

## Values and Organizational Climate in Professors of a Higher-Education Institution in Lima

### Valores y clima organizacional en docentes de un instituto de educación superior de Lima

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research is to evaluate the relationship between values and organizational climate in a higher-education institution of Lima. The design used is bivariate correlation and the sample consisted of 100 professors (44% male and 56% female), with ages ranging between 30 and 65. The instruments used were Schwartz's Portrait Values Questionnaire and Litwin & Stringer's Organizational Climate Questionnaire. The results indicate that there is statistical correlation between Power, Self-Direction, Universalism, Stimulation, and Tradition and all the dimensions of organizational climate. In terms of gender, the correlation matrix among male and female exhibit differences in the stimulation variable of the values variable. The implications of the results are discussed.

**Key Words:** organizational climate, values, higher-education professors, organizational culture, organizational behavior

**Resumen:** Este estudio tiene como objetivo estimar la relación entre valores y clima organizacional en docentes de una institución de educación superior de la ciudad de Lima. El diseño es correlacional y la muestra estuvo conformada por 100 docentes (44% hombres y 56% mujeres) entre 30 y 65 años. Los instrumentos que se utilizaron fueron: Portrait Values Questionnaire de Schwartz y Cuestionario de clima organizacional de Litwin y Stinger. Los resultados señalan que existe correlación entre Poder, Autodirección, Universalismo, Estimulación, Tradición y las dimensiones del clima organizacional; con referencia al sexo, las matrices de correlaciones de varones y mujeres presentan diferencias, en la escala Estimulación de la variable valores. Se discuten las implicancias de los resultados.

**Palabras clave:** clima organizacional, valores, docentes de educación superior, cultura organizacional, comportamiento organizacional

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## Introduction

Currently, educational institutions put an emphasis on training teachers on institutional values as part of the identification process with the organization. This shows the importance of training them in issues related to the strengthening of civic, democratic, and equitable culture, with the purpose of contributing to the prevention of conflicts and the building of peace within the institutions (Rodríguez, 2008).

It is also necessary that teachers receive a psycho-pedagogical preparation to lead the teaching and learning process and thus promote the development of values (Caro, 1999). In this regard, Grojean, Resick, Dickson, and Smith (2004) point out that leaders not only influence directly the behavior of members of an institution, but their actions also influence the perceptions of the organizational climate. In this way, the faculty's behavior can exert influence on the students and on the set-up of the organizational climate, which is based on values, and the leaders, in this case the teachers, are charged with communicating and demonstrating the importance of it (Dickson, Smith, Grojean, & Ehrhart, 2001; Grojean et al., 2004).

On the other hand, the way ethical issues are addressed in an organization is a consequence of personal values (Dickson et al., 2001). In addition, it is assumed that the perceptions on the organizational climate will be affected initially by the personal values of the institution's employees (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016). As shown, all the above is related to the construction of values that can somehow exert influence on students; however, at the same time it is related to the construction of an adequate organizational climate. Considering Wayne (2010), internal relations with collaborators are associated with their performance within the organization. What is being sought is that teachers adapt to the statutes of the institution, to their mission, vision, and institutional values. This is how the organizational climate reflects the values, attitudes, and beliefs of their members (Rada Gómez, 2004).

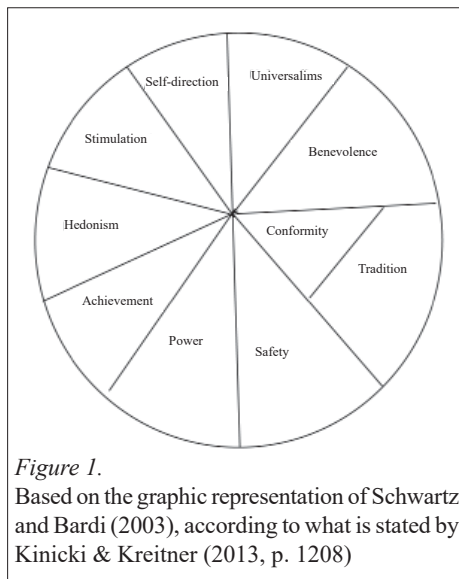
There are studies about values; however, this paper will be based on the fundamentals developed by Schwartz (1992) who postulates the existence of "ten motivational domains and their affinity or opposition relationships expressed in a circular structure, which would be the foundation upon

which to research personal value systems with other variables" (García, 2005 as cited in Robbins & Judge, 2009, p. 55). According to Schwartz, Melech, Lehman, Burgess, Harris, and Owens (2001), values are the basis for distinguishing between what is appropriate and what is not, which is associated to the organizational climate based on visions about what happens according to each worker's appreciation.

Schwartz (1994) identified a set of basic and universal values recognized in all societies and defined them as goals that transcend situations, vary in their degree of importance, and are the basis for personal and social life. At the same time, he stated that these values are immersed in a coherent system that can help explain the making of individual decisions, attitudes, and behavior.

Borg, Groenen, Jehn, and Schwartz (2011), pose that social sources have an impact on the individual differences regarding the priorities of value, culture, social institutions, and individual experiences, which provide opportunities to express values and particular constraints. Furthermore, these authors mention that these can stem from the efforts made by people to understand, describe, or justify their needs or traits conferring them socially-approved value labels. For example, love can be a reflection, in part, of a need transformed by sex, or the assessment of achievements may be a transformation of the socially-approved aggressiveness trait.

Studies conducted by Schwartz (1994) conclude that values are considered as the base; they are also associated to existential states and forms of conduct, something that goes beyond the objects, people, and situations, and can express our own as well as the others' interests. In 1992, this author proposed a ten-type value classification (see Figure 1): self-direction, universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, security, power, achievement, hedonism, and stimulation. All of them can be grouped into *two bipolar dimensions*: self-aggrandizing (power and achievement) vs. self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence), in addition to conservation (tradition, conformity and safety) vs. openness to change (self and stimulation). The hedonism typology is not included in any higher-order value. As seen in Figure 1, Schwartz suggests that values are found in opposite directions from the center of a conflict to each other.



A recent study with populations of Great Britain, United States, and Iran found values organized according to the Universal Value Theory (Borg, Bardi, & Schwartz, 2017), which emphasizes the topicality of this theory in the study of values.

Schwartz (1992, as cited in Schwartz, Melech, Lehman, Burgess, Harris, & Owens, 2001) held that values have a predictive power and can reflect a major social change (Caprara et al., 2017); additionally, he claims that there is a consensus about the most useful way to conceptualize the basic values, among which the following aspects are considered:

- Values as cognitive structures are linked to emotions.
- Values are desirable objectives to meet.
- When transcending actions and specific situations, they distinguish themselves from narrower concepts, such as norms and attitudes.
- They appear as standards that guide the selection or assessment.
- They constitute a system of value priorities to give importance to the values that guide the action.

Moreover, when studying the stability and change in values in early adulthood, a tendency of stability was found (Vecchione et al., 2016).

Concerning gender and values, Schwartz and Rubel (2005) conducted a study with 127 samples from 70 countries. Differences were found between cultures in seven of the 10 basic human values, in which men gave greater value and importance than women to stimulation, power, achievement, hedonism, and the values of self-

direction. Women, on the other hand, gave greater importance to values such as benevolence and universalism; less consistently, women attributed greater importance to security values, but there was no significant difference between both sexes for the tradition and conformity values (Daset, Lopez, & Suero, 1998). In the same vein, in a study conducted with students, significant differences were found between women and men because women gave more importance to benevolence, universalism, security, and conformity (Abella Garcia, Lezcano Barbero, & Casado Muñoz, 2017).

In regard to the organizational climate variable, currently there is no precise agreement to define it, but it is often considered as the part that stands out from the company's culture; also, the perceptions of employees are taken into consideration with regard to their environment and daily tasks that are part of the organization (Pintos & Rodriguez, N.D.).

Weyner et al. (2012) mention that organizational culture and climate focus on how employees see, interpret, and give a meaning to their environment by producing explanations to describe, sort, and analyze the facts inside the organization; it is worth noting that, historically, climate happens before culture. It is noticeable that climate and culture complement each other, therefore, their study is important because it allows to have a more accurate perception of the organizational behavior, with regard to their group and individual processes, their level of satisfaction, performance, effectiveness, and achievement indicators, among others (Litwin & Stringer, 1968, as cited in Vicuña 2006). However, the climate is an experience based on what people see, and unveil, and involves also the perspective of employees and what the organization carries out in terms of practices and policies (Schneider, 2000).

Climate focuses on the situations that take place and how they relate to the employees' perceptions, feelings, and behavior. This can be interpreted as something temporary and subjective, and there is room for manipulation by authority figures (Deninson, 1996). Hence, while climate is related to the experiences described or the perceptions of what is happening, culture helps to define why these things happen.

Litwin and Stringer's model (1968) argues that climate is a way of measuring the impact of the environment on partners who are motivated; therefore, in their quantitative study, motivation and

climate were related in order to assess the impact of the leadership style in terms of the motivation and general conduct of employees. As is well known, the human component is important; that is why a favorable organizational climate is conducive to employee satisfaction in terms of their work (García Velásquez, Hernández Gracia, Gonzáles Villegas, & Polo Jimenez, 2017). Segredo Pérez, García Milian, León Cabrera, and Perdomo Victoria (2017) state that the organizational climate, being a characteristic of the work environment, is permanent at a temporary level and, together with organizational culture and development, set up a dynamic system. In that way, the organizational climate reflects the quality of the environment from the workers' perspective and influences their behavior (Machado dos Santos et al., 2016).

Litwin and Stringer (1968) and Goncalvez (1998) indicate that the organizational climate is comprised of the following dimensions:

- Structure: the degree to which the organization emphasizes bureaucracy.

- Responsibility: autonomy in decision-making related to their work.

- Reward: perception of equity and justice in terms of the compensation received for the work well done.

- Challenge: feeling generated by own work.

- Relations: perceptions of partners about the existence of a pleasant work environment that conceives the idea of good social relationships among peers and between bosses and subordinates.

- Cooperation: feeling of help from the members, managers and other employees of the group.

- Standards: perception about the emphasis that the organization puts on the performance standards.

- Conflict: feeling from peers and superiors about accepting the dissenting views and not fearing to face and solve problems.

- Identity: sense of belonging to the organization.

Regarding the investigations, there was a study in Mexico that focused on the physical environment and technology as part of the organizational climate, finding differences in the perception of the same students and teachers (Alejandro Carmano, Chavez Chairez & Palomo Juarez, 2016). In relation to the studies carried out by two Latin American public universities, differences were found in the organizational climate of a Mexican and Colombian educational institution, but in the Colombian university, there

was a better perception of the climate (Mercado Salgado & Toro Álvarez, 2008).

The review of specialized literature did not deliver relevant results with respect to the correlation of both variables, thus exploring that possible relationship was considered appropriate. Therefore, we ask ourselves, what are the values that relate to the organizational climate in the faculty of a higher education institute in the city of Lima? This way, we could outline a frame of reference to understand which difficulties are associated with the deficit values and also to handle some aspects of the collaborators' uncertainty and dissatisfaction, and their subsequent resignation. This study seeks to provide some results that can contribute actions to work with values and an organizational climate in higher-education institutions.

## Method

### *Design and Participants*

This study has a descriptive and correlational design (Alarcón, 2008). The sampling was non-probabilistic and intentional in nature.

The sample consists of 100 professors, who represent one-fifth of the professional population, with the participation of 44 men and 56 women, aged 30 to 65 years, mostly part-time teachers.

The following criteria were considered within the sample: number of years at work (at least 1 year); and the age (between 30 and 65 years). Foreign nationality was taken into account as an exclusion criterion.

### *Instruments*

- Schwartz Portrait Value Questionnaire* (PVQ, Schwartz, 1994). It aims at measuring the individual differences in terms of value orientation. It has forty short statements, which collect the ideas, beliefs, and aspirations that implicitly allow analyzing the importance of the evaluated value (Eскурra, 2003).

The items were organized based on two bipolar dimensions: self-aggrandizing (power, items 2, 17, 39, and achievement, items 4, 13, 24, and 32) vs. self-transcendence (universalism, items 3, 8, 19, 23, 29, 40, and benevolence, items 12, 18, 27, 33); in addition to conservation (tradition, items 9, 20, 25, 38; conformity, items 7, 16, 28, 36, and security, items 5, 14, 21, 31, 35) vs. openness

to change (self-direction, items 1, 11, 22, 34, and stimulation, items 6, 15, 30).

Respondents must provide answers based on a scale with the following options: “*very much like me; like me; somewhat like me; a little like me; not like me; not like me at all.*”

In Peru, Escurra (2003) conducted a study with school children and found that the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient scored between .70 and .79. In the study of Grimaldo and Merino (2009), carried out with 254 university students, the alpha coefficients obtained scored between .53 and .78. For the purposes of this study, the latest version will be used.

- *Perception of organizational climate questionnaire* (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). Its objective is to assess the degree of staff satisfaction at work. It contains nine items, organized into the following dimensions of values: structure, responsibility, reward, challenge, relations, cooperation, standards, conflicts, and identity. In Peru, this questionnaire has been adapted by Vicuña (2006) through the method of construct analysis.

### Procedure

Instruments were administered by controlling the possible interference variables, such as the time and place. The instructions were included

in the forms and were explained orally. The administration of both scales took 40 minutes. The corresponding consents were signed.

The SPSS (v. 21) statistical package was used for data analysis. The data analysis took into consideration Schwartz’s (2009) proposition indicating that one should attempt to center the items so as to correct the scores of the Schwartz Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ); otherwise, it would lead to erroneous conclusions.

### Results

The reliability of this study was determined for each factor through the Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient: Factor 1 (conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism and security) .794; Factor 2 (self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power) .783. As a general criterion, George and Mallery (2003) suggest that these values are acceptable.

Table 1 presents the values of asymmetry and kurtosis in the -1.5 and 1.5 range. In terms of the hierarchy of values, benevolence and universalism are located at the top places and power on the bottom position.

Table 2 shows that the majority of the participants are located in a middle level in terms of

Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics of the Value Scales*

Value	M	95% CI	SD	Asymmetry	Kurtosis
Hedonism	0.24	[0.13, 0.34]	0.54	-0.41	0.20
Security	0.20	[0.12, 0.28]	0.43	-0.81	2.10
Power	-0.57	[- 0.76, - 0.38]	0.95	-0.42	-0.42
Achievement	-0.25	[- 0.38, - 0.12]	0.66	-0.76	0.87
Self-direction	0.23	[0.13, 0.33]	0.52	-0.27	0.40
Conformity	-0.25	[- 0.34, - 0.15]	0.46	-0.51	0.78
Universalism	0.31	[0.20, 0.42]	0.55	-0.02	-0.49
Stimulation	-0.47	[- 0.61, - 0.32]	0.73	-0.55	0.02
Tradition	-0.33	[- 0.51, - 0.15]	0.92	-0.41	-0.84
Benevolence	0.49	[0.40, 0.57]	0.43	-0.66	0.86

Note: CI = Confidence Interval

perception of the different organizational climate categories assessed and, as a priority, in structure, reward, and cooperation.

Table 2

*Frequencies and percentages of the categories of the organizational climate scales*

Categories	Low		Medium		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Structure	4	4	78	78	18	18
Responsibility	21	21	56	56	23	23
Reward	5	5	72	72	23	23
Challenge	10	10	59	59	31	31
Relationships	8	8	61	61	31	31
Cooperation	5	5	70	70	25	25
Standards	16	16	64	64	20	20
Conflicts	6	6	66	66	28	28
Identity	25	25	48	48	27	27

The inferential correlation analyses were performed with a signification level of .05 and .01. Before the correlation analysis, a distribution normality analysis of both scales was carried out in order to determine the relevance of the use of parametric or non-parametric statistics. Due to the size of the sample (greater than 50 participants), the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical model was used with the Lilliefors correction of signification.

It was found that all the organizational climate scales presented distributions that deviate from a normal distribution ( $p < .001$ ). Consequently, the null hypothesis that explains that the data came from a normal distribution was rejected. Thus, since it was one of the non-normal distribution variables to correlate, the Spearman's rho non-parametric statistical model was used for the inferential analysis.

It is noted that the value scales for: power, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, and tradition had a statistically significant correlation with all the organizational climate scales (Table 3), presenting the largest correlation degree between Tradition (values) and Challenge (organizational climate),  $r_s = .66$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $r_s^2 = .44$ , where the size of the effect is large (Cohen, 1988).

## Discussion

This exploratory study found that the professors ranked the values of benevolence and universalism in the first places. These results are related to those found in a group of lawyers (Grimaldo, 2010), in traffic police officers (Grimaldo, 2008), small-business employees (Castro, 2016), in municipal school teachers (Navarro-Saldaña, Perez-Villalobos, González-Cid, Mora-Mardones, & Jiménez-Espinoza, 2007), in school students (Escurra, 2003; García,

Table 3

*Correlations between the value scales and organizational climate (N = 100)*

Valor	Clima organizacional								
	Str	Resp	Rew	Chall	Rel	Coop	Sta	Con	Id
Hedonism	.06	.02	.04	.10	.07	.04	.04	.06	.07
Security	.03	-.06	-.07	-.02	.03	-.03	-.04	.01	.04
Power	-.43**	-.51**	-.41**	-.54**	-.45**	-.40**	-.44**	-.42**	-.50**
Achievement	-.11	-.08	-.06	-.11	-.17	-.10	-.10	-.10	-.18
Self-direction	.44**	.48**	.32**	.53**	.47**	.37**	.40**	.45**	.48**
Conformity	.15	.18	.15	.05	.21*	.26**	.16	.16	.23*
Universalism	.48**	.50**	.46**	.57**	.46**	.46**	.45**	.48**	.55**
Stimulation	.24*	.30**	.21*	.39**	.23*	.28**	.27**	.25*	.23*
Tradition	-.52**	-.60**	-.44**	-.66**	-.52**	-.54**	-.50**	-.53**	-.56**
Benevolence	.19	.24*	.08	.25*	.17	.07	.10	.12	.17

*Note.* Str = structure; Resp = responsibility; Rew = reward; Chall = challenge; Rel = relations; Coop = cooperation; Sta = standards; Con = Conflicts; Id = identity.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

Grimaldo, & Manzanares, 2016; Medrano, Cortés & Palacios, 2009) and college students (Martí Noguera, Martí-Vilar, & Almerich, 2014), who also ranked these values corresponding to the dimension of self-transcendence. It means that professors prioritize the help they give not only to the people closest to them, but also from a broader view of well-being for mankind; in general they seek the common good (Castro, 2016) and are oriented towards the preservation of people (Schwartz, 2001). The ranking of benevolence as a predominant value would be associated to the willingness to collaborate with students (Tyler, 2003) and with nature in general (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). A teacher who is oriented toward his or her students will facilitate learning, as well as social experiences that provide the basis for the development of a healthy personality and a good social functioning (Lambert, Abbott-Shim, & McCarty, 2002; Lambert, 2003). Additionally, Schwartz (2009) suggests that benevolence, among other values, is a value of growth that leads to further development at a personal level.

In line with the above, there are studies that posit that teachers who have a high level of altruism, as compared with the teachers with low levels of altruism, have more positive attitudes toward education (Ismen & Yildiz, 2005; Onair, 2008). In other words, the greater the benevolence in teachers, self-control, universalism, harmony, and security (Onair, 2008) will also increase. In the same way, it was found that the perception of the professional efficiency correlates positively with the value of benevolence (Bulent, 2009).

As for the implications of previous results, valuing benevolence and universalism make it possible to guide the conduct towards others. In that sense, it has been found that memorable teachers are not only characterized by their level of expertise, but because they see teaching as a challenge, they are passionate about teaching, and they consider it important to establish a connection with their students (Bain 2007). This connection is associated with the high score in benevolence and universalism, since it fulfils the attributes of a teacher that makes an impact.

In contrast, we find that the value ranked in the last place was power, which is associated with the valuation of the social status and prestige, the control or dominion over people, and the resources (Grimaldo, 2010). It would be consistent with the

study of Navarro, Perez, Gonzales, Mora, and Jimenez (2007) who, in a sample of basic education teachers, found that those who gave less importance to power were those teachers perceived by their students as highly facilitating. In contrast with the values selected in the first places, this is how participants perceive power as a value oriented towards personal satisfaction; which is associated with the philosophy of the institution which is *learning by doing*. In other words, learning occurs through the specific practice of the competence to be developed in the student, in a climate of trust and security that facilitates the teaching-learning process.

As for the descriptive results of organizational climate, it is observed that most of the teachers reported being satisfied in all the categories assessed, as also noted in the study of Palma (2000) about faculty and administrative staff in universities. The higher percentages result from the teachers who reported satisfaction in the categories of: structure, reward, and cooperation. It could be proposed that they consider that the standards promote the development of work, in addition to being satisfied with the equity and justice and help managers and peers.

As shown, there are inverse correlations between power (self-promotion); so, if there is a further pursuit of status and success, the teacher perceives the institution in a negative way. Probably, the teacher will perceive the institution as an environment that does not provide the possibilities of exercising control and dominance, even over the resources. It is understandable since they prioritize a value that responds to their own needs (Navarro-Saldaña et al., 2007), which is consistent with an inadequate perception of the organizational climate, regarding issues related to structure, responsibility, reward, challenge, and other aspects that involve the organizational climate. The latter result correlates with the findings by Caligiore Corrales and Diaz Sosa (2003), who discovered that a group of medicine and nursing teachers had a negative valuation of the organizational climate.

In the same vein, there was an inverse correlation between the value of tradition (conservation) and the dimensions of organizational climate, which means that those who valued the *status quo*, the norms, and customs (Schwartz, 1992) opposed those aspects related to the structure,

responsibility, rewards, standards, identity, and other components of the organizational climate. It is likely that as part-time teachers, they come from other institutions and do not agree with the institution's guidelines.

The results indicate that both the dimension of transcendence (universalism), characterized by collectivism, as well as the dimension of openness to change (self-direction and stimulation) associated with individualism, correlate with the categories of organizational climate. This is explained based on the statements by Ros and Schwartz (1995), who posed "the idea of multidimensionality of some cultures in relation to the individualist and collectivist values. Evidence is shown for the first time that cultures are not forced to ascribe to a pattern that is whether strictly individualist or collectivist" (p.183). In that sense, this multidimensionality could refer to an organizational culture, as it is the case of the faculty in the educational institution where this study was conducted, where both individualist and collectivist interests were found (Cieciuch, Schwartz, & Davidov, 2015).

Based on the findings, it can be affirmed that the correlation between universalism and the categories of the organizational climate indicates that a teacher who is oriented toward the common good (Schwartz, 2006) has a proper perception of the organizational climate. This way, a teacher profile includes knowing not only the subject matter, but developing the needed knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes (Kepowicz, 2007), which requires initiative, autonomy, and personal development. However, the teacher oriented towards power, self-direction, and stimulation, can also perceive a suitable climate in the organization; similar to those who value tradition.

Therefore, most of the teachers assessed are satisfied with the organizational climate, regardless of the value system.

By way of conclusion, it is considered that there is a significant correlation between the following values: self-direction, universalism, and stimulation, with the dimensions of organizational climate. Additionally, there is an inverse correlation between power, tradition, and organizational climate. It should be noted that the predominant value is *benevolence* while *power* is in the last position. In regards to the organizational climate, the highest scores were obtained in structure, reward, and cooperation, which indicates that they

perceive a pleasant work environment where they can establish good social relationships among their peers, managers, and students.

Given that this is an exploratory study, based on the results presented, it is possible to generate future studies including other variables, such as culture, motivation, institutional values, and organizational commitment. So that it promotes the development of an explanatory model of the organizational behavior of the faculty in the higher-education institution. Additionally, proposing comparative studies at a regional level and in Spanish-speaking populations to determine the similarities and differences at the cultural level.

The amplitude of the Likert scale provides a limitation, which could lead to confusion on the participants' part in terms of identifying the intensity, which suggests future studies aimed at reviewing this instrument or specifically rethinking alternative answers. Furthermore, the size of the sample and the intentional sampling do not allow generalizing results. In the same way, the fact that other higher-education institutions were not included, which would have granted a broader view of the relationship between both variables.

Finally, we suggest continuing with the development of this line of research since it allows explaining the strengthening of the organizational climate based on values in a higher-education context, which has a bearing on the training of students and future professionals.

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