CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PREAMBLE

The research study reported here belongs to the field within organizational behaviour known as organization climate. The field of organizational climate has proved challenging to researchers for several reasons. First, it is a relatively new specialization. Secondly, even within the decade or so of the currency of the term climate, the field has attracted debates and controversies on every aspect of theory and methodology. Third, the ongoing debates have provoked even more research in more recent times, and the available range of assumptions, hypotheses, tools and techniques in the study of climate have raised as many questions as they have answered.

While a review of the available literature and a discussion of the premises and assumptions have been reserved for later chapters in the report, it should be in order to present a brief statement here of the framework within which the present study has been undertaken.

The phenomenon of organizational climate invokes several other concepts within the larger field of organizational studies and, indeed, appears to have intimate links with them in a comprehensive and systemic manner. It is inconceivable, for instance, for any definition of climate to be
divorced from such other established concepts as structure, process, value, attitude, motivation and satisfaction. The search for a more exact description of the inter-relationships among the variables conceived (and currently observable), providing a reasonable position for climate in such a 'model', may be said to be the primary objective of most studies in the field. However, it must immediately become clear that in such a comprehensive task, the researcher needs some minimal anchorage from which he can get a set of tentative bearings to proceed on his exploration. At the end, he may well re-order the maps; but the a priori assumptions are inevitable. In a study of organizational climate, the minimum assumptions at the start would be of the following order:

(a) That the variables under study may be classified as being in three broad categories:

1. features of the organizational environment.
2. typicalities in psychological states.
3. behavioural outcomes.

(b) That variables regarded as wholly or partly constituting climate would represent a perceptual frame for describing the organization and may therefore be regarded as part of the category termed psychological states.
(c) That an examination of the causal nature of relationships among the variables observed would constitute a legitimate study of climate.

(d) That it is possible to observe and qualify, directly or by inference, to greater or lesser degree of sophistication in measurement, the variables conceived under the three categories above.

Viewed in this light, the general objective of the present study may be regarded as a search for a greater conceptual clarity and a more reasonable definition for the term climate.

Since climate may be expected to have a strong perceptual basis, it should be particularly advisable for the researcher to be aware of major influences in climate perception from the larger cultural milieu. Under these conditions such other dimensions as values, needs, role-stereotypes, levels of aspiration and norms, all having their origins in the macro environment beyond the organization, might well influence the nature and content of climate perceptions within the organization. Although research in the field has been carried out in several societal settings, the yield in the literature has been largely methodological and not in the nature of theoretical insights from cross-cultural perspectives. We have today a fair amount of useful material on variables isolated for study, instruments, and tools and techniques for analysis,
but a far from commensurate volume of information on the probable origins of climate perceptions. Hence, should a research study wish to venture into a search for theory, it finds itself in a starting position in which the available information and material is not so little as to make the study entirely exploratory and, yet, not so much as to cast it within a truly hypothetico-deductive mould. The present study has therefore set-up for itself the intermediate objective of alternative explorations with an available methodology and to thereby generate some hypotheses regarding the nature of the phenomenon of climate.

The specific aims of the study, the methodology adopted and the analysis undertaken are thus consistent with the general objectives stated above, and are stated more explicitly in Chapter V dealing with the scope of the study.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

Figure 1 depicts diagrametically the sequence of events in the research study.

While the succeeding chapters report each of the phases of work in Figure 1 in greater detail, it would not be out of place to comment on some aspects of the background to the study.
Figure 1: Sequence of Events in the Study

Antecedents to the Study
- Past Research
- Job Enrichment Project
- Pilot Testing of Instruments
- Literature Survey

Preparatory
- Choice of Mills
- Study Design
- Plan of Analysis
- Instruments Ready

Main Study
- Mill Visits
- Primary Data Collection
- Secondary Data Compilation

Analysis
- Descriptive Statistics
- Inferential Statistics
- Supplementary Analyses
- Interpretation

Reporting
- Main Findings
- Supplementary Findings
- Discussion
- Suggestions
The present researcher has been on the scientific staff of the Human Resources Division of Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association (ATIRA) since 1970. In this period the nature of the continuing professional assignments provided -

(a) a close familiarity with the functioning of textile organization;

(b) a direct appreciation of the relevant concepts in organizational behaviour related to climate through other programmes of research, training and consultancy;

(c) a first hand acquaintance with a large number of instruments for a study of psychological and behavioural variables; and

(d) an involvement in action research assignments in which the variables supposedly comprising organizational climate were explored directly or indirectly.

These experiences led inevitably to certain unanswered questions in the field. Over time, the questions came to be formulated into the research proposal for the doctoral dissertation.
CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter II traces the growing significance of a study of organizational climate and behaviour, the historical perspective, and the search for the concept of climate. The various aspects and dimensions of climate commonly studied are described in Chapter II, providing the background to the study.

A review of research in organizational climate, summarising the major trends and issues, is presented in Chapter III, along with research pertinent to the study in India with particular reference to the supervisory and managerial population in the textile industry.

A brief history of the Indian textile industry, the characteristics of the Ahmedabad industry, and the typical characteristics of a textile organization are given in Chapter IV.

The scope of the present study, the statement of aims and objectives, and a detailed description of the variables and instruments employed in the study are presented in Chapter V.

Chapter VI is a description of the methodology and data collection procedures adopted in the study, including the detailed plan of analysis conceived as integral to the design of the study.

Chapter VII reports the findings of the study in detail, as per the plan of analysis adopted,
Chapter VIII discusses the findings, commenting on both the findings in the expected directions and those that leave questions unanswered. The findings are examined particularly for their contribution to theory by way of reinforcement of tentative hypotheses and refinements to the starting model. Shortcomings and gaps calling for further research are also identified.