze the value given to ethics at work. 29.71% rate it as high and 2.93% as very high.

- **Labor Recognition:** 45.02% believe that their work is valued.
- **Investment Reward:** 52.72% perceive reciprocity.
- **Compliance Control:** 44.35% perceive effective controls.

These findings highlight the importance of emotional engagement, alignment with values, and ethics within the entity.

Relationship between the variables

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test determined that the data do not follow a normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). Consequently, the Rho-Spearman correlation test was used, a non-parametric statistical tool suitable for evaluating the association between variables when normality is not met.

Main findings

1. Ethical climate and work commitment:

- Correlation coefficient: 0.194 (very low positive correlation).
- p-value: 0.003 (< 0.05 , statistically significant).
- The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming a significant but weak relationship.

2. Work interest and work commitment:

- Correlation coefficient: 0.189 (very low positive correlation).
- p-value: 0.003 (< 0.05 , statistically significant).
- It is confirmed that there is a significant relationship, although of low intensity.

3. Professional laws and codes and work commitment:

- Correlation coefficient: 0.174 (very low positive correlation).
- p-value: 0.003 (< 0.05 , statistically significant).
- The null hypothesis is rejected, establishing that there is a significant but moderate association between these variables.
- 4. **Set of remuneration means and work commitment:**
 - Correlation coefficient: 0.137 (very low positive correlation).
 - p-value: 0.035 (< 0.05 , statistically significant).
 - A significant relationship is confirmed, although of low intensity.
- 5. **Work independence and work commitment:**
 - Correlation coefficient: 0.388 (low positive correlation).
 - p-value: 0.002 (< 0.05 , statistically significant).
 - A significant relationship is confirmed, highlighting the importance of autonomy at work as an influential factor in work commitment.

All the relationships analyzed have a positive and statistically significant correlation with work commitment, although the intensity of these associations varies from very low to low. It highlights work independence as the factor with the greatest influence on staff engagement, suggesting the need for organizational strategies that promote employee autonomy to improve their commitment and job satisfaction.

Consolidated Results

The study showed a significant relationship between the ethical climate and work commitment in the Provincial Municipality of Tacna.

1. Ethical Climate:

- The perception of the ethical climate in the organization is mostly positive.
- Dimensions such as interest in collective well-being, efficiency at work, adherence to regulations and institutional rules were rated as high by more than 44% of respondents.
- Independence obtained lower values (32.22% in high and 5.02% in very high), but it continues to reflect a culture of autonomy and ethical empowerment.

2. Work Commitment:

- Staff show a strong emotional commitment to the organization (40.59% high and 8.37% very high).
- There is a high alignment with the objectives and values of the municipality (55.65% high).
- Moral commitment was also positively evaluated, reflecting a strong adherence to work ethic.

3. Relationship between Ethical Climate and Work Commitment:

- A significant correlation was found between these variables (Rho-Spearman < 0.05).
- Employees who perceive a positive ethical climate tend to be more committed to the municipality, reflecting a greater motivation and sense of belonging.
- An adequate ethical climate favors the retention of talent and the improvement of work performance.

4. Comparison with Previous Studies:

- At the international and national levels, previous studies have shown the same relationship between ethics and work commitment.
- Research in Ecuador, Spain and Peru agrees that ethics influences performance, satisfaction and the perception of the organizational climate.
- At the local level, studies in Tacna reinforce these findings, highlighting the importance of ethics in municipal management.

Ethics is not only an organizational principle, but a key factor in employee motivation and performance. Promoting a positive ethical climate strengthens work commitment and contributes to organizational success in the public sector.

4) CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the relationship between the ethical climate and work commitment in the Incentive Program Area of the Provincial Municipality of Tacna during the year 2022. Through the application of the Rho-Spearman correlation test, it was determined that there is a significant, although low-intensity, relationship between these variables.

The results indicate that, although the ethical climate influences work commitment, its impact is not particularly strong. However, the statistical significance of the findings suggests that factors such as work interest, respect for laws and professional codes, remuneration and work independence have a relevant role in the perception of commitment by staff. In particular, work independence showed the highest correlation within the factors evaluated, which highlights the importance of granting greater autonomy to employees to strengthen their organizational commitment.

In practical terms, these findings underscore the need to develop organizational strategies that foster a strong ethical environment and policies that promote staff autonomy and recognition. Although the general correlation between ethical climate and work commitment is low, its statistical significance suggests that improvements in

the ethical environment and working conditions can contribute to strengthening the bond between employees and the institution.

This study lays the groundwork for future research that delves into other factors that can impact work engagement more strongly and allow for the design of more effective strategies for organizational development.

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