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Original Article

Organizational climate practices in absorptive capacity: an analysis from the textile industry

Práticas do clima organizacional na capacidade absortiva: uma análise a partir da indústria têxtil

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This article aims to analyze the influence of the organizational climate on the absorptive capacity.
Design/Methodology/approach: The survey is characterized as descriptive and quantitative. The employed method is a survey, applied through the virtual platform Google Forms. The sample consisted of 172 respondents from five manufacturing units of a textile industry, being collected by accessibility and convenience. Multiple regression analysis was used to process and analyze the data.
Findings: The research shows that hypotheses H_{1a}, H_{1c} and H_{1d} are confirmed, a favorable organizational climate influences the absorptive capacity through proper management of internal relationships, effective leadership, and renowned organizational image. On the other hand, the H_{1b} hypothesis was rejected, organizational climate did not show interference in the absorptive capacity through professional development in the confirmatory test.
Originality/relevance: The significance and contribution of this study lie in addressing an observed gap in the analysis and evaluation of absorptive capacity. Specifically, it explores how organizational climate management practices interrelate with this concept, thereby shedding light on related themes.
Practical implications: The study allows managers of organizations to understand which organizational climate management practices should be prioritized in the absorptive capacity, thus contributing to the creation of an environment conducive to the transfer of knowledge, that is, combining prior knowledge with the new knowledge.

Keywords: Organizational climate practices; Absorptive capacity; Textile industry; Knowledge; Organizational environment

RESUMO

Finalidade: O presente artigo tem como objetivo analisar a influência do clima organizacional na capacidade absortiva.

Desenho / metodologia / abordagem: A pesquisa caracteriza-se como descritiva e quantitativa. O método empregado é o survey, aplicada por intermédio da plataforma virtual *google forms*. A amostra foi composta por 172 respondentes de cinco unidades fabris de uma indústria têxtil, sendo coletada por acessibilidade e conveniência. Utilizou-se a análise de regressão múltipla para o tratamento e análise dos dados.

Constatações: A pesquisa evidenciou que o que as hipóteses H_{1a}, H_{1c} e H_{1d} confirmaram que um clima organizacional favorável influencia a capacidade absortiva por intermédio da gestão propícia dos relacionamentos internos, da efetiva liderança e da renomada imagem organizacional. Em contrapartida, a hipótese H_{1b} foi rejeitada, devido ao clima organizacional não ter demonstrado no teste confirmatório interferência na capacidade absortiva através do desenvolvimento pessoal.

Originalidade/relevância: A relevância e contribuição deste estudo no aspecto científico estão relacionadas ao preenchimento de uma lacuna observada na análise e avaliação da capacidade de absorção, por meio das práticas de gestão do clima organizacional, inter-relacionando-se com os temas.

Implicações práticas: O estudo permite aos gestores de organizações compreenderem quais práticas de gestão do clima organizacional devem ser priorizadas na capacidade absortiva, contribuindo assim com a criação de ambiente propício para a transferência de conhecimento, ou seja, combinação do conhecimento prévio com o conhecimento novo.

Palavras-chave: Práticas do clima organizacional; Capacidade absortiva; Indústria têxtil; Conhecimento; Ambiente organizacional

1 INTRODUCTION

Fundamentally, organizations rely on individuals for the formulation and execution of their strategies and actions, recognizing that organizational performance is intricately tied to its intellectual foundation. In order to better understand the opinions and positions that characterize a representation of organizational reality, it is necessary to accurately and continuously diagnose the organizational climate, thus portraying people's perceptions of a given moment (Berberoglu, 2018; Mussak, 2010).

Organizations must consider the organizational climate as an alternative to conceptualize the way in which people and organizations experience knowledge and constitute their work environments. Organizational climate offers overlapping perspectives to better understand integrative knowledge in any organizational environment (Di Stefano & Micheli, Ahead of Print; Schneider, 1985).

The conceptual frameworks formed by the constituent elements of the organization assist individuals in interpreting the knowledge they acquire regarding

the organization's operations (process climate), the organization's strategic orientation (strategic climate), and the values they associate with the organizational context (culture). These frameworks aid in developing a deeper understanding of the knowledge encompassed within this context (Parker et al., 2003; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Kazan and Scorsolini-Comin (2010) mention that organizations must be attentive to identifying and capturing knowledge, due to market changes, the incorporation of new technologies and the desire for self-development. Holste and Fields (2010) understand knowledge as a fundamental strategic resource to obtain competitive advantage, as it acts as an intelligence generator and activity optimizer in the organizational context.

The accumulation of knowledge by the organization is only recognized as a competitive differential from the moment that it is transformed into results and, at this juncture, actions related to the organization's Absorptive Capacity [ACAP] can be observed (Stewart, 1998). For Zahra and George (2002), absorptive capacity is characterized by a set of practices and processes through which organizations acquire, assimilate, transform, and apply knowledge. According to Willerding, Krause and Lapolli (2016), the acquired knowledge only generates results for organizations when the organizational climate is harmonious and favorable to the sharing of knowledge. This expresses that ACAP can be stimulated by focusing on the relationships between people, groups and organizations, when wrapped in a conducive organizational environment (Contreras, Aldeanueva, Espinosa, & Abid, 2021; Minbaeva, Pedersen, Björkman, Fei, & Park, 2014).The establishment of a conducive organizational climate is characterized by the support of senior management, transparent communication, encouragement to develop new ideas, and quickly response to new opportunities to integrate knowledge (Flores & Silva, 2018; Lin & Lee, 2006). For Ekvall (1996) the organizational climate plays the role of an intervening variable that influences organizational processes and results, enabling the creation of competitive advantages, and valuable and inimitable resources (Cassol, Gonçalo, Santos, & Ruas, 2016). Regarding practical implications,

the research by Contreras et al. (2021) demonstrated that organizations need to ensure an organizational climate that provides them with an efficient environment in order to manage and encourage the acquisition, management and transformation of knowledge and, therefore, be more innovative and competitive. Briel, Schneider and Lowry (2019) express in their research that an internal environment with a pleasant and lasting organizational climate to work in is directly related to absorptive capacity. The results obtained in the study by Mehmood, Mushtaq and Hanaysha (Ahead of Print) state that good practices for a favorable organizational climate positively influence ACAP, substantially improving knowledge acquisition in the organization.

Given the above, the idea that organizations need to develop a favorable organizational climate has become relevant, where external capacities for absorbing and exploring knowledge, and the sharing of internal knowledge through spontaneous communication are encouraged (Denicolai, Ramirez, & Tidd, 2016; Flor, Cooper, & Oltra, 2018). In other words, an organizational climate that promotes ACAP. In this regard, Moutinho (2016) emphasizes the importance of broadening research across diverse organizations to explore more effective approaches in enhancing absorptive capacity processes. Dumani Rodríguez, Campoverde Aguirre and Silva Ordóñez (2015) highlight the existence of few studies on organizational climate in relation to absorption capacity. According to Baškarada and Koronios (2018), and Contreras et al. (2021), it is necessary to expand research that explores the development of good management practices to encourage open relationships in the work environment and the use of high connectivity between company and the external environment, in order to promote ACAP. In the presence of an unfavorable organizational climate the transfer of internal knowledge can be mistakenly redirected in organizations, which makes it necessary to expand the number of research about the socialization regime of employees (Di Stefano & Michelle, Ahead of Print). For Zahra and George (2002) the organizational climate gains relevance in ACAP studies, as an internal environment

with social integration is necessary for sharing and exploring the acquired knowledge. In view of the above, this article aims to analyze the influence of organizational climate on absorptive capacity. Thus, the research is justified due to the need to understand how the set of people's perceptions and feelings, related to activities and organization, influence the assimilation and management of knowledge (Destler, 2017; Huang, Lin, Wu, & Yu, 2015; Yu, Yu, & Yu, 2013).

It should be noted that Brazil is the 5th largest textile industry in the world, and the 4th in the clothing segment, whose average production, in tons, is around 1.91 million textiles and 7.93 billion pieces of clothing. It has 1.36 million direct employees and more than 8 million when adding indirect workers, of which 60% are female. In addition, it has around 25,200 formal companies focused on the segment, with a turnover of the textile and apparel chain in the order of R$ 161 billion (Associação Brasileira de Indústria Têxtil e de Confecção [ABIT], 2023).

The results of the present research show that the favorable organizational climate influences the ACAP, except for the variable organizational development. Thus, it is worth considering that the beneficial organizational climate contributes to the organization's ability to incorporate new knowledge and adapt to existing ones, assimilate new useful technologies or those with proven potential, take reasonable risks in solving problems, and discover new one's ways to work to become more effective.

This research establishes criteria for analyzing the perception of managers regarding organizational climate and absorptive capacity in general. It addresses research gaps identified in the literature (Dumani Rodríguez et al., 2015; Moutinho, 2016) and contributes to advancing the theoretical context by filling the knowledge gap concerning the variables of organizational climate that enable the development of absorptive capacity (ACAP). Moreover, in practice, it demonstrates that companies must ensure an organizational climate that facilitates efficient knowledge management, acquisition, and transformation to enhance ACAP.

2 THEORETICAL REFERENCE

2.1 Organizational Climate

The behavior of people in organizations is the result of their personal characteristics and the environment in which they operate. People's attitudes are affected by a wide range of organizational characteristics and social relationships, which set the organizational climate in work environments (Parker et al., 2003).

Considered as one of the most relevant attributes for detecting regulatory and guiding elements of human behavior within organizations, the organizational climate is defined by Silva (2003) as an important record of people's perception, reflecting the hegemonic thinking constituted in organizational relationships, on different aspects of the organizational environment (Menezes & Gomes, 2010; Siqueira, 2009). For to Tachizawa, Ferreira and Fortuna (2006) the organizational climate consists of the set of values and beliefs that guide the relationships between people participating in the organization, managed by a set of policies and practices, resulting from knowledge and organizational processes (Queiroz, Siqueira, Figueiredo, & Novaes, 2005).

According to Ostroff, Kinick and Tamkins (2003) and Schneider, Ehrhart and Macey (2013), the organizational climate can be defined as the shared perceptions and the meaning attributed to the policies, practices and procedures that people experience, and the behaviors observed, expected, supported and rewarded by the organization.

The organizational climate is intricately connected to how individuals perceive the organization in relation to their own knowledge, considering both external and internal environmental factors. It also influences how they absorb and interpret information, ultimately shaping their reactions, whether positively or negatively, to these interpretations (Araújo et al., 2010).

According to Castillo and Cazarin (2019), effectively creating, making use of and managing knowledge, whether external or internal, is a "means to improve

performance and add value to the activities developed" (Castillo & Cazarin, 2019, p. 2). In a favorable and stimulating environment, employees are more motivated to create and exchange knowledge, openly share their thoughts and ideas, think freely, understand the particularities of markets and customers, develop better products and services, as well as individual skills essential to the organization (Jokanović, Zivlak, Okanović, Ćulibrk, & Duđak, 2020; Lefika & Mearns, 2015).

From a strategic perspective, Ologbo and Chukwuekezie (2013) highlight the need for the organization to establish an organizational climate that facilitates organizational learning and the creation of knowledge, provide paths and processes that increase people's skills, and ensure the development of technological platforms to obtain knowledge information and the sharing and dissemination of knowledge intra and interorganizational.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) indicate that beliefs, commitments, contexts and interactions between people, groups and organizational teams influence the organizational climate, and the conversion of these bonds, associations and relationships translate information into knowledge, recreating a favorable climate for judgments, behaviors and attitudes in acquiring and assimilating new knowledge (Nazarpoori, 2017).

2.2 Absorptive Capacity [ACAP]

Organizations with the need to stay in the market seek to modernize and increase the ability to "[...] create knowledge, disseminate it in the organization and incorporate it into products, services and systems" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1997, p. 12). Cohen and Levinthal (1990) point out that knowledge management practices, considered as sources of development of ACAP, act as a stabilizing force to absorb knowledge from external sources, transferring new knowledge between the people involved in the respective processes.

According to Grant (1996), the existence of a common language between the transmitter and the receiver facilitates the absorption of knowledge by the organization. An organization's ACAP can be directly related to the receiving entity's ability to absorb knowledge, based on a sharing process.

ACAP, according to Cohen and Levinthal (1990, p. 128) is "the ability to recognize the value of new external information, assimilate it and apply it for commercial purposes". The authors also point out that the organization, when recognizing the value of external knowledge, can incorporate and outline them, improving its internal processes.

In an analogous way, Cassol et al. (2016) and Curado, Oliveira, Maçada and Nodari (2017) portray ACAP as the organization's ability to qualify the value of new knowledge, as well as assimilate this information to be used in the organization, with the purpose of obtaining competitive advantage. Balogun and Jenkins (2003) mention that the ACAP will be maximized when there is already a previous knowledge, favoring the absorption of new knowledge about a certain specialty. Wang and Ahmed (2007) relate ACAP to the organization's ability to recognize the value of new external information, assimilate and apply it.

According to Jiménez-Barrionuevo, García-Morales and Molina (2011) and Picoli (2014) ACAP is divided into: Potential Absorptive Capacity - component of acquisition and assimilation of new knowledge, however it is at a "sleeping" level, until there is an actual use for that knowledge; and Realized Absorptive Capacity - component of transformation and exploitation of previously acquired knowledge, providing a competitive advantage to be developed in the short or medium term.

Cassol (2014, p. 44) understands that ACAP "emphasizes the relevance of obtaining external knowledge, combining it with internal knowledge and absorbing it for internal use in the organization", in order to transform and modify it into a new knowledge. This process, as far as it is concerned, is intended to make use of the new knowledge, and in view of this, bring monetary and/or social return to the organization (Nazarpoori, 2017; Moré, Gonçalo, Vargas, Bucior, & Cembranel, 2014).

2.3 Organizational Climate and Absorptive Capacity

The organizational climate is closely intertwined with how individuals perceive the organization in relation to their own knowledge, considering external and internal environmental factors. Moreover, it significantly influences their absorption and interpretation of information, consequently molding their reactions, whether they are positive or negative, to these interpretations (Araújo et al., 2010).

According to Zahra and George (2002), favorable organizational environments foster intra-organizational social integration and strong bonds among employees, facilitating the sharing of meanings. These shared meanings shape the organizational climate. Baškarada and Koronios (2018) further suggest that promoting open communication within the workplace and establishing robust connections with the external environment also contribute to a conducive organizational climate, thereby promoting absorptive capacity (ACAP)

ACAP should be considered a key factor for the successful transfer and dissemination of knowledge within organizations, as well as for the direct influence of individuals, groups, and teams, observed within a favorable organizational climate (Máynez-Guaderrama, Cavazos-Arroyo, & Nuño-De La Parra, 2012).

To foster the creation, sharing, adaptation, and implementation of knowledge, the organizational climate needs to undergo transformation and become an integral part of the organizational processes (Dumani Rodríguez et al., 2015).

After conducting extensive bibliographic research across various platforms, including Emerald, Web of Science, Scopus, SPELL, SciELO, ScienceDirect, and the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations [BDTD], the main approaches of each study that comprise the corpus of this research were identified and synthesized. A total of 461 articles, published between January 2005 and October 2022, were initially selected. Among them, 22 articles were chosen for a more detailed analysis, while 2 articles were deemed eligible for information extraction

and further analysis (Table 1), as they displayed relevance to the research topic. Throughout the literature review and supplementary studies, no research specifically exploring the recursive relationship between organizational climate and absorptive capacity was found.

Table 1– Literature review

Author	Year	Journal	Title
Contreras *et al.*	2021	SAGE Open (https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211052549)	*Potential and Realized Absorptive Capacity in Colombian Firms: The Mediating Role of the Organizational Climate for Innovation.*
Dumani Rodríguez *et al.*	2015	Suma de Negocios (https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sumneg.2015.10.001)	*Clima organizacional, migración tecnológica y apagón analógico en la televisión ecuatoriana*

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Studies carried out by Dumani Rodríguez et al. (2015) show that the organizational climate should be aligned with the rapid acquisition of new knowledge, supported by the sharing of knowledge that was previously acquired. Contreras et al. (2021) reveal in their research that the organizational climate for innovation plays a mediating role in potential and realized absorptive capacity. The authors also mention that the potential absorptive capacity influences the organizational climate for innovation, which, in turn, affects the realized absorptive capacity. From the theoretical reference, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Table 2 – Research hypothesis

H_1: **Favorable organizational climate influences absorptive capacity**.
H_{1a}: Organizational climate favorable - Internal relationship variable - influences ACAP;
H_{1b}: Organizational climate favorable - Personal development variable - influences ACAP;
H_{1c}: Organizational climate favorable - Leadership variable - influences ACAP;
H_{1d}: Organizational climate favorable - Corporate image variable - influences ACAP.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This research falls under the category of descriptive research in terms of its objective. It employs a survey approach and utilizes quantitative analysis as the primary tool to examine the practices of organizational climate management and its interrelationship with absorptive capacity (Fonseca, 2002; Lindfelt, Ip, Gomez, & Barnett, 2018).

The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions and encompassed a set of 08 variables aimed at identifying the impact of organizational climate on absorptive capacity. The Organizational Climate dimension was assessed through variables such as internal relationships, personal development, leadership, and corporate image. Meanwhile, the Absorptive Capacity dimension was evaluated using variables including acquisition, assimilation, transformation, and application (see Table 3).

Table 3 – Description of dimensions

Continue...

	Variable	Description
Organizational Climate	Internal relationship	It is the bond created between two or more individuals, based on their interactions (knowledge, experience and trust) and on the social context in which they operate (Fundação Instituto de Administração [FIA], 2022).
	Personal development	It promotes and expands the acquisition of skills, rules, concepts or attitudes that result in better synergy between the characteristics of people and the demands of the organizational roles played (Freitas, 2014; Boudreau & Milkovich, 1999).
	Leadership	The will to control events, the knowledge to devise a strategy and the power to get a task accomplished, through the cooperative use of consequences and the knowledge of other people (Krause, 1999, p. 15).
	Corporate image	It is the synthesis of the organization's identity manifested from its behavior, its culture and its corporate personality, which project a functional, internal (self-image) and intentional image respectively and build in the minds of its publics this gestalt that is what I call of corporate image (Villafañe, 2004, p. 46).

Table 3 – Description of dimensions

Conclusion

	Variable	Description
Absorptive Capacity	Acquisition	The organization's capabilities to recognize the value of new external knowledge, acquire it, and add it to the company's knowledge base.
	Assimilation	Routines and processes that allow the organization to analyze, process and interpret external knowledge, given the existing knowledge.
	Transformation	Organization's capabilities in developing and refining the routines that favor the combination of old knowledge and new knowledge, which has already been acquired and assimilated.
	Application	Capacity that organization has to incorporate acquired knowledge, assimilated and transformed in its processes, competences and organizational structures to create and to improve new products and services.

Source: ACAP - adapted from Zahra and George (2002, pp. 189-190)

Each question in the questionnaire was formulated based on the works of D'Otaviano (2009) and Godoy (2009) to assess the organizational climate. Additionally, for measuring the absorptive capacity, the questionnaire drew from the research conducted by Camisón and Forés (2010), who developed instruments specifically for this purpose. Both questionnaires have undergone testing and validation. Appendix 1 presents each statement categorized by dimension and their respective variables, along with corresponding mean, median, and standard deviation values.

In order to evaluate the content of the collection instrument, the Q-sort research method was used. The first version of the data collection instrument was submitted to content validation through the analysis of ten experts (researchers, managers and consultants), with experience in their respective areas, indicating the items that should be reexamined and, in case of writing inadequate or ambiguous, be discarded (Moore & Benbasat, 1991). The content evaluation process encompassed three phases: characterization of the evaluator, evaluation of items according to the definitions and concepts presented, and suggestions for improvement.

After the necessary adjustments, a cross-sectional survey was carried out to obtain the data, using a structured questionnaire made available for completion via the web, through the specialized data collection site google forms. The Likert scale was adopted for the questionnaire, which expresses a favorable or unfavorable attitude in relation to a given subject, measuring the degree of agreement and disagreement regarding a certain statement. Each question in the aforementioned questionnaire contains 5 response options, ranging from (1) "I totally disagree" to (5) "I totally agree" for the statements that made up the questions of the organizational climate dimension; and ranging between (1) "It is much worse than our competitors", (3) "It is equal to our competitors" and (5) "It is much better than our competitors" for the statements that composed the questions of the absorptive capacity dimension.

To establish the sample size, the recommendations made by Ringle, Silva and Bido (2014) regarding the use of the G*Power software, version 3.1.9.2, were taken as a basis. According to the authors, this software concerns a free power analysis program for a variety of statistical tests commonly used in social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009; Memon et al., 2020). Ringle et al. (2014) recommend that, initially, one should evaluate the construct or VL that receives the highest number of arrows or has the highest number of predictors, observing two parameters: the power of the test (Power = 1 – β prob error) and the effect size (f^2). The authors suggest to define a more consistent model to use at least double the value obtained in the calculation. Cohen (1988) and Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt (2016) indicate as a parameter of test power a value of 0.80 and a median f^2 of 0.15. They add that a model must receive at least two arrows, as an adequate parameter. Following the criteria previously established, the software's calculation indicated a total sample size of 85, which, adjusted to the recommended (double) level, becomes 170 hospital organizations. Considering the questionnaires received for this research, 187 questionnaires were collected and 172 validated,

with complete data, without filling errors, low variance, or incompleteness, which is the final size of the research sample. The number of responses was considered representative for application of Exploratory Factor Analysis [AFE] techniques (Hair, Gabriel, & Patel, 2014). Data were tabulated in an Excel® spreadsheet, imported and processed using the statistical software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS®] version 22.

In order to test differences between organizational climate and absorptive capacity, through the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (U test), a comparison was made between the average values, characterized by the criterion of the researched factory. The nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test is used to test differences between two groups on a single variable (Campbell & Skillings, 1985; Siegel & Castellan, 1988).

Finally, to evaluate the influence of the organizational climate on the absorptive capacity, multiple linear regression was used. This technique of multivariate analysis is used to explain or predict the occurrence of a certain event in terms of a set of predictor dimensions (Fávero & Belfiore, 2017).

4 RESULTS ANALYSIS

To characterize the sample, we investigated demographic aspects. Table 4 shows the predominance of male respondents (67.3%). Regarding the distribution by function, it is evident that 75.6% (coordinator and operational leader) occupy middle management positions. Most survey participants have higher education (54.1%), while the number of respondents with a graduate degree represents 37.2% of the sample.

The characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 – Distribution of respondents according to gender, education and function

Gender	Male			Female	
	109	67.3		53	32.7
Education	Frequency	Percent	**Function**	Frequency	Percent
Postgraduate	54	37.2	Director	7	4.1
Higher education	93	54.1	Manager	16	9.3
Technical school	11	6.4	Coordinator	36	20.9
High school	4	2.3	Operational Leader	94	54.7
-	-	-	Area Specialist	19	11.0
Total	**172**	**100.0**	**Total**	**172**	**100.0**

Source: Elaborated by the authors

In order to better understand the distribution of the respondents, a descriptive analysis of the sample was carried out. It is important to highlight that the descriptive analysis of the sample was stratified by factory based on the results obtained. Table 5 shows the average values of each component per manufacturing unit. As we can see, the highest value obtained among the organizational climate practices is leadership, with an average value of 3.45, while the lowest average score of 2.99 belongs to personal development. In relation to absorptive capacity, it appears that the value of all variables was above 3.5 (Table 5).

After completing the descriptive analysis of the sample, it was necessary to examine whether there was variability among the variables by assessing the Assigned Mean Values [AVM] for the dimensions of organizational climate and absorptive capacity across different respondent roles. The data were tested for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test, which indicated a lack of normal distribution for both the organizational climate and absorptive capacity dimensions (p-value of 0.000). According to Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt (2011), the assumption of normality is not always valid when data are measured on ordinal or nominal scales. In such cases, it is recommended to employ non-parametric tests.

Table 5 – Descriptive analysis

	Variable	Factory Unit 1		Factory Unit 2		Factory Unit 3		Factory Unit 4		Factory Unit 5		All	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Organizational Climate	Internal relationship	3.00	0.883	3.13	0.961	2.85	0.911	3.16	0.849	3.18	0.726	3.06	0.868
	Personal development	2.87	0.876	3.12	0.810	2.97	0.859	3.01	0.666	2.99	0.697	2.99	0.783
	Leadership	3.38	0.951	3.53	0.884	3.43	0.900	3.43	0.694	3.50	0.706	3.45	0.828
	Corporate image	3.36	0.992	3.53	0.855	3.42	0.876	3.35	0.748	3.44	0.770	3.42	0.846
	Total	3.16	0.865	3.34	0.800	3.19	0.794	3.24	0.659	3.29	0.648	3.24	0.752
Absorptive Capacity	Acquisition	3.48	1.026	3.81	0.844	3.54	0.954	3.72	0.697	3.55	0.960	3.62	0.904
	Assimilation	3.45	1.026	3.59	0.909	3.43	0.867	3.62	0.869	3.56	0.887	3.53	0.905
	Transformation	3.37	0.998	3.61	0.797	3.50	0.793	3.56	0.684	3.42	0.754	3.51	0.808
	Application	3.61	1.012	3.73	0.765	3.59	0.900	3.74	0.805	3.59	1.003	3.65	0.896
	Total	3.47	0.972	3.68	0.796	3.51	0.805	3.65	0.713	3.52	0.825	3.56	0.822
Number of respondents		42		29		36		40		25		172	

Source: Elaborated by the authors

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Consequently, the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney non-parametric test was employed for comparing two independent samples. This test was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in the mean values assigned to organizational

climate practices and absorptive capacity. In the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (U test), p-values below 0.05 indicate significant differences between the groups. As shown in Table 6, the pairwise analysis reveals similarities and/or equality between the average assigned values for both the organizational climate and absorptive capacity dimensions. This suggests a uniformity of the established concepts between these practices across all researched factories.

Table 6 – Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test: manufacturing unit surveyed

Continue...

Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney (U test) Organizational Climate		**Dimension**	
		Absorptive Capacity	**Absorptive Capacity**
Factory Unit 1 and Factory Unit 2	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.545	0.591
	U test	466.500	471.500
Factory Unit 1 and Factory Unit 3	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.927	0.759
	U test	570.000	552.500
Factory Unit 1 and Factory Unit 4	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.914	0.643
	U test	503.500	477.000
Factory Unit 1 and Factory Unit 5	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.979	0.859
	U test	526.000	514.500
Factory Unit 2 and Factory Unit 3	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.480	0.411
	U test	487.500	478.500
Factory Unit 2 and Factory Unit 4	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.486	0.882
	U test	431.000	470.000
Factory Unit 2 and Factory Unit 5	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.573	0.527
	U test	455.000	450.000

Table 6 – Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test: manufacturing unit surveyed

Continue...

Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney (U test) Organizational Climate		Dimension	
		Absorptive Capacity	**Absorptive Capacity**
Factory Unit 3 and Factory Unit 4	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.974	0.594
	U test	540.000	501.000
Factory Unit 3 and Factory Unit 5	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.702	0.895
	U test	529.500	549.500
Factory Unit 4 and Factory Unit 5	Result	≅ AV	≅ AV
	p-value	0.731	0.710
	U test	471.000	469.000

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Notes.Captions: ≠ (Difference); ≅ (Similarity and or equality); AV (Average value)

The reliability of the dimensions was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha test and Composite Reliability, as shown in Table 7. According to Hair, Tatham, Anderson and Black (2009), these measures assess reliability on a scale from 0 to 1, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable. The results (Table 7) surpassed the recommended threshold, as both Cronbach's Alpha [AC] and Composite Reliability [CC] exceeded 0.700.

Table 7– Reliability analysis

Dimension/Variable	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability	Number of items
Organizational Climate	**0.971**	**0,980**	**26**
Internal relationship	0.937	0,936	6
Personal development	0.918	0,915	7
Leadership	0.921	0,918	7
Corporate image	0.923	0,925	6
Absorptive Capacity	**0.843**	**0,978**	**18**
Acquisition	0.903	0,906	4
Assimilation	0.942	0,943	5
Transformation	0.895	0,897	5
Application	0.917	0,919	4

Source: Elaborated by the authors

The suitability of the sample for Factor Analysis was assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, which measures the degree of partial correlation on a scale from 0 to 1. A KMO value close to 1 indicates high adequacy for utilizing the Factor Analysis technique, whereas values closer to 0 suggest weak correlation between the dimensions. It is important to note that a minimum KMO of 0.6 is recommended for proper application of the Factor Analysis technique (Fávero & Belfiore, 2017; Hair et al., 2009). In this study, the KMO test yielded a reasonably high value of 0.893, indicating strong explanatory power, as shown in Table 8. Additionally, the Barlett's sphericity test resulted in a significant p-value of 0.000, indicating a correlation between the dimensions (Table 8). Significance in p-values is typically represented by values below 0.05 (Fávero & Belfiore, 2017; Hair et al., 2009). Factor loadings from the factorial analysis of the statements exceeded 0.50, ranging from reasonable to excellent for all variables (Hair et al., 2009). Collectively, the 8 composite variables accounted for 81.7% of the total variance.

Table 8 – KMO and Bartlett's tests in dimensions 1 to 8

KMO e Bartlett's test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.		.893
Bartlett's sphericity test	Approx. Chi-square	1715.015
	Df.	28
	Sig.	.000

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Correlations between Organizational Climate [OC] and Absorptive Capacity [ACAP] were computed and presented in Table 9 through a matrix with Pearson's correlation coefficients. In this analysis the values can vary from (-1 to 1). A value of (-1) suggests a perfect negative correlation, a value (0) indicates no correlation, and (1) indicates a perfect positive correlation (Hair et al., 2009). Based on Cohen (1992) and Franzblau (1958), it can be seen that 53.6% (15 correlations) of the correlations between the variables were

classified as very strong (If | ρ | > 0.80, the correlation is very strong) and 46, 4% (13 correlations) are strong (If 0.60 < | ρ | < 0.80, the correlation is strong).

Table 9 – Correlation between variables

	Acquisition	Assimilation	Transformation	Application	Internal relationship	Personal development	Leadership	Corporate image
Acquisition	1							
Assimilation	.782**	1						
Transformation	.836**	.884**	1					
Application	.882**	.803**	.851**	1				
Internal relationship	.695**	.865**	.792**	.658**	1			
Personal development	.717**	.791**	.832**	.702**	.870**	1		
Leadership	.812**	.758**	.787**	.839**	.640**	.718**	1	
Corporate image	.821**	.814**	.811**	.820**	.716**	.740**	.878**	1

Source: Elaborated by the authors
Notes. **. Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 ends).

The multicollinearity of variables was assessed using the Tolerance statistic and the Variance Inflation Factor [VIF]. The VIF is calculated by estimating each independent variable as if it were a dependent one, regressing it in relation to the others and obtaining the value ($1 - R^2$) of that regression. If VIF < 1, there is no multicollinearity; 1 ≤ VIF ≤ 10, multicollinearity is acceptable; VIF > 10, multicollinearity is problematic (Hair et al., 2009). It appears that the variables meet the requirements established by the literature, being established between 1 ≤ VIF ≤ 10.

To examine the presence or absence of relationships between the surveyed dimensions, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. Each dimension was analyzed separately, treating absorptive capacity as the dependent variable and the variables comprising the organizational climate dimension (Internal relationship,

Personal development, Leadership, and Corporate image) as independent variables.

Regression analysis involving a single explanatory variable is referred to as simple regression, whereas analysis involving two or more explanatory variables is known as multiple regression. Multiple linear regression is a commonly employed data analysis technique for studying the relationship between a dependent (quantitative) variable and two or more independent (quantitative) variables. Its objective is to predict changes in the dependent variable based on variations in the independent variables (Hair et al., 2009).

The hypotheses regarding the relationships between dimensions and their corresponding results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 – Multiple regression analysis

Hypotheses	β	p-value	Situation
H1: Favorable organizational climate influences absorptive capacity.			
H1a: Organizational climate favorable - Internal relationship variable - influences ACAP;	0,310	0,000	Hypothesis not rejected
H1b: Organizational climate favorable - Personal development variable - influences ACAP;	0,097	0,152	Hypothesis rejected
H1c: Organizational climate favorable - Leadership variable - influences ACAP;	0,326	0,000	Hypothesis not rejected
H1d: Organizational climate favorable - Corporate image variable - influences ACAP.	0,291	0,000	Hypothesis not rejected

Source: Elaborated by the authors
Notes. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.856$; $p < 0.05$

It is observed that all variables presented a positive relationship. According to Hair et al. (2016), β values range from -1.0 to +1.0, given that values close to +1.0 indicate a very strong positive relationship between two variables and values close to -1.0 indicate a negative or low relationship. Close to zero indicate weak relationships. In Table 10, the relationship between the variables and the values of β, that is, the relationship between the absorptive capacity and the variables “Internal Relationship”

(β = 0.310), “Leadership” (β = 0.326) and “Corporate image” (β = 0.291) showed most representative values. Such findings seem to indicate that absorptive capacity is favorably influenced by a favorable organizational climate. Table 10 shows that all the values that tested the causal relationship between the variables are within the parameters proposed by Hair et al. (2016), which confirms the hypotheses proposed in this research, except for H_{1b}.

5 DISCUSSION

Based on scientific literature, when examining the relationship between organizational climate and absorptive capacity, it becomes apparent that effective management of the organizational climate is essential for developing absorptive capacity. Failures in one area can lead to failures in the other. Therefore, organizations that foster favorable organizational climate practices enhance their absorptive capacity and create environments conducive to knowledge assimilation. Supporting this notion, Zhang, Zhao and Wang (2014) demonstrated that organizations with a positive organizational climate facilitate the sharing of both internal and external knowledge. Caporarello and Zaccarelli (2009) noted that individual efforts to acquire external knowledge contribute to improved interactions and enhanced activities. Similarly, the findings from Lowik, Kraaijenbrink, and Groen (2016) suggested that a lack of a favorable organizational climate can act as a barrier, discouraging individuals from analyzing, processing, and understanding externally acquired knowledge (Zahra & George, 2002).

The results of this study indicated that interactions between individuals are closely related to the establishment of a favorable social context, thereby supporting hypothesis H_{1a}. However, it is important to note that for these interactions’ benefits, such as knowledge exchange, experience sharing, and trust-building, to be sustainable in the long term, organizations must adopt these practices as early as possible (FIA, 2022).

Despite the rejection of the H_{1b} hypothesis, the significance of promoting personal development and expanding the acquisition of skills, rules, concepts, or

attitudes should not be overlooked. Creating a favorable environment influences personal experiences (personal development) through the acquisition of external knowledge, enabling organizations to have a qualified workforce capable of meeting present and future role demands, developing new skills, and achieving better synergy between individuals and organizational roles (Freitas, 2014; Boudreau & Milkovich, 1999). According to Mennens, Gils, Odekerken-Schröder and Letterie (2018), synergy between individuals' characteristics and organizational role demands facilitates potential absorptive capacity, enabling the identification and transfer of externally generated knowledge through the sharing of experiences and knowledge between individuals and organizations (Rossetto, Carvalho, Behling, & Lenzi, 2021).

The positive outcome of hypothesis H_{1c} supports the notion that effective leadership practices contribute to enhanced absorptive capacity. Leaders who strengthen trust bonds and promote actions that foster commitment and connection with the organization, such as adopting high-performance practices, encouraging idea generation, fostering good relationships, and establishing assertive communication, play a significant role in facilitating the cooperative use of knowledge (Krause, 1999) and are more effective in acquiring, transforming, and exploiting external knowledge.

Based on the positive result obtained for hypothesis H_{1d}, it can be concluded that disseminating a corporate image that conveys credibility and engenders trust among various stakeholders contributes to leveraging an organization's ability to utilize internal and external influences for the development of new experiences, technologies, and knowledge. A favorable organizational climate considerably accelerates the internalization and seamless integration of new technologies and knowledge, according to Dumani Rodríguez et al. (2015). Studies conducted by Balestrin, Vargas, and Fayard (2008), Contreras et al. (2021), and Lin and Lee (2006) emphasize the need for a positive organizational climate that encourages knowledge transformation through the sharing of new ideas, experiences, and a favorable perception of the organization's image in the market (Vesal, Siahtiri, & O'Cass, 2021).

According to Butler and Ferlie (2020), the organizational climate should incorporate mechanisms that foster peaceful social relationships and facilitate effective communication among all organizational elements. This helps bridge the gap between potential absorptive capacity and actual achievements. Strategies include making organizations more innovation-friendly and receptive to new ideas (Araújo, Modolo, Carneiro, & Vils, 2017; Lee, Chen, Tsui, & Yu, 2014), establishing dedicated research and development departments focused on implementing and evaluating new knowledge integration within the organization (Dumani Rodríguez et al., 2015), and encouraging the development and utilization of new products, methods, or concepts that foster interaction and knowledge sharing (both internal and external) among individuals (Contreras et al., 2021; Ebers & Maurer, 2014; Hotho, Becker-Ritterspach, & Saka-Helmhout, 2012; Magni, Paolino, Cappetta, & Proserpio, 2013).

6 CONCLUSIONS

The organizational climate encompasses various interconnected perspectives that contribute to a deeper understanding of integrative experiences and the sharing of experiential knowledge within organizational contexts. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the organizational climate on absorptive capacity. The results of the H_{1b} hypothesis test indicated that the organizational climate (specifically, Personal development) did not exert a significant influence on absorptive capacity. However, the confirmatory tests for hypotheses H_{1a}, H_{1c}, and H_{1d} revealed that the organizational climate dimensions of Internal relationship, Leadership, and Organizational image had a positive and favorable impact on absorptive capacity. These findings suggest that a favorable organizational climate can facilitate the acquisition, assimilation, and transformation of knowledge. Moreover, a conducive organizational climate enhances trust, communication, and knowledge transformation among individuals (Chen & Huang, 2007).

The recognition of perceptions pertaining to the organizational climate is crucial in establishing a conducive environment for knowledge absorption, idea generation, and innovation. The results obtained highlight several key perceptions concerning the organizational climate, including inter and intra-organizational relationships, investment in employees' formal education, competency management, the implementation of continuous improvement in operational processes, and a positive perception of the organization's image.

This research indicates that a favorable organizational climate plays a significant role in enhancing an organization's capacity to assimilate new knowledge, adapt to changes, incorporate innovative technologies, take calculated risks, and discover more effective ways of working. It is important to highlight that the manufacturing units involved in the study exhibited a consistent understanding of the concepts related to organizational climate and absorptive capacity, as evidenced by the results obtained from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test.

Based on the data from this research, it is evident that the variable of personal development, which received the lowest average score among the surveyed variables, appears to be misaligned with the strategies and the perception expressed in the managers' discourse. This misalignment may have contributed to the rejection of hypothesis H1b. Although the results confirmed that the organizational climate, specifically in terms of professional development, does not directly influence knowledge application in the manufacturing units, we believe that organizations should actively promote the establishment of robust personal development plans and succession planning. These measures are crucial for ensuring the acquisition, transfer, and retention of knowledge within organizations (Arham, 2021; Rahman, Moonesar, Hossain, & Islam, 2018; Trentin, 2021).

Pragmatically, this research provides valuable insights for organizational managers, enabling them to recognize and prioritize effective organizational climate management practices that foster an environment conducive to knowledge transfer

and the integration of prior and new knowledge. By addressing the existing gap in the literature on organizational climate and absorptive capacity, this study contributes to promoting cooperation, facilitating discoveries, and facilitating the transformation of knowledge among individuals within organizations. Ultimately, it emphasizes the importance of cultivating a favorable organizational climate that nurtures and supports knowledge exchange and creation.

The study acknowledges certain limitations, such as the restricted number of manufacturing units within the same segment, which could potentially affect the results due to the influence of existing corporate culture. In light of this, it is recommended that future studies replicate the research, as the findings cannot be generalized. Expanding the study to other areas with different characteristics would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding and further theoretical and empirical development on the subject.

The results of this research hold valuable implications for researchers, professionals, and organizations alike. It offers insights for professionals seeking to grasp the significance of the organizational climate, particularly in terms of recognizing and integrating new knowledge within a conducive environment. By shedding light on the influence of the organizational climate, this study provides a foundation for enhancing understanding and facilitating the effective management of knowledge in various organizational settings.

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3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work)	√
4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review	√
5. Definition of methodological procedures	√
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