CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Each organization has its own unique constellation of characteristics and properties. These unique set of characteristics that distinguish one organization from another is otherwise called the 'organizational climate'. This is the term used to describe the psychological structure of organizations. This structure may be the one of trust, progressiveness, fear, confidence, security, etc. All these aspects put together would probably reveal the internal functioning of that organization or sub-unit. Thus, if organizations are thought of having a personality, then the organizational climate is the measure of that personality.

It is necessary to understand the behaviour of people, the organization structure within which they interact and the organization's process of communication, decision-making, rewards and performance evaluation in order to manage and control organizational behaviour. The interaction of these phenomena - individuals and group behaviour, conflict, leadership
styles, organisational structures, communication and so forth results in the organisational climate. Hence, organizational climate and structure refer to a set of characteristics that describe an organization, which are relatively enduring over-time and influence the behaviour of people in the organization (Forehand and Gilmer, 1964).

There is evidence that one type of climate may be effective in one organizational setting but not in another. For e.g., in an advertising agency, the organizational climate is characterised by a high degree of task uncertainty, unstructured problems and rapidly changing environment. On the other hand, in a government agency, the opposite type of climate may exist where it faces low task uncertainty, structured problems and a static environment.

Cordial interpersonal relations in an organization are the result of congruence between the individual employee and the climate of the organization. This congruence further facilitates individual's performance and satisfaction.

The organizational climate will be negatively or positively influenced when behaviour, structure or process variables of the organization are changed. In other terms, the managers can influence and bring about a change in the organizational climate.
The behavioural components in the organizations include an important aspect of 'leadership'. The leadership power, politics, influences and styles will have significant impact on organizational behaviour of the followers. In an organizational setting these leaders and followers could be otherwise called 'superiors and subordinates'.

The major function of the superiors or managers is to see that the organization runs smoothly. In this process managers spend much of their time in communication. This involves persuading or convincing subordinates to perform or respond in desired ways. It certainly necessitates the use of power and influence on the part of the superiors. Although these are used interchangeably, influence is broader in scope.

Power is the ability to get an individual or group to do something. Power in an organization is a two-way phenomenon, flowing from the superior to the subordinates and back. If the subordinates perform well, the evaluation of their outputs and efforts can help the supervisor receive a high rating. It is very likely the negative subordinate behaviour will be the main contributor to a poor performance rating for the superior. So, power is a two-way flow between the superior and subordinate and it is inherent in the leadership position. The leader may constructively utilize his power for the benefits
of his followers, communicating the decisions taken at the management level to his subordinates. The most common forms of this downward communication are job instructions, official memos, policy statements, procedures, manuals and company publications. All these forms of communication try to shape and control the subordinates' behaviour in such a way that it will serve to reach the goals of the organization. These persistent patterns of behaviours used by the superiors to control their subordinates will determine their 'leadership style'. A number of theorists believe that the use of a particular leadership style will bring about high performance levels in areas such as production and satisfaction. These 'styles' or personal behaviour leadership approaches have been the most widely used in practice and have been widely published, researched and applied in organizational settings. Each of the approaches attempts to identify what leaders do when leading.

Some leaders may resort to either 'task-oriented' styles like 'authoritarian' or 'person-oriented' styles like 'nurturant - task' to influence their subordinates. The authoritarian leader expects and demands complete loyalty, unconditional submissiveness and full compliance from his subordinates. On the other hand, the participative leader places high value to maintain partnership in the group and treats group members as
equals, gives total freedom to his subordinates. The nurturant-task leader cares for his subordinates, shows affection, takes personal interest in their well-being, and above all, is committed to their growth. The nurturant-task leaders were close to the authoritarian leaders in being strict, in pushing their ideas through and in controlling other ideas and activities. The nurturant-task leaders were close to the participative one in encouraging the members, giving due share to their ideas, and yet maintaining control over them (Sinha, 1980, P.101).

The leader who believes in hierarchial disposition, maintains fair interpersonal relationships, follows standard rules and believes in clear-cut demarcation of responsibility and work is said to be having 'bureaucratic style' of leading his subordinates.

Whatever may be the leadership style of the superiors, their predominant responsibility lies in making people work towards the organizational goals. In this process they will be using different tactics to influence their subordinates to get the work done by them to attain the organizational goals.

In line with this assumption, Hersey, Blanchard and Natemeyer (1979) postulated that 'power bases are potentially available to any leader as a means of inducing compliance or influencing the behaviour of others. Some leaders have a great
deal of power while others have very little. Part of the variance in actual power is due to the organization, and part is due to individual differences among the leaders themselves. According to them effective leaders should not only vary their styles depending on the maturity level of their subordinates but they should also vary the use of power in order to be effective.

Ansari (1990) investigated the bases of power, leadership style and influence strategies. In his study, he hypothesised that the higher the leader is on participative behaviour, the more he or she will perceive the importance of expert and referent bases of power, whereas, the higher the leader is on autocratic behaviour, the more he or she will perceive those bases of power, such as, reward, coercion, and connection which induce compliance. Further the higher the leader is on participative behaviour, the more will be the use of non-controlling influence tactics (e.g., ingratiating, personalised help, etc.), whereas the higher the leader is on autocratic behaviour, the more will be the use of controlling tactics (e.g., assertiveness, sanctions, etc.). The general conclusion of his study is that there is a meaningful correspondence between bases of power, leadership styles and influence strategies. For example, if a participative manager has referent power, then he makes frequent use of such tactics as personalised
help, showing dependency and positive sanction. Likewise, a task-oriented manager with expert power very often employs influence strategies such as expertise and reasons. The bureaucratic manager often relies on such tactics as exchange and challenge, upward appeal, and coalition and manipulation. Similarly, an authoritarian manager with coercive power relies more often on negative sanctions and threat.

It is evident that not only the leadership styles but also the organizational climates set by the top leaders can and do influence the motivational orientations of managers in specific and organizationally important ways (Baumgartel, Dunn & Sullivan, 1976-77; and Litwin & Stringer, 1968).

It is further evident that new employees often learn about the behavioural norms by observing their superiors' behaviour and interactions with subordinates. During this observation process, individuals construct a reality about the organizational environment and adopt their behaviour accordingly (Cheng, 1983; Festinger, 1950). From these findings it could be assumed that the leadership styles and influence strategies used by the superiors will influence the perception of organizational climate. Depending on the leadership styles, the influence strategies adopted by the superiors vary. So also the subordinates' perception of organizational
climate. The subordinates' perception of their superiors' leadership behaviour and influence strategies will influence their perception of organizational climate.

How the subordinates perceive their superior's leadership styles, what influence strategies their leader adopts and in relation to it how they perceive their organizational climate will pave the way for superior - subordinate relations. Leader-member relation factor refers to the degree of confidence, trust and respect followers have in the leader. This situational variable reflects the acceptance of the leader. When the subordinates perceive the organizational climate and their superiors in a favourable light then they are sure to experience organizational commitment, work involvement and job involvement.

Job attitudes like job satisfaction, job involvement and work involvement are related aspects. Job satisfaction depends on the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes and how the job holders view those outcomes. Those outcomes may have different values for different people. For some people, responsible and challenging work may have positive value and it may boost their job satisfaction. For other people, such outcomes may have neutral or even negative value. Hence people from the same organizational setting differ in the job values they attach to job outcomes.
People differ in the extent - that work is a central life interest, actively participate in work, perceive it as central to self-esteem and perceive work as consistent with self-concept. The concept of job involvement is different from work involvement in the sense that it refers to the degree to which an individual's work role is important in itself and forms the basis of self definition. Further, it is generally viewed as a generalised cognitive state of psychological identification with work, insofar as work is perceived to have the potential to satisfy one's salient needs and expectations. The job and work involvement beliefs differ in two ways. Job involvement refers to a specific belief regarding the present job, whereas work involvement refers to a general belief. Since the objects of two beliefs belong to the same universe, a person who shows a high degree of work involvement is expected to show a high degree of job involvement also. Since job involvement operates at a descriptive level (it describes workers' job identifications as they are) and work involvement operates at a normative level (it describes workers' views of their relationship with work as it should be) the relationship between the two beliefs may not be strong. A person who considers work as very important in one's life may not necessarily find a specific job very interesting. People who are not interested and uninvolved in their job cannot be expected to realize the
same satisfaction as those who are interested and involved. This variable accounts for the fact that two workers could report different levels of satisfaction for the same performance levels.

Though these job variables operate at the individual level, they are being governed by factors outside the individual. The foundation for these job attitudes would be in the process of socialization itself. Parents, siblings, friends, teachers and significant others inculcate various attitudes regarding work in general and job in particular into the person even from his/her childhood. These attitudes will either be strengthened through reinforcements or weakened through punishments. Hence, the attitudes a person holds towards his work/job before he enters into an organization are purely moulded by the process of socialisation or the socio-cultural milieu. But there is no guarantee that these attitudes are enduring over time. Once the individual enters into actual work field, his career transforms into new dimensions in accordance with the organizational factors. So, eventhough he assimilates high values towards work and job through the process of socialisation, if the organizational factors are not in congruence with those attitudes, the person either will feel dissatisfied with his job or he may gradually change his attitudes in conformity with the organizational factors. It could be said
that depending upon the strength of the socialisation or socio-cultural impact, the person may either adhere to his personal attitudes towards work and job or change them in accordance with the organizational setting or climate. In the recent times an area of research which has drawn the attention of many researchers in the field of organization behaviour is superior-subordinate relation, and its impact on various job related attitudes of employees. Hence, it is imperative to study how certain aspects of organizational behaviour, leadership styles and influence strategies inherent in the superior-subordinate relations, influence the job attitudes and perception of organizational climate of the employees at the lower level of hierarchy.