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Nexus between organisational climate, job satisfaction, employee performance and training and development

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Abstract

Empirical findings on the nexus between training, job satisfaction and organisational climate are reported. With one major enervating effect of the legacy of apartheid of an extreme illiteracy level among the majority of the SA population prompting this study. Engender a culture of human capital development across various SA economic sectors to enhance organisational behaviours and performance. The study was longitudinal and experimental in nature (pre and post quasi experimental research design) alongside Organisational Climate Questionnaire (LSOCQ), which randomly collected data from employees in five companies in two provinces in South Africa. For the data analysis, the study used multi-variate techniques, including correlation and regression modelling, and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Findings reveal a significant relationship between job satisfaction, organisational climate and training transfer. Specifically, workers with extra training were highly motivated than those with little or no training. Findings further show an apparent relationship among the variables namely, job satisfaction, organisational climate and T&D, particularly as it relates to skilled workers. findings revealed that entrenched human capital development (T&D) culture predicts favourable organisational behaviours and optimal performance outcomes. Intentional elevation of own organisational climate, management must ruminate promotion of constant feedback and engender transparency, affording workers opportunities to engage without fear of reprisal.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Lower-level employees, Organisational behaviours, Organisational climate, Training.

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1. Introduction

Myriads of businesses across the globe pursue competitive advantage and prosperity through various means. Success does not come cheap, and it is essential that businesses are conscious and deliberate of sourcing and using their recruited talent in the most optimal and efficient way possible [1]. Organisational success is directly and indirectly linked to employee performance. Given this reality, it is incumbent upon organisational leaders to be cognisant of how crucial training and development are to employee performance [2, 3]. To comprehend the personality of a specific business necessitates looking beyond official systems, standards and rules, and observing unspoken values and beliefs, people's daily behaviours, habits, attitudes and shared assumptions in the workplace [4, 5]. The contributing factors of an organisational success go beyond the competencies of management alone, nor the discernible features (strategies or structures) of the business. Rather, the business has a concealed quality, a *modus operandi*, which might even be weightier on many business results than its leadership or system [5, 6]. In as far as the business processes are concerned, climate assumes the role of a mediating factor, impacting the outcome of the functioning of the business. Climate possess this intervening power due to its effects on business processes [7].

Additionally, Kangis and Williams [8] suggest that there are many different kinds of evidence (anecdotal and empirical) that demonstrate what makes an organisation successful. Rankhumise [9] for instance, identified the following factors as contributing to the success of an organisation: market and finance access, managerial skills, access to information technology, personnel qualities, education and training [9]. Other significant factors noted in literature include mergers and acquisitions, leadership, quality, re-engineering and general strategy [10-14]. Conversely, a handful have tried to investigate the conjectured relationship involving climate and (employee) performance. Climate is the lens through which people experience and interpret the atmosphere in the workplace and how it impacts or shapes attitudes and behaviours [15]. Equally, it is not what the job situation is, but what the employee's impression of that milieu (an employee level variable) is.

Satisfaction is personal and because of this, it is unlikely for people to downplay how they genuinely feel as compared to how they depict the system of climate or the general atmosphere in the workplace. The climate construct was originally established to assist unpack meaningful traits of people's psychological milieus. Following the well-known equation of Lewin, et al. [16] B = f (P, E), where "B", which is behaviour, is a function of personal characteristics (P) and the environment (E), there is, therefore, a need to describe how many different environments influence people. It was worth noting that the concept of climate helped in serving this purpose. Organisational climate is not based on individual employees' personal views of the organisation. For climate to hold meaning at the organisational level, there must be a shared understanding of the organisation's characteristics.

It is only through this collective agreement that a true organisational climate can be said to exist. In essence, climate reflects how employees commonly perceive the organisation, rather than how each person thinks it should be [17].

2. Literature Review

2.1. Organisational Climate and Performance

In a highly influential work by Litwin and Stringer [18] they describe organisational climate as work environmental qualities that people clearly or subtly sense and consider as shaping their behaviours and how they feel at work, including motivation. In the same way, West, et al. [19] note that organisational climate has to do with the shared view of employees about the fundamental elements of their organisation. This assertion is the same for Gifford and Wietrak [17] who view organisational climate as the shared opinions and feelings that employees have about their organisation. In short, organisational climate is a major determinant of actions, motivations, behaviours and performance, including the business as a whole. When the climate is positive, motivations, a sense of belonging and better performance are often inevitable compared to a negative climate that often creates disengagement and undermines the goals of the organisation [20].

Bradley, et al. [21] note that the general impressions that people form about their work environment or climate serve as a guide or framework for ensuring consistency between their behaviours and the expectations, including the practices and procedures of the organisation. In several studies Popa [22]; Psico-smart [23] and Wilkens and London [24] the general

observation is that highly-involved and highly supported employees perform better, indicating that climate and performance have a reciprocal effect, where an improvement in one causes an improvement in the other.

2.2. Organisational Climate and Job Satisfaction

A positive business climate advances job satisfaction and motivation, which is vital for retaining your valuable best talent. If workers feel appreciated, treasured, supported, and engaged, loyalty to the organisation is almost guaranteed [25]. The majority of the businesses put high premium on the significance of possessing energised workers in realising organisational goals and strategies. Motivated workers are more industrious on job performance and assist business survival [26]. Through adopting a culture of meaningful employee inclusivity and engagement, Zappos saw a notable 30% increase in worker satisfaction scores, which directly correlated with a 20% rise in customer satisfaction [23]. Due to the existential relationship between organisational climate and employee motivation, cultivating an emerging milieu in industrial firms hinges on leaders' ability to stimulate an empathetic business climate [27, 28].

If organisations overlook or do not pay attention to their work environment or climate, as well as how their employees feel about it, they (employees) become less interested or involved in work, derailing their performance in the process.. The organisational climate comprises the manner employees in a business view and describe their situation in an attitudinal and value-based manner Pagon and Banutai [29]. Veliu, et al. [26] opined that there is a notable positive link between work climate and high and good employee commitment and engagement. Schaufeli [30] and Albrecht, et al. [31] maintain that workers operating in businesses with appropriate business climate are bound to be happy and engaged.

2.3. Training Transfer and Its Process Outcomes

The underlying intention of training and development normally includes plans drawn to transfer skills, attitudes and competencies among individuals or teams and its managers [32]. Individual capacitation and skills development help the business and workers in acquiring rare skills to carry out specific tasks, accomplishing several goals such as employee engagement, improving morale and competencies, as well as promoting a sense of security [3]. Training and development culture must be embraced and integrated across the organisation to proactively drive and remain competitive. An efficacious training can assist the business save costs [33] because trained employees are adept of devising creative means of utilising business resources, and this is extremely significant in aiding the process of reducing and avoiding wastage [1]. Other than that, meaningful workforce training can assist to reduce overall employee turnover within the business [34].

Training is a strategic intrusion that, when implemented and utilised correctly, interchanges other HR enhancement intercessions [35]. During the advent of change for example, nature and type of work changes, the workforce must be ready to adapt and or acquire a wide-ranging and variable competencies that are necessary to organisational prosperity Bah, et al. [36]. Al-Khaled [1] observes that many businesses acknowledge that skill level and quality determine the success of employees. . In view of this, training and development are vital for such businesses [37].

2.4. Organisational Climate and Training and Development

Training and development enhance business outputs through employee capacity enhancement [38]. The data from the study by Gil, et al. [39] showed a positive and statistically significant correlation between a supportive business climate and T&D process outcomes. Rouiller and Goldstein [40] indicated that manager trainees in departments with positive work (climate) environment performed better in terms of applying the skills they learnt and acquired during training. As was anticipated, it was also discovered that manager trainees who erudite more in training functioned better on the job.

In the context of this study, the results showed that participants who acquired training more than twice had higher scores than those who trained once. It was also previously reported that the typical business climate has also been discovered to impact knowledge and skills by boosting engagement in activities such as training [41]. The fundamental hypothesis in this study is summed up as follows, that *training improves the perception of employees about organisational climate*; a reflection that both factors have a reciprocal effect on each other.

2.5. Job Satisfaction and Training and Development

It is generally accepted that T&D are very significant drivers with a telling effect on both immediate to long-term gains for the workforce and the business in general. Documentary evidence persists to reveal that appropriately crafted training programs can help improve workforce motivation and morale [27, 42]. Evidently, workforce afforded such a training opportunity are more confident and motivated [1]. In Table 2, the findings showed that participants, upon acquiring skills development training more than twice, exhibited a remarkably higher score than those who received one-time training. In the same way, Modise [43] notes that getting employees involved and empowering them positively impacts their motivation and performance even if they do not directly affect the general change process. This result strongly implies that massive dividends can be drawn from an intentional hunt for further opportunities for employee empowerment.

2.6. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The seminal work by Vroom [44] Expectancy Theory (ET) is considered appropriate in this study to assess workforce motivation and performance. The rationale being that this work motivation measurement primarily hypothesises under a 'valence-instrumentality-expectancy framework'. Oftentimes, there are certain expectations of what the role will be for someone who starts a new job [45]. The researcher builds on existing theory, suggesting that when employees undergo and receive skills development training (positive valence), their motivation increases, causing them to work harder (effort). However, this is only if they believe that their performance leads to rewards (expectancy). In view of this, the link between

effort and performance (E-P) is the focus. Employees become highly motivated when they see that their efforts, through training, lead to better outcomes or results. Also, when this happens, they (employees) begin to view the work climate more positively. Thus, this means that the two effects (effort and performance) reinforce each other.

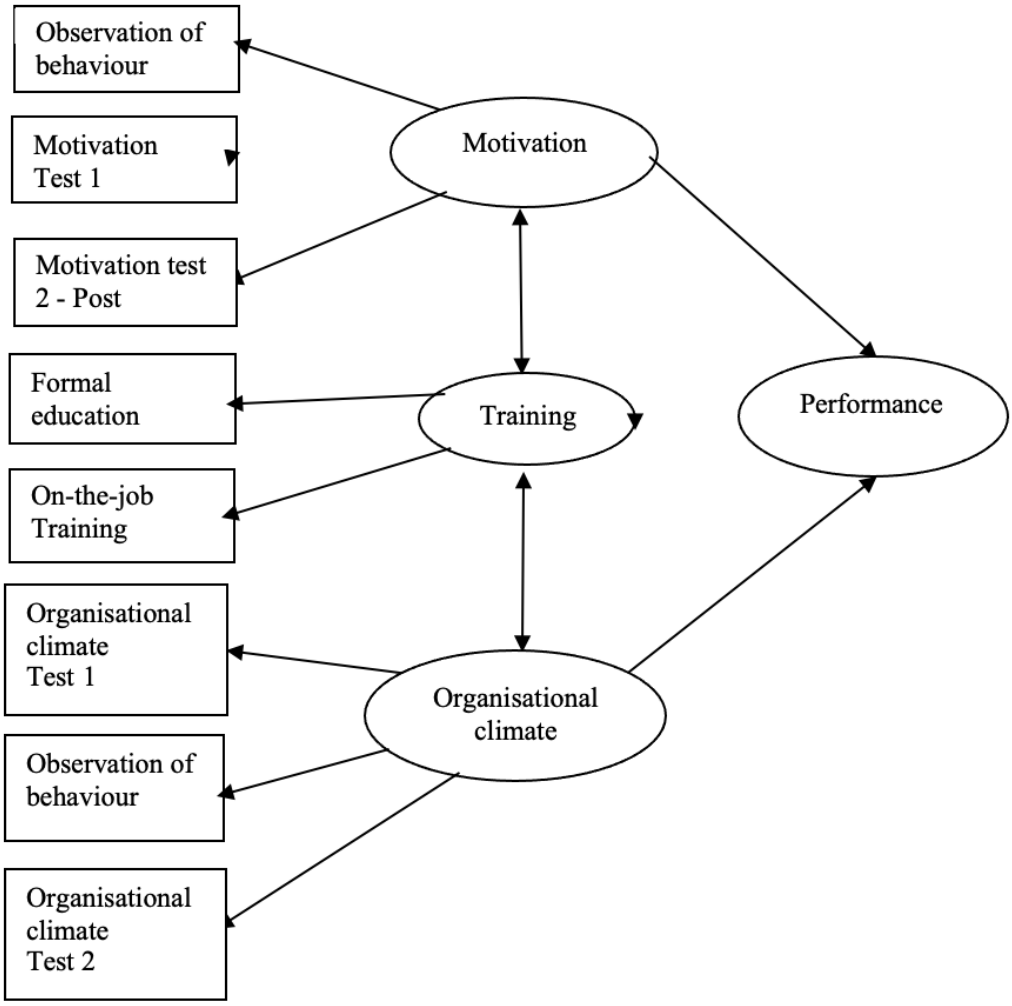

Figure 1.
Path Diagram for Employee Performance.
Source: Cooper and Schindler [46].

A path diagram of employee performance is depicted in Figure 1. Training, motivation, organisational climate and performance are the four key focus areas of the study, shown in circles, with Test 1 embodying before training and test 2 signifying after training. Measurable variables are in the rectangles in the diagram. It is worth noting that the arrows epitomise influence. The arrows in the diagram go from motivation to actual measurements like the test results and this is because motivation causes the test results and not the other way around. The figure also reveals an interrelationship between motivation, organisational climate and training.

Motivation and organisational climate both contribute to the effectiveness of training, and in turn, training influences these two factors. Each of these elements likely plays a role in shaping individual employee performance. A more detailed version of the model would also account for error variances affecting all measured variables and the outcome variable.

2.7. Ethical Considerations

Strict compliance with ethical issues such as consent of participants, the confidentiality and anonymity of their information and a free choice to exit (i.e. voluntary participation) at any time were assured. All these guarantees were preceded by the permission letter sent to the management of all the participating companies to grant such permission to collect data before the measuring instrument was dispatched and administered.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. The Research Design

This study followed a positivist research approach using an exploratory and descriptive quantitative design. A quasi-experimental, one-group pre-test post-test design was applied to examine the research hypothesis [47, 48]. A stratified random sampling method was used. The design involved measuring the dependent variable—perceived organisational

climate—before introducing the independent variable, which was training. A second measurement of the dependent variable was taken after the training phase [49, 50]. The study was longitudinal in nature, spanning 18 to 24 months.

3.2. Population and Sampling Size

The study focused on lower-level workers from five business organisations operating in different economic sectors of South Africa's two provinces, namely Free State and Northern Cape provinces. This group included semi-skilled and skilled workers, as well as supervisory staff, classified under grades 'A', 'B1', and 'B' according to Patterson, et al. [51] Decision Band Job Grading Model. Unlike employees in higher management echelons, targeted cohort of workers typically engage in work processes that are their basic and routine in nature [52].

3.3. Data Collection

The seminal work by Litwin and Stringer [18] Organisational Climate Questionnaire (LSOCQ) consisted of nine measuring instruments employed to collect data (pre- and post) from 1000 participants from five different companies covering a timeframe in excess of 24 months. A questionnaire that is "explanatory surveys - a form of causal-comparative research" was used for the purpose of affording the researcher a chance to explore opinions and attitudes of the participants from the data collected at a point in time [50]. A self-completion questionnaire was distributed to randomly selected participants to achieve higher response rates, maintain control over the question sequence, collect data from individuals with limited literacy, and ensure confidentiality.

3.4. Data Presentation and Analysis

The collected data were analysed utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [53]. Cronbach's alpha and inter-item correlation coefficients were used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics summarised the data, while Pearson correlation was used to examine relationships between variables. To determine whether parametric or non-parametric tests were appropriate, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality was applied. Based on the results, either Independent T-Tests, Mann-Whitney U Tests, or both were used as appropriate.

3.5. Validity and Reliability of the Measuring Instrument

The measuring instrument utilised contained 18 scale items, aligned with factors originally proposed by Likert and Likert [54] and refined by Coldwell [55] were largely derived from Litwin and Stringer [18] Organisational Climate Questionnaire (LSOCQ). These items covered nine dimensions: structure, responsibility, reward, risk, warmth, support, standard, conflict, and identity. Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). According to Taylor and Bowers [56] the survey's items, subscales, and indices are grounded in well-established measures of validity and reliability. Supporting this, Hernandez, et al. [57] found internal consistency coefficients ranging from 0.70 for peer goal emphasis to 0.96 for group process.

Table 1.
Reliability analysis of 'Organisational Climate' measuring instrument (ORGCLIM).

Item-Total Statistics Table

Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
OC1	54.971	73.89	0.443	0.697
OC2	54.609	69.439	0.664	0.675
OC3	55.283	78.218	0.239	0.717
OC5	54.196	77.743	0.332	0.709
OC6	54.022	72.08	0.59	0.685
OC7	54.797	76.446	0.29	0.712
OC9	55.341	68.909	0.552	0.682
OC12	56.337	81.904	0.119	0.725
OC14	54.649	73.342	0.494	0.693
OC16	55.239	68.452	0.494	0.688
NOC4	55.634	78.429	0.172	0.725
NOC8	55.971	94.865	-0.514	0.776
NOC10	54.5	77.291	0.329	0.709
NOC11	56.801	81.702	0.155	0.722
NOC13	55.917	69.088	0.56	0.681
NOC15	53.833	82.525	0.104	0.725
NOC17	53.989	85.371	-0.093	0.744
NOC18	54.964	72.581	0.413	0.699

Reliability Coefficients
N of Cases = 276.0 N of Items = 18
Alpha = 0.7227

Evidence of the instrument's reliability is supported by previous findings. Hernandez, et al. [57] reported internal consistency coefficients ranging from 0.66 for motivational conditions to 0.93 for supervisory support and facilitation. Coldwell [55] recorded a value of 0.77 for an 18-item instrument. In this study, the pilot recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.722, which exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.6. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was also above 0.6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with a p-value below 0.05. Factor analysis using principal component extraction and varimax rotation was conducted to test for discriminant and convergent validity. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each employee response variable across both rounds of data collection.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Demographic Data

The majority (i.e. 60.6% for pre- and 64.4% for post-) of the participants were males, with females or women making up the difference. A situation very common between genders across sectors at this level of management hierarchy. That said, this reality is not necessarily startling, since the nature of work being done at this management level is typically physical and needs strength, which is usually linked with masculinity, something male employees are synonymous with.

African workers represented 82.4% (for before and after), followed by Whites (10%) and then Coloureds (7.2%), with an age range of 31 to 56; 66% were married. The majority (i.e. 77.4%) were employees performing routine jobs, although a tiny number (22.6%) did work that required some higher level of capability and competence. Table 2 represents an extraction of the descriptive results.

Table 2.
Summary of the comparison of descriptive findings.

Category **Pre and Post**	**Motivation & Job Satisfaction**	**Organisational Climate**
Overall	No significant difference (p = 0.477)	No significant difference (p = 0.323)
Company	Significant increase in Country Bird (p = 0.000)	Significant increase in Absa (p = 0.000)
	Significant increase in Absa (p = 0.012)	Significant decrease in SA Truck and Bodies (p = 0.000)
	Slight increase in Interstate, not significant (p = 0.052)	
Skill Level	Increase among skilled employees, not significant (p = 0.092)	Significant increase among skilled employees (p = 0.010)
	Decrease among semi-skilled employees, not significant (p = 0.170)	Significant decrease among semi-skilled employees (p = 0.020)
Gender	Significant increase among females (p = 0.001)	–
Race	No significant difference overall	Increase among Coloured participants, not significant (p = 0.096)
	–	Significant increase among White participants (p = 0.001)
Age	No significant difference	No significant difference
Home Language	Significant increase among South Sotho speakers (non-parametric) (p = 0.024)	Significant increase among Afrikaans speakers (non-parametric) (p = 0.001)
	–	Significant increase among Afrikaans speakers (parametric) (p = 0.000)
	–	Significant decrease among Xhosa speakers (non-parametric) (p = 0.047)
Marital Status	Increase among divorced participants, not significant (p = 0.073)	Increase among single participants, not significant (p = 0.055)
Qualification	Significant increase among those with post-Matric qualifications (p = 0.002)	Significant increase among same group (p = 0.000)
Tenure – Same Job	Significant increase for those with 6–10 years in same role (p = 0.028)	Significant increase for same group (p = 0.023)
Tenure – Same Company	No significant difference	No significant difference

Note: NP = Non-parametric test; P = Parametric test.

The results presented in Table 2 show a p-value of 0.477, which is above the 0.05 significance level. This means there is not enough evidence to conclude that the average motivation and job satisfaction scores differ significantly between the pre- and post-training groups. Therefore, the first hypothesis—stating that there is a significant difference in employee motivation and job satisfaction between the two groups—is not supported by the data.

Table 3.
Comparison of the (Mean and Standard Deviation) results.

Prepost		N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error Mean
Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Pre	589	100.41	24.603	1.014
	Post	526	101.48	25.349	1.105
Organisational Climate	Pre	587	53.4872	8.20770	0.33877
	Post	518	54.0039	9.17865	0.40329

Similarly, the results in Table 4 indicate a p-value of 0.323, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This means there is insufficient evidence at the 5% significance level to propose a meaningful difference in organisational climate scores between the before and after training cohorts. As such, this results does not support the second hypothesis, which proposed a significant change in perceptions of organisational climate across the two groups.

Reviewing the results in Table 2 for motivation, job satisfaction, and organisational climate reveals a consistent trend among skilled employees, who showed positive responses in both cases. The findings indicate a strong link between these variables and training, particularly among skilled workers. Al-Khaled [1] supports this observation, noting that organisational climate affects both job performance and employee satisfaction [41]. The demographic groups that showed notable improvements in motivation and satisfaction include skilled workers, women, speakers of South Sotho, those with post-Matric qualifications, and employees with 6 to 10 years in the same role. The next section examines the final empirical model for predicting individual performance.

4.2. An Empirical and Predictive Framework for Understanding Individual Performance

This section addresses the part two of the main research question i.e. whether the proposed correlations between the dependent and independent variables, as shown in Figure 1, are supported by the data [58]. By combining the models presented in the figures, the final empirical regression model can be derived. The discussion begins by examining the model where ‘training effectiveness’ is treated as the dependent variable, and organisational climate, motivation, job satisfaction, and self-performance are the independent variables.

Table 4.
Comparison of the (Independent T-Test) results.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		**t-test for Equality of Means**						
		F	**Sig.**	**T**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**95% Confidence Interval of Difference**	
									Lower	**Upper**
Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Equal variance assumed	0.269	0.604	-0.711	1113	0.477	-1.065	1.497	-4.003	1.873
	Equal variance not assumed			-0.710	1090.684	0.478	-1.065	1.500	-4.008	1.878
Organisational Climate	Equal variance assumed	3.389	0.066	-0.988	1103	0.323	-0.51664	0.52304	-1.54290	0.5096
	Equal variance not assumed			-0.981	1044.993	0.327	-0.51664	0.52669	-1.55013	0.5168

Table 5(a).
R-squared statistics for the model evaluating training effectiveness as the dependent variable, with motivation and job satisfaction, and organisational climate as predictor variables.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.434	0.188	0.186	63.927
2	0.446	0.199	0.196	63.553

Table 5(b).
ANOVA F-statistics for the model assessing training effectiveness as the outcome variable, using motivation and job satisfaction, and organisational climate as explanatory variables.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	479560.6	1	479560.600	117.349	0.000
1 Residual	2071923.0	507	4086.633		
1 Total	2551483.0	508			
2 Regression	507752.2	2	253876.110	62.856	0.000
2 Residual	2043731.0	506	4038.994		
2 Total	2551483.0	508			

Table 1.5(c)
Regression model results for Effectiveness of training as dependent variable and motivation and job satisfaction and organisational climate as independent variable.

Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	42.179	11.651		3.620	0.000
	Motivation and Job Satisfaction	1.207	0.111	0.434	10.833	0.000
2	(Constant)	9.662	16.901		0.572	0.568
	Motivation and Job Satisfaction	0.997	0.136	0.358	7.315	0.000
	Organizational Climate	0.997	0.377	0.129	2.642	0.008

It is important to note from Tables 5(a–c) that while both models are statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000 (Table 5c), the R Square values of 0.188 and 0.199 (Table 5b) are relatively low, indicating that only a small portion of the total variance is explained.

Table 6.
Correlation coefficients showing the relationships among all measured variables.

		Effectiveness of Training	Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Organisational Climate
Effectiveness of Training	Pearson Correlation	1	0.426	0.339
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0
	N	525	525	517
Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.426	1	0.58
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000
	N	525	526	518
Organisational Climate	Pearson Correlation	0.339	0.58	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	517	518	518

In conclusion, the correlation coefficients shown in the table are generally low, with the exception of those linking motivation and job satisfaction, organisational climate, and the effectiveness of training.

5. Summary and Recommendations

This study aimed to examine the link between training, organisational climate, and individual performance. A literature review laid the foundation for the empirical analysis. One key finding showed that employees who underwent training two or more times reported significantly higher scores than those trained only once. This outcome supports the study's third hypothesis. The study also confirmed that a positive organisational climate enhances participation in developmental activities like training. The core assumption was that training influences employees' perceptions of their organisational environment, and that these two elements affect each other in return. Regular skills development allows employees to associate training with organisational culture. This, in turn, improves their performance and leads to greater satisfaction with how they are treated by their employer.

Organisations should pay close attention to the significant improvements observed in 'employee motivation and job satisfaction' and 'organisational climate' among skilled workers and those with post-Matric qualifications. These improvements occurred even though these groups already had the highest baseline scores. This finding highlights the value of training and the need to invest in skill-building. As employees become more skilled, their job satisfaction and perceptions of the organisational climate appear to improve accordingly.

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