

ASSESSING PERFORMANCE: THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATES AND POLITICS ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PERFORMANCE

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This study examines multiple organizational climates and their relationship with politics and performance in public organizations. We argue that four types of climates (participative, innovative, leadership and service) impact employees' performance and public service outcomes, and that perceptions of organizational politics mediate these relationships. A theoretical model is suggested and examined empirically in a field study of 2102 teachers from 108 public schools and three major districts in Israel. Standard regressions and hierarchical linear model statistics are used to examine several hypotheses about the relationship between climate, micro-level performance and macro-level performance. The findings, both micro- and macro-level based, indicate that multiple climates in the school environment are positively related to teachers' satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour. Furthermore, perceptions of politics and such micro-level performance indicators are also related to school level achievements.

INTRODUCTION

The public service environment is important as it has an immense effect on the routines of our daily lives, on our interactions with other citizens and with governmental institutions, on our overall satisfaction with life, and on our prosperity under the political umbrella of the administrative state. This environment is operationalized and examined both in the public administration and in the management literature in terms of the organizational climate. In recent decades the generic managerial literature has accumulated extensive knowledge about organizational climate, its meaning, diversity and effect on performance, for individuals, teams and the organization as a whole (Tagiuri and Litwin 1968; Glick 1985; Reichers and Schneider 1990). It has also acknowledged that the organizational atmosphere is not uni-dimensional. Rather, it is best described as an integration of multiple climates (Schneider 1975). This compound atmosphere of a multiple-climates structure is also one of the most salient elements in determining employees' motivation, expectations and willingness to exert effort (formal or informal) and contribute to organizational performance (Kopelman *et al.* 1990).

Nonetheless, only scant attention has been paid to the exploration of multiple climates in public sector organizations. Based on studies that found meaningful between-sectors differences we see promising potential in developing a more specific rationality and logic for the multiple climate–performance connection in public organizations. We believe this is an important step towards exploring the uniqueness of the effects of such multiple climates in the public sector and that such research will add to the current knowledge in public administration and policy analysis. Obviously, such a discussion should be focused on the problems, goals, demands and overall uniqueness of the public sphere, beyond those of conventional business organizational settings. It should also draw on the continuous flow of knowledge between private sector and public sector organizations (Rainey 1991; Rainey and Bozeman 2000) as reflected in contemporary approaches in

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public administration, such as the New Public Management (NPM) doctrine or the performance oriented paradigm in public organizations (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Hood 1991).

Hence, the major goals and potential contributions of this article are fourfold. First, we hope to enhance our knowledge about the multiple-climates perspective and determine the particular meaning that it has for public organizations. Second, we will develop an in-depth theory about multiple climates and use this terminology to explain micro-level and macro-level performance in public schools. Third, we will argue that multiple climates in public organizations are related to employees' attitudes and well being, and affect overall excellence and achievement at the organizational level (e.g. school achievement). This argument will be examined empirically in the Israeli education system. Finally, organizational politics (e.g. Romm and Drory 1988) will be tested as a potential mediator in the multiple climates–performance relationship.

PIECES IN THE PUZZLE: BACKGROUND AND THEORY

Public organizations are an important segment of any national economy and a major construct of its social infrastructure. However, being bureaucratic entities, they are frequently criticized for lacking a highly innovative climate (Borins 2000a), and for having strong authoritarian chains of control, dual lines of leadership (administrative and political) as well as a non-competitive style of service. Whereas serious improvements in the image and productivity of public organizations have been made in recent years (e.g. Borins 2000b) there is still much to progress in this respect. Policy makers and public administrators are encouraged to reduce the cost of red tape in bureaucratic systems and to redesign old organizational models and build new ones that favour creativity, commitment, the mixed flow of communication, autonomy and responsibility (Vigoda and Golembiewski 2001). One way in which public organizations may improve their organizational processes and management style is by putting together the pieces of the climate puzzle in public agencies. A careful investigation of the meaning and aftermaths of multiple climates may help us understand performance and other job outcomes in public organization as a whole. Such an understanding may have consequent meaning for improved public services in various fields of public and social action such as education, health, welfare and environment.

Multiple organizational climates

Organizational climate emerged in the 1960s as a core concept in research on organizations (Litwin and Stringer 1968; Friedlander and Marguiles 1969). Studies have pointed to both climate and culture as important factors in describing the general atmosphere of the workplace (Reichers and Schneider 1990). Tagiuri and Litwin (1968, p. 27) defined organizational climate as the 'relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of an organization that (a) is experienced by its members, (b) influences their behaviour, and (c) can be described in terms of values of a particular set of characteristic of the organization'. Organizational climate thus refers to formal and informal interpersonal practices and inter-subjectively developed meanings resulting from organizational sensemaking processes (Glick 1985) and consists of empirically accessible elements such as behavioural and attitudinal characteristics (Drexler 1977; O'Driscoll and Evans 1988; Moran and Volkwein 1992).

One important aspect of organizational climate research is its multi-dimensionality (MacCormick and Parker 2010). Whereas early writing on organizational climate treated

it as a uni-dimensional factor, later and more recent studies are quite univocal in adopting the multiple-climate perspective. The fact that organizational climate has many faces was advanced by the seminal work of Schneider (1975) and others that followed. For example, Schneider (1975) proposed that climate has to have a focus or target and that climate research has to be a *climate for something*. More specifically, studies have suggested that organizations do not have 'one climate', but encompass many climates, such as the service climate (Schneider 1980), the human resource development climate (Biswajeet 2002), the safety climate (Probst 2004), the innovation climate (Bare and Frese 2003), the ethical climate (Starratt 1991), the political climate (Romm and Drory 1988; Drory 1993), the justice climate (Leventhal 1980), the leadership climate (Chen and Bliese 2002) and the participative climate (Tjosvold 1985; Tesluk *et al.* 1999). This 'climate-for-something' approach has the advantage of being focused and therefore enhances predictability; however, at the same time not many studies allow for the possibility of multiple climates-for-something occurring in the same organization (Ostroff *et al.* 2003; MacCormick and Parker 2010). Our article follows this line of thinking, suggesting multiple aspects of organizational climate in heterogeneous public domains. We decided to focus on four major types of climate that have also received strong theoretical justification and rationality in the literature: service climate, innovation climate, leadership climate, and participative climate (Schneider 1975; Tjosvold 1985; Chen and Bliese 2002; Bare and Frese 2003; Huang *et al.* 2005; to name only a few). Furthermore, we promote the idea that these multiple-climate aspects affect the performance of, and services to, the public. Thus, the linkage between organizational climate(s) and performance, especially in the public sector, should be reviewed both theoretically and empirically.

Organizational climate and performance

One of the most promising explanations about change and improvement in organizational performance builds on the contribution of the work atmosphere and organizational climate. The organizational climate is a social structure that can either promote performance or impede it, and thus may be considered a buffer between individual skills and motivation and various work outcomes (Schneider 1975). Studies have also found climate to be a meaningful intermediate element between employees' skills and motivation on the one hand, and a series of performance-related variables on the other (Kopelman *et al.* 1990). Such variables include micro-level and individual-based work outcomes (i.e. job satisfaction, job commitment, creativity, supportive human relations, pro-social behaviour, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviours) as well as macro-level performance variables (i.e. productivity, profit and quality of service).

More specifically, studies have also suggested that public sector motivation is reinforced when the social environment is supportive and encourages individuals to spend time, effort and resources in helping the organization grow and develop (Perry 2000). Therefore, the atmosphere in the public workplace is expected to affect the quality of the services provided to citizens. Citizens as clients benefit from dealing with more satisfied public servants and enjoy better attention, responsiveness, and good will when dealing with red tape and cumbersome bureaucratic procedures. Nevertheless, few studies have examined the meaningful impact of organizational climate on performance in the public sector. Moreover, those studies have not produced theories about or examined multiple dimensions of organizational climate and have focused exclusively on either the micro or macro perspective.

Multi-level analysis of public and private organizational performance

The literature on public organizations, on public sector reforms, and especially on performance in the public sector (as part of the New Public Management movement) is preoccupied with models and experiences on either the macro (e.g. Lam 1997; Christensen and Laegreid 1999) or the micro levels (e.g. Moon and deLeon 2001). Studies about performance under the NPM doctrine are mostly macro-oriented. They pay a great deal of attention to benchmark cases and focus on recommended practices, comparative views among nations and bureaucracies, case studies of successful and less successful experiences, and suggestions about the 'next steps' needed. However, as argued by Vigoda-Gadot and Meiri (2008), knowledge about the macro–micro interface of these issues is needed in order to advance our knowledge, ensure the validity of our results, and provide a convincing argument about the usefulness of explanatory models. Therefore, performance in the public sector has not yet been fully studied from the integrated micro–macro perspective. In addition this integration meets Walker and Boyne's (2009) call for capturing the connections between different dimensions of performance by examining the relationship between employee level performance measures and school level performance measures.

Finally, following Rousseau (1985), we argue that advancing our knowledge about the mixed-level analysis of organizational climate and performance, especially in public administration and management, must rely on establishing a solid link between the micro/individual-level of analysis and the macro/system-level of analysis. Thus, measuring the micro and macro organizational performance of public services through the same research design, as well as linking these two levels with public sector climate, has potentially serious merit for theoretical and empirical models. Relating these levels can also improve the validation of findings produced by each approach.

The mediating role of perceptions of politics

Another important aspect of public service is the dominant role played by politics and political behaviour. The political environment of public organizations has been studied by scholars of both political science and public administration and policy (e.g. Peterson 1990; Miller 1993). Therefore, an impressive body of knowledge has been accumulated over time about the nature, evolution, and meaning of organizational politics in general, and in public administration in particular.

A recent comprehensive book on the topic (Vigoda-Gadot and Drory 2006) suggests that politics and influence dynamics are of prime importance to any type of organization, in any field, market, sector, or culture. The main characteristics of the organizational politics are the readiness of people to use power in their efforts to influence others and secure personal or collective interests or, alternatively, avoid negative outcomes within the organization. The nature of organizational politics in the public sector has received attention as well, arguing that there are higher levels of politics in this sector as compared with the private sector (Vigoda-Gadot and Kapun 2005) and demonstrating its negative influence on citizens' trust in government and on the performance of public agencies (Vigoda-Gadot 2007). Research on organizational politics is operationalized in terms of the perceptions of the organizational members regarding the politics (i.e. the use of power for different gains) in the organization.

Empirical evidence demonstrates the negative effect of organizational politics on various work outcomes such as job satisfaction (i.e. Ferris *et al.* 1996; Witt *et al.* 2000), organizational commitment (i.e. Vigoda 2000), job stress and strain, and job burnout (Valle and Perrewe

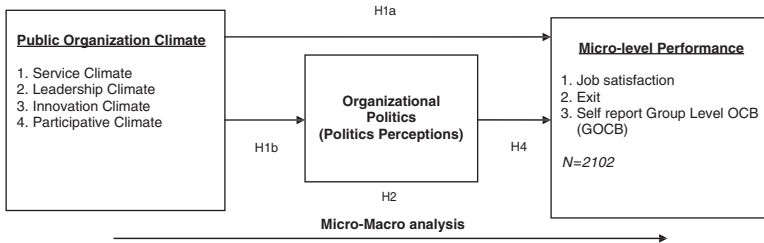
2000; Vigoda 2002). However, it seems that beyond the direct relationships between politics and outcomes which have already been established in the literature (i.e. Kacmar and Baron 1999; Miller *et al.* 2008), much less attention has been paid to the relationship between climate and organizational politics. We claim that different organizational climates may contribute to the nature of perceptions of organizational politics. In other words, a more constructive, supportive, and positive climate will reduce negative perceptions of the organization as a political entity (Ferris and Kacmar 1992). Such a positive climate will contribute to positive perceptions about the level of fairness and justice and to the sense that decisions are taken based on the collective interest of many stakeholders (i.e. public servants or citizens), rather than those of only a few powerful ones (i.e. senior managers or politicians).

MULTIPLE CLIMATES, PERFORMANCE, AND POLITICS IN PUBLIC DOMAINS: MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 1 presents two models that depict the potential relationships to be tested. First, it should be mentioned that both models (A and B) are developed under the assumption that public sector climates may lead to changes in micro and macro performance. Nonetheless, we are aware of the fact that an inverse effect may also exist, according to which performance leads to change in public sector climate(s). That is, the relationship between climate and performance is not uni-directional and may involve reciprocal effects. Still, even if reciprocal, we chose to concentrate on one direction, with performance as the dependent variable due to our interest in understanding the factors that may improve the outcomes of public agencies.

Second, according to Model A, multiple climates in public organizations are related to micro-level organizational performance. Perceptions of organizational politics that

Model A: Multiple climates and micro-level performance in public organizations: The mediating role of organizational politics



Model B: Organizational politics and macro-level performance in public administration: The mediating role of micro-level performance

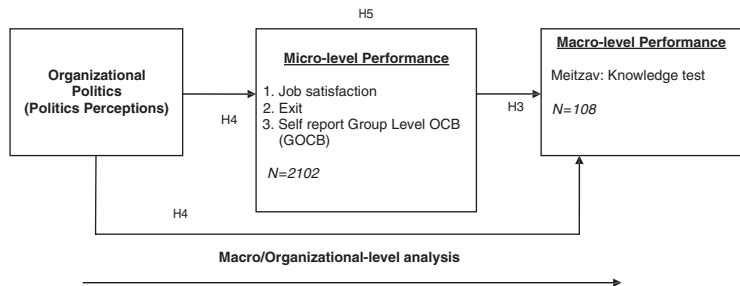


FIGURE 1 *The research models*

constitute a dominant facet of the public sector atmosphere (Miller 1993; Vigoda-Gadot and Kapun 2005) is suggested as a mediator in this relationship. Finally, Model B extends this rationale to suggest a relationship between organizational politics, micro-level performance, and macro-level performance. In accordance with this, five major hypotheses will be tested. The hypotheses predict direct and indirect relationships and relate measures of both micro and macro level performance. H1 (a and b) and H2 involve a combined macro–micro relationship, whereas H3 to H5 suggest macro-level relationships and expand upon the important role of organizational politics.

The first hypotheses suggest a direct relationship between multiple climates and micro-level performance. It is argued that improvements in the service, leadership, innovation, and participation in the decision-making climates will have a positive effect on a variety of individual-level attitudes. Thus when the atmosphere in the organization emphasizes the importance of giving the customers a positive service experience (i.e. service climate), is characterized by supportive and directive leadership (i.e. leadership climate), encourages creativity and original thinking (i.e. innovation climate), and encourages the organizational members to express their opinions and ideas (i.e. participation climate), job satisfaction of the employees is likely to be high and their intentions to leave the organization will be reduced (lower levels of exit). In addition, in such a positive atmosphere employees will view themselves as a more integral part of the organization because it is a pleasant place in which to work. Such constructive organizational climates are also expected to have a positive effect on the willingness to help others and support them in times of need or during personal or organizational crises (i.e. Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), and especially its group level aspect, named Group-Level OCB (GOCB)). Therefore, we formulated the first hypothesis as follows:

H1a: Multiple organizational climates (i.e. service climate, leadership climate, innovation climate, participative climate) are related with micro-level performance (i.e. a positive relationship with job satisfaction and self-reported GOCB and a negative relationship with exit intentions) in the public sector.

In many respects, the political atmosphere in organizations is related to the organizational climate. Whereas some studies view politics in organizations as an objective and natural phenomenon, one that exists in every organization and is part of daily life in the workplace (e.g. Pfeffer 1992), other studies emphasize its negative perceptual image in the eyes of employees (e.g. Kacmar and Ferris 1991; Kacmar and Baron 1999). A study by Gandz and Murray (1980) found that while employees usually consider organizational politics to be an unfair, evil, irrational, and unhealthy behaviour, they also believe that political behaviour is necessary in many cases, especially if someone has an interest in advancing in the organization and becoming acknowledged by his/her co-workers and employers as a good employee or as a talented manager. Thus, while politics in organization should be treated as a human and natural phenomenon that serves a certain personal and social function, most studies still emphasize its negative, dangerous, and potentially harmful meaning.

Evidence for such negative views can be seen in several studies that discussed and empirically examined how politics may relate to organizational climate (Romm and Drory 1988; Drory 1993). In accordance with these studies we expect that multiple organizational climates will be negatively related to perceptions of organizational politics. When the employees perceive the service, leadership, innovation, and participation climates as

positive they are less likely to see the organization as a place where decisions are made in an unfair way. For example, an organization that emphasizes participation in a way that encourages *everyone* to share their ideas and opinions is less likely to be perceived as opportunistic or favouring. Thus, we suggest:

H1b: Multiple organizational climates are negatively related to organizational politics in the public sector.

In line with the previous hypothesis, we also expect that multiple climates and micro-level performance will be mediated by perceptions of organizational politics. The major argument in support of this view can be found in the way organizational politics is perceived in organizations. As mentioned in the previous sections, and according to the dominant approach of Ferris and Kacmar (1992) and their colleagues, politics may be viewed as either part of the organizational climate or as an immediate response to it. Perceptions of politics are in large part an outcome of the prevailing atmosphere in the workplace. When multiple climates (i.e. the service climate, leadership climate, innovation climate, and participative climate) are negative, the organization is likely to face higher levels of negative perceptual politics due to employees' negative perceptions of injustice, unfairness, and inequity among peers. Some preliminary support for this line of thinking can be found in studies that focused on the moderating and mediating role of perceived organizational politics in its relationship with work outcomes and performance (e.g. Witt *et al.* 2000; Poon 2004, 2006). According to these studies, strong perceptions of organizational politics contradict perceptual fairness and equity in the eyes of employees. It thus may negatively affect the work outcomes of individuals and damage organizational performance in general. Thus:

H2: Organizational politics mediates the relationship between multiple organizational climates and micro-level performance in the public sector.

Hypotheses H3 to H5 extend our view further to include macro-level performance variables. We suggest that micro-level performance at the employees' level (in this case, teachers) will be related to the overall outcomes and success of the school (H3). The logic behind these hypotheses is based on human resource studies and on organizational psychology and organizational behaviour theories that put people at the centre of the organizational process. Over the years strong evidence has accumulated about the immense contribution of individuals to overall organizational success. Studies found that individual-level variables (e.g. job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, intentions to leave, organization citizenship behaviour) are strongly and systematically related to organizational-level performance in private and in public organizations. Several recent studies that are relevant to our research are Currall *et al.*'s (2005) study on public schools, Kim's (2005) examination of governmental organizations, and a meta-analysis of Podsakoff *et al.* (2009). All of these studies and others like them demonstrate a direct relationship between micro-level/individual aspects of performance and macro-level/organizational aspects of success in public and private agencies.

In view of the suggested dominance of politics in public sector organizations we also suggest that such politics will be related to macro-level performance (H4). Finally, it is expected that micro-level performance will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational politics and macro-level performance (H5). The rationale for these hypotheses relies on the central role of organizational politics as a major outcome and/or

expression of the overall organizational climates. We argue that perceptions of politics negatively affect the micro and macro levels of performance. More specifically, we expect that the internal politics of a public organization negatively affect employees' attitudes and behaviour, thus damaging performance at the individual level and, at a later stage, negatively affecting overall organizational achievements. Hence, three final hypotheses are suggested:

H3: Micro-level performance is positively related to macro-level performance in the public sector.

H4: Organizational politics is negatively related to micro-level and macro-level performance in the public sector.

H5: Micro-level performance mediates the relationship between organizational politics and macro-level performance.

METHOD

Sample and procedure

A sample of Israeli public schools was used in this study. The schools are a major part of the Israeli education system which is a modern and advanced one, playing a central role in the state's culture and in citizens' life. Expenditure on education accounts for approximately 10 per cent of GDP, and most schools are subsidized by the state. The overall budget of this system is 27.5 billion Shekels (around 7.5 trillion US dollars). The number of students is 1,445,555 and the number of teachers is around 127,500 (2008 figures). Israeli schools are divided into four tracks: state, state-religious, Arab, and non-Jews; the majority of Israeli children attend state schools. The education system consists of three tiers: *primary education* (grades 1–6, approx. ages 6–12), *middle school* (grades 7–9, approx. ages 12–15), and *high school* (grades 10–12, approx. ages 15–18). *Compulsory education* is from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Data collection was conducted between August 2004 and April 2005 and was based on a survey of teachers from various schools. First, we were granted access to schools in three major regions of the country, such that the sample would represent many of the above aspects of the Israeli education system (state, state-religious, Arab, and non-Jews; primary education, middle schools, and high schools; larger and smaller sized schools, etc.). Schools of special education were excluded from our study. Altogether we approached 2500 teachers from all 145 schools in the studied regions. We turned to all schools in the regions and teachers in each school were selected based on a random sample from the formal list provided by the school office. Whereas we aimed to have a sample of around 20 teachers from each school, our final analysis was based on between 15 and 25 teachers per school. Altogether responses were obtained from 2102 teachers who belonged to 108 schools (primary, middle, and high schools). Participation in the survey was voluntary and teachers were assured full confidentiality of all information provided. We used a direct return method that set the overall return rate at 84.04 per cent (for teachers) and 74.48 per cent (for schools). In addition, archival data about the schools and student achievement, the socio-economic rank of the schools, and the size of the schools were collected. It is noteworthy that the major characteristics of the sample (e.g. age, gender, education, and tenure of teachers) correspond highly with the overall statistics of similar schools nationwide, based on information reported by the Israeli Ministry of Education.

Variables

Service climate

This variable was defined, based on Schneider *et al.* (1998, p. 151), as a climate that emphasizes the importance of a positive experience for consumers throughout the production, delivery, and consumption sequence. It reflects employees' perceptions of service-related norms, rules, compensation system and support of service activities, and the attitudes towards quality of service to clients. We applied the 'climate for service scale' suggested by those scholars and in other studies such as those by Schneider *et al.* (1998, 2002). The original scale was composed of 22 items representing four sub-categories: global service climate, customer orientation, managerial practices, and customer feedback. Seven items were finally used, and respondents ranked their views on a 5-point scale (1 = do not agree at all; 5 = strongly agree). Sample items are: (1) The job knowledge and skills of teachers to deliver superior quality work and services in this school are high; (2) The tools, technology, and other resources that support the delivery of superior quality work and service in this school are high. Reliability of the scale was 0.81.

Leadership climate

Chen and Bliese (2002, p. 549) defined this climate as the shared group members' perceptions of the extent to which the leaders of their group provide task-related direction as well as socio-emotional support to subordinates. We used the Leadership Climate Scale suggested by Koene *et al.* (2002). A 9-item scale representing the charismatic leadership style and the consideration leadership style was adopted. Sample items are: (1) The principal is a model for me to follow; (2) The principal has a sense of mission which he or she transmits to me. Reliability of the scale was 0.91.

Innovation climate

Innovation climate reflects the formal and informal organizational practices and procedures guiding and supporting a proactive, self-starting, and innovative approach towards work (Bare and Frese 2003, p. 48). It reflects the perceptions of organizational members about the degree to which the atmosphere in the organization encourages creativity, initiative, and original thinking. Based on Litwin and Stringer's (1968) Organizational Climate Questionnaire, we used a 7-item scale. Sample items are: (1) There is a feeling of pressure to continually improve our personal and group performance; (2) Our philosophy in this school emphasizes that people should solve problems by themselves. Reliability of the scale was 0.75.

Participative climate

This variable was defined as a social-type voice mechanism, which may encourage employees to express their opinions, and thus reduce the overall level of opinion withholding in an organization (Huang *et al.* 2005). It reflects perceptions about the supportive and collective efforts of organizational members, their cooperation and sharing of ideas in favour of getting better organizational outcomes. We relied on several studies (i.e. Tesluk *et al.* 1999; Huang *et al.* 2005) and created a scale of nine items. Sample items are: (1) I feel that I play an important part in determining the goals of this school; (2) This school encourages teachers to work in cooperation with each other. Reliability of the scale was 0.71.

Organizational politics

We used the Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) as suggested by Ferris *et al.* (1989). Here POPS was defined as the degree to which respondents view their work environment as political, and therefore unjust and unfair. Kacmar and Ferris (1991) suggested the first version of this scale with 40 items, which was re-examined by Kacmar and Carlson (1997), who proposed a more parsimonious 12-item scale. This latter scale has become the most accepted measure of POPS. Following these studies we adopted a 12-item scale that was adjusted slightly to fit the environment of public organizations. Sample items are: (1) Favouritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead in this school; (2) There has always been an influential group of teachers in this school that no one ever crosses. The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and the reliability was 0.81.

Job satisfaction

A 6-item scale taken from Schriesheim and Tsui (1980) measured this variable. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their current job, co-workers, supervisors, current salary, opportunities for promotion, and work in general. The scale for these questions ranged from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Reliability of this scale was 0.73.

Exit

According to Mobely (1982) and Farrell and Rusbult (1992, p. 202), intentions to leave or exit orientations include job movement both within and across organizational boundaries, as well as a variety of cognitive activities that precede leaving. This behaviour is manifested by intentions of searching for a different job and thinking about quitting. Respondents in both our samples were asked to report the degree to which they agreed with a 5-item scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items were: (1) I often think about quitting; (2) If I could, I would move to another organization. Reliability of this scale was 0.87.

GOCB

Existing scales of OCB, such as those suggested by Williams and Anderson (1991) and Organ (1988), were used to create a matching scale of 23 items called Group-Level OCB (GOCB). This scale was suggested and tested by Vigoda-Gadot *et al.* (2005, 2006), who found it a useful way to study the good citizenship of work groups, teams, or the overall citizenship-at-work atmosphere. As with the conventional OCB scale, we have distinguished among altruistic GOCB, compliance GOCB, and group-level in-role performance. As suggested by Chan (1998) and reconfirmed by Ehrhart (2004), our scale's referent is the unit rather than the individual, and 'instead of studying an individual's performance of OCB, the interest is in the individual's perception of the normative level of OCB performed within the group' (Ehrhart 2004, p. 65). A 9-item scale was used and sample items are: (1) The teachers here take a personal interest in other employees (altruistic); (2) The teachers here give advance notice when unable to come to work (compliance). The reliability of this scale was 0.82.

Micro-level control variables

We controlled for teachers' gender, age, managerial duty (teacher/managerial), and job status (tenured/non-tenured).

Macro-level variables

We used the achievement scores for schools as reported by the Israeli Ministry of Education (Meizav). The scale ranged between 0 and 100. The higher the score, the higher the achievement of the school in terms of overall student grades on external exams on a comparative national level. In addition, we measured the socio-economic rank of the schools (the higher the rank, the less the need for socio-economic improvement in the school), as well as school size (by number of students), and used these variables as macro-level control variables.

Statistical analysis

As the data at the micro-level were collected from teachers in 108 different schools, we first analyzed the data on the basis of hierarchical linear modelling (HLM; Bryk and Raudenbush 1992). This approach allows for the testing of the nesting of teachers within schools. The advantage of HLM is that by modelling residuals at the school level as well as at the individual level, such models acknowledge that teachers within the same school may be more similar to one another than to teachers belonging to a different school (Heinrich and Lynn 2001). The relative explanatory potential of each model was assessed on the basis of the difference in the '-2 res log-likelihood' from that of the control model. As our hypothesis called for the examination of a mediation effect, we followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation steps. Finally, for the analysis at the macro level we conducted a linear regression analysis. As explained below, for data collected at the individual level we first examined whether aggregation to the school level is appropriate and then produced aggregated measures to be used in the regression analyses.

FINDINGS

The micro-level/individual analysis

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables at the micro-level and at the macro-level are displayed in tables 1 and 2.

Before testing the hypotheses we examined a model with only the control variables. Model 1 of table 3, Models 3 and 6 of table 4, and Model 9 of table 5 are models which examine the relationship between the control variables and each of the dependent variables. Taking this step was important so that when we examined the impact of the independent variables and the mediator on each dependent variable, we could show that the effect was above and beyond the effect of the control variables. In addition, in each model where the dependent variable was a micro-level performance variable we examined the estimate for the school's random variance. This estimate was significant, indicating that differences between schools affect individual performance. Controlling for this effect through our HLM analysis enables us to examine the hypothesized effects over and above the school effect.

As climate and organizational politics are theorized as macro/organizational level variables, we aggregated them to the school level (by calculating the mean). This procedure was possible because the mean within-group agreement (i.e. Rwg) of all of the measures was above 0.7 ($Rwg_{\text{organizational politics}} = 0.76$; $Rwg_{\text{service climate}} = 0.83$; $Rwg_{\text{leadership climate}} = 0.77$; $Rwg_{\text{innovation climate}} = 0.84$; $Rwg_{\text{participative climate}} = 0.85$).

Hypothesis 1a predicted a relationship between multiple organizational climates and micro-level performance. As can be seen in Model 4 (table 4), service climate had a significant positive impact on the teacher's job satisfaction at the individual level

TABLE 1 *Descriptive statistics—micro level*

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	1917	0.90	0.30											
2. Age	1734	38.86	9.46	-0.04										
3. Duty	1847	0.30	0.46	-0.001	0.19***									
4. Status	1819	0.82	0.38	0.04	0.35***	0.14***								
5. Service climate	2102	3.76	0.66	0.07**	0.02	0.05*	-0.05*	0.74***						
6. Leadership climate	2099	3.84	0.76	0.02	0.07**	0.10***	-0.05*	0.65***	0.72***					
7. Innovation climate	2102	3.66	0.63	0.07**	0.10***	0.16***	0.03	0.65***	0.66***	0.70***				
8. Participative climate	2102	3.61	0.63	0.06**	0.08**	0.10***	0.02	0.65***	0.66***	0.62***	-0.63***			
9. Organizational politics	2088	2.53	0.76	-0.007	-0.11***	-0.13***	0.04	-0.49***	-0.58***	0.49***	0.48***	-0.50***		
10. Job satisfaction	2097	3.62	0.60	0.05*	0.08**	0.14***	0.03	0.53***	0.52***	0.52***	0.49***	0.38***	-0.54***	
11. Exit	2100	2.17	0.94	-0.03	-0.16***	-0.09***	-0.15***	-0.37***	-0.39***	-0.38***	-0.36***	0.38***	0.38***	-0.54***
12. GOCB	2097	3.43	0.59	0.02	0.10***	0.02	-0.008	0.46***	0.43***	0.44***	0.56***	-0.44***	0.38***	-0.28***

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

TABLE 2 *Descriptive statistics—macro level*

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Socioeconomic status	108	6.20	13.05										
2. School size	108	471.36	325.57	-0.26**									
3. Service climate	108	3.77	0.36	0.25**	-0.16								
4. Leadership climate	108	3.90	0.39	0.28**	-0.28**	0.77***							
5. Innovation climate	108	3.68	0.32	0.27**	-0.25**	0.71***	0.84***						
6. Participative climate	108	3.64	0.34	0.29**	-0.31***	0.75***	0.74***	0.84***					
7. Organizational politics	108	2.48	0.35	-0.34***	0.34	-0.62***	-0.75	-0.80***	-0.81***				
8. Satisfaction	108	3.62	0.22	0.29**	-0.06	0.70***	0.65***	0.61***	0.61***	-0.60***			
9. Exit	108	2.17	0.34	-0.23*	0.02	-0.51***	-0.55***	-0.57***	-0.50***	0.56***	-0.66***		
10. GOCB	108	3.46	0.30	0.27**	-0.23*	0.72***	0.60***	0.65***	0.80***	-0.66***	0.55***	-0.50***	
11. Meizav	86	71.39	10.07	-0.62***	-0.04	0.35***	0.16	0.18	0.25*	-0.24*	0.18	-0.004	0.37***

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

TABLE 3 Regression analysis for the main effects of organizational climate on organizational politics

Dependent variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	Organizational politics		Organizational politics	
Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.
N	108		108	
Intercept	2.40***	0.06	5.66***	0.23
1. Socioeconomic status	-0.007**	0.002	-0.002	0.001
2. Size	0.0003**	0.0001	0.00006	0.00006
3. Organizational politics				
4. Service climate			0.16	0.09
5. Leadership climate			-0.27**	0.10
6. Innovation climate			-0.25*	0.13
7. Participative climate			-0.50***	0.11
R ²	0.18			0.74
ΔR^2				0.56***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

(estimate = 0.22, $p < 0.01$ level). This model was significantly different from the model including only the control variables ($\Delta -2\log\text{-likelihood} = 49.7$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that climate is significantly related to job satisfaction above and beyond the control variables.

As can be seen in Model 7 (table 4), both service climate and participative climate had a significant positive impact on the teacher's assessments of GOCB (Estimate_{service climate} = 0.26, $p < 0.01$; Estimate_{participative climate} = 0.67, $p < 0.001$). This model was significantly different from the model including only the control variables ($\Delta -2\log\text{-likelihood} = 95.7$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that climate is significantly related to the teacher's assessments of GOCB above and beyond the control variables. According to Model 10 (table 5), none of the proposed climates had a relationship to teacher's tendency to exit the organization.

Hypothesis 1b predicted a negative relationship between multiple organizational climates and organizational politics. As can be seen in Model 2 (table 3), this hypothesis was supported. With the exception of service climate, all of the other three types of climate (i.e. leadership climate, innovative climate, and participative climate) had a significant negative impact on the teacher's perceptions of organizational politics as measured on the macro-level (all coefficient estimates significant at the $p < 0.05$ level). This model had an R-squared of 0.74, indicating that multiple climates explained 74 per cent of the variance in perceptions of organizational politics. The difference in R-squared between the expanded model with the climate variables and a model with only the control variables was 0.56 ($p < 0.001$).

To examine Hypothesis 2, which posited that organizational politics would mediate the relationship between the multiple organizational climates and micro-level performance, we added the variable organizational politics to each model presented above in regard to H1a. This macro-micro model did not show a mediation effect for any of the individual level performance variables. It is noteworthy that when we conducted this same analysis examining climate and organizational performance at the micro/individual level, we did find that perceptions of politics mediate the climate-performance relationship. However, as these results did not hold when climate and politics are aggregated to the macro level, it is possible that the micro-level effect is a result of same source bias.

TABLE 4 HLM analysis for the main effects of organizational climate and organizational politics on micro level performance (satisfaction and GOCB)

Dependent variable	Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7		Model 8	
	Satisfaction	S.E.	Satisfaction	S.E.	Satisfaction	S.E.	GOCB	S.E.	GOCB	S.E.	GOCB	S.E.
n	1553		1553		1553		1554		1554		1554	
Intercept	3.59***	0.08	2.05***	0.23	4.36***	0.16	3.14***	0.09	0.48	0.26	4.39***	0.20
1. Gender	-0.10	0.05	-0.03	0.05	-0.07	0.05	0.006	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.05
2. Age	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.009***	0.002	0.009***	0.001	0.009***	0.002
3. Duty	-0.11***	0.03	-0.12***	0.03	-0.11***	0.03	0.007	0.03	0.009	0.03	0.007	0.03
4. Status	-0.04	0.04	-0.04	0.04	-0.04	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.04
5. School socioeconomic status	0.004	0.002	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.005	0.003	0.0005	0.002	0.001	0.002
6. School size	0.0	0.0	0.0001	0.00005	0.0001	0.00005	-0.0002	0.00009	-0.00001	0.00006	-0.00003	0.00008
7. Organizational politics					-0.31***	0.05					-0.52***	0.08
8. Service climate			0.22**	0.08					0.26**	0.09		
9. Leadership climate			0.10	0.08					-0.12	0.099		
10. Innovation climate			-0.02	0.11					-0.09	0.13		
11. Participative climate			0.11	0.10					0.67***	0.12		
School random variance	0.018**	0.006	0.001	0.003	0.008*	0.004	0.07***	0.01	0.02***	0.005	0.04***	0.008
-2loglikelihood	2677.3		2627.6		2651.3		2378.6		2282.9		2339.8	
Δ-2loglikelihood (with same n)			49.7***		26***				95.7***		38.8***	

* p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

TABLE 5 HLM analysis for the main effects of organizational climate and organizational politics on micro level performance (exit)

Dependent variable	Model 9		Model 10		Model 11	
	Exit		Exit		Exit	
Effect	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.
n	1555		1555		1555	
Intercept	2.55***	0.14	5.15***	0.42	1.15***	0.27
1. Gender	0.114	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.08	0.08
2. Age	-0.01***	0.003	-0.01***	0.003	-0.01***	0.003
3. Duty	0.09	0.05	0.10*	0.05	0.09	0.05
4. Status	0.23***	0.06	0.24***	0.06	0.24***	0.06
5. School socioeconomic status	-0.007	0.004	-0.004	0.003	-0.004	0.004
6. School size	-0.00003	0.0001	-0.0002*	0.0001	-0.0002	0.0001
7. Organizational politics					0.56***	0.10
8. Service climate			-0.20	0.15		
9. Leadership climate			-0.17	0.16		
10. Innovation climate			-0.16	0.21		
11. Participative climate			-0.16	0.19		
School random variance	***0.07	0.02	0.03**	0.01	0.04***	0.01
-2loglikelihood	4060.2		4022.2		4031.8	
Δ -2loglikelihood (with same n)			38***		28.4***	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

The macro-level/organizational analysis

As the below models involve school level analysis we aggregated the micro-level performance variables to the macro/school level (by calculating the mean). This procedure was possible because the mean within-group agreement (i.e. Rwg) of all of the measures was above 0.7 ($Rwg_{\text{satisfaction}} = 0.83$ and $Rwg_{\text{GOCB}} = 0.86$), except for exit, which was 0.58. However, many have questioned the 0.7 rule of thumb for Rwg (Lance *et al.* 2006).

Hypothesis 3 posited that micro-level performance will be related to macro-level performance. As can be seen in Model 3 (table 6), only the aggregated micro-level GOCB was significantly related to the macro-level school achievement score ($\beta = 8.68$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 4 posited that organizational politics will be related to both micro- and macro-level performance. As can be seen in Model 2 (table 6), organizational politics was negatively related to Meitzav – school achievement scores ($\beta = -5.47$, $p < 0.05$). The R-squared of this model was 47 per cent. Furthermore, compared to a model with only the control variables, the delta R-squared of this model was significant (ΔR -squared = 0.03, $p < 0.05$), indicating that organizational politics adds significantly to the explained variance in achievement scores. As can be seen in Models 5 and 8 (table 4) and Model 11 (table 5), organizational politics was related to performance at the micro-level and these three models were superior to models with only the control variables.

Hypothesis 5 posited that micro-level performance will mediate the relationship between organizational politics and macro-level performance. As can be seen in Model 4 of table 6, when adding the aggregated micro-level performance variables to the regression, organizational politics is no longer significant. As mentioned above, GOCB was the micro-level performance variable significantly related to the achievement scores ($\beta = 8.32$, $p < 0.05$). The R-squared of this model was 52 per cent. Furthermore, compared to a model

TABLE 6 Regression analysis examining the mediation at the organizational level on the Meizav ($n = 86$)

Dependent variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Meizav		Meizav		Meizav		Meizav	
	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate	S.E.
Intercept	88.55***	2.54	100.54***	6.66	29.17	23.38	33.32	28.00
1. Socioeconomic status	-3.15***	0.39	-3.05***	0.38	-2.9***	0.38	-2.89***	0.39
2. School size	-0.008**	0.003	-0.006*	0.003	-0.005*	0.003	-0.005	0.003
3. Satisfaction					5.79	4.99	5.49	5.15
4. Exit					2.70	3.10	2.89	3.20
5. GOCB					8.68*	3.37	8.32*	3.63
6. Organizational politics			-5.47*	2.82			-0.97	3.54
R ²	0.44		0.47		0.52		0.52	
ΔR^2			.03*				.05*	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

with only the control variables and organizational politics, the delta R-squared of this model was significant (ΔR -squared = 0.05, $p < 0.05$).

Finally, it is noteworthy that when the organizational climate variables are added to the model in table 6, their effect is insignificant (table 6 does not include these variables for reasons of parsimony). Thus, whereas not implicitly suggested by the hypotheses, we found no significant relationship between organizational climate and macro-level performance. This finding reflects the problematic relationship between micro- and macro-performance as spotted recently in the context of organizational climate (e.g. MacCormick and Parker 2010). We therefore suggest that the impact of organizational climate on micro-performance of public schools is stronger from its impact on macro-performance in such environments. In line with this, we believe that the major change in macro-performance can thus be attributed to organizational politics and micro-performance, rather than to organizational climate directly.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The major goal of this study was to explore the meaning of the *multiple-climates* terminology and apply it in a public setting. We used data from the Israeli education system at both the micro-level (teachers) and macro-level (students' achievements in public schools) and tried to relate them theoretically and empirically. Our study is in line with the current interest in public management transitions, performance improvement in general and specifically in the public education systems.

Our study follows other studies that focused on performance in public organizations based on data gathered in the education system of different countries. For example, Meier and O'Toole (2002) tested more than 1000 Texas school Districts for over five years and found that additional salary rewarded to school superintendents for activities that are over and above the normal determinants of salary was positively correlated with 10 of 11 performance indicators such as scores on standardized tests and school attendance. More recently, Andersen (2008) tested the impact of a public education reform in Denmark on the achievements of 80,000 secondary school students. He found no or very small direct effects on performance measured by average exam scores, but found highly significant moderation effects of inequity in the sense that students with low

socioeconomic status perform worse at reforming schools than at similar non-reforming schools.

However, these studies did not mention the role of organizational climate in their models of performance and were conducted at the macro-level of analysis in specific national systems which are largely different from educational systems in other nations such as Israel. As suggested by Raadschelders (2010), this approach raises questions of generalization at the individual, organizational, sectorial, and national levels. Hence, we tried to contribute to the discussion of performance management in public administration in three major ways: (1) by demonstrating the usefulness of a multiple-climate terminology for achieving better goals in public schools; (2) by focusing on both micro and macro levels of analysis in one comprehensive study; and (3) by using a less studied sample of the Israeli education system for our empirical analysis. We also sought to improve the explanatory power of models regarding the relationship between various types of climate and multi-level indicators of performance. We used various sections of the Israeli public education system as a reasonable (but not full) representative of other public services and also examined the level of perceived organizational politics as a factor that may mediate the multiple climates–performance relationship.

We believe that our findings make theoretical, empirical, and practical contributions. First, the combined micro–macro analysis points to robust relationships between organizational level multiple climate perceptions and individual job outcomes. Most of the dependent variables were found to be related directly to some of the organizational multi-climate facets. In particular, service climate as well as participative climate encouraged public employees to express positive job attitudes such as job satisfaction and GOCB. Furthermore, organizational politics had a negative relationship with all of the climate facets. These findings are in line with previous research on the impact of climate on job/work outcomes (e.g. Schneider 1975; Kangis *et al.* 2000), but they are reinforced and reconfirmed, this time, in a typical public sector environment.

Second, the macro/collective-level analysis adds to our understanding of the above findings. Whereas no support was found for a direct relationship between multiple climates and the schools' actual achievements, few other variables were found to have a significant relationship with those achievements. The most solid finding was the effect of GOCB on school achievement. This finding is encouraging, as it supports previous knowledge on OCB, and adds to the knowledge on macro-organizational level outcomes rather than merely individual-level outcomes (e.g. Podsakoff *et al.* 2009). This finding shows that public organizations that are characterized by more helping behaviours and by the good citizenship of its members will also score higher on overall macro-level organizational achievements. In addition, socio-economic status and school size were significantly related to the achievement scores of the schools. The smaller the school size and the higher the socio-economic status of the students, the better the performance at the macro/organizational level.

Another important finding is the role of organizational politics in public administration, which illuminates the conflict of interest between political and administrative decisions and the seemingly contradictory interests of various stakeholders in the public sector. Studies (e.g. Miller 1993; Vigoda-Gadot 2007) found that perceptions of organizational politics, unfairness, and injustice in public domains are much higher than those in the private sector, and therefore may lead to higher levels of negligent behaviour and a decrease in the performance and quality of services to citizens. Our findings, both at the micro-level and at the macro-level, corroborate these studies. They demonstrate how

organizational politics, which reflect perceptions of fairness, justice, and the balance of power amongst employees, may play a role in the potential outcomes of teachers, students, and the school as a whole. The multilevel analysis which showed a negative relationship between organizational level politics and micro-level performance is important as it goes beyond cross-sectional analyses and supports claims that a negative organizational political atmosphere is related to individual level performance outcomes such as the tendency to leave. While other studies have highlighted the mediating and moderating role of organizational politics in relation to job outcomes and other performance indicators in organizations (e.g. Valle and Perrewé 2000; Poon 2004, 2006), we did not find such an effect. Thus while both climate and politics at the organizational level are related to individual level outcomes, and while climate is related to both politics and micro-level performance, politics does not help in explaining the relationship between organizational climate and individual level performance. It is interesting that when we examined perceptions of climate and politics at the individual level, politics did mediate the climate–performance relationship. Thus, further examination of the proposed mediation effect is called for.

Similarly, another important goal of the study was to draw a clearer link between the multiple climates of the public sector and the multi-level performance of individuals and organizations. By using a dual-level strategy of analysis, the study followed Rousseau (1985), Schnake and Dumler (2003), and Ehrhart (2004) and tried to verify the validity of the model and the sustainability of the findings. Currently, the study of performance in public organizations and beyond is roughly divided between micro- and macro-level analysis. On the one hand, public administration borrows ideas and lessons from studies in organizational behaviour and human resource management that traditionally focus on the micro-level of employees, managers, customers/citizens, or teams. On the other hand, public administration uses theories and findings from strategic management or policy analysis studies to learn about overall organizational implications with wider social implications. However, very few studies combine both the micro and the macro levels into one coherent explanation of outcomes or performance in public domains. Our findings demonstrate how micro-level outcomes are related to macro-level performance in the public sector. We therefore believe that our study has merit by adding to both the micro- and macro-level analysis of performance in the public sector and hope that our model and results will help direct future studies in this arena.

Integrating levels of analysis is also related to another typical integration that is widely used in modern public administration – the combination of private and public sector ideas, methods, and research tools. For example, the study of public sector performance has broken new ground in recent years by using ideas and methods that were previously applied in private sector management and in the business market. The NPM philosophy, mentioned earlier, is a good example of the call for performance-guided public policy and management. Public organizations, public schools among them, have become acutely aware of the potential of performance measurement tools, and an apparent shift in ideologies to boost the outcomes of governmental-owned firms and agencies is apparent. Despite the criticism that NPM reforms have received in recent year, mainly regarding inadequate privatization processes, overemphasis of the economic-client jargon, a tyranny of the cost-analysis approach, and the problem of governability as a result of NPM, the advantage of performance measurement remains one of its greatest contributions to modern public organizations. Hence, the knowledge gained in this study may be useful in adding to the wave of knowledge that enriches public organizations with models

and explanations rooted in the business market (i.e. Hood 1991; Lynn 1998; Christensen and Laegreid 1999), along with a focus on Performance Indicators and advanced human resource management strategies. In the same vein, we believe that the learning processes from the private sector to the public sector is a dual track: (1) *theoretically*, by considering the idea of multiple climates as relevant and useful for improving public sector outcomes and school achievement; and (2) *methodologically*, by applying the methods and tools (micro, macro, and mixed) that are widely acceptable in private management studies and demonstrating their usefulness for public administration research and practice.

The Israeli context of the educational system should also be considered when the findings are interpreted. The Israeli education system has changed tremendously during the last 30 years. Its original roots in the 1930s and 1940s were highly influenced by the Zionist ideology and desire to promote the idea of the Jewish state. The early years of the young state, after the independence in 1948, were characterized by a highly centralized structure and the major ethos of mass immigration absorption. Major efforts for reforms, during the years, included a decentralization process, change of legislative aspect (formation of mandatory education laws, mainly in the 1950s), cultural and organizational changes (the reform of integration, in the late 1960s), and several new programmes for better management and liberalization (mainly in since the 1980s and until today). Today, the Israeli education system is facing several major challenges: (1) the urgent need to improve student performance at all levels in the face of strong public criticism; (2) greater commitment of the political system in building effective and integrative hands-on education programmes; (3) a call for thorough administrative and managerial reforms which include better performance measurement; (4) changing the schools' climate and atmosphere to better serve the needs of the students and the state; and (5) improving the quality of the teachers as well as their position in the system and their reputation in society as a whole. Our study touched only on a few of these important issues. It tried to relate aspects of school climate with school and individual performance. Its results should therefore be understood first of all in the unique Israeli context that is still going through extensive transformations, and in which climate and performance orientations remain central issues of debate.

Finally, several limitations of the study should also be mentioned. Perhaps the most notable one is that our study should not be interpreted in a causal way, although both models (A and B) may be inferred as such. Our study was developed along the rationale that treats organizational climate(s) as driving micro- and macro-level performance in the public sector. Nonetheless, the opposite relationship is also possible, where dissatisfaction from the job, exit and general group-level OCB are facilitators of organizational climate rather than its outcomes. Whereas our study is in line with most of the literature in this field that views the later constructs as outcome variables, the alternative line of rationale should not be excluded and should be subject to future studies.

Other limitations of our study are also noteworthy. First, our adoption of a multiple-climate perspective can be improved in future studies by including other elements of the public sector climate such as ethical climate, transparency climate, and accountability climate. These facets of the public sector setting are important and relevant, and have the potential to add value to the theoretical and empirical discussions in this field. Second, our data were collected in the Israeli educational system. We believe that future studies should try to generalize our model to other sub-sectors of the public sphere (i.e. health organizations, welfare systems, security and economic-oriented services) as well as to other cultures beyond the Israeli one. Third, whereas our sample at the individual level

was quite large (over 2000 individuals), the macro-level sample (108 schools) was much more modest. We therefore recommend that further examination of the micro-macro relationship should be done with larger organizational-level samples that will allow more robust results. We also feel that our use of only one objective performance indicator at the macro level is not enough. Additional performance indicators at this level of analysis, preferably objective ones, should be used in the future to overcome measurement errors and common-source and common-method bias.

SUMMARY

This study tried to contribute to the discussion on organizational climate, performance, and politics in public sector organizations. Despite its limitations and differences between the micro-level and the macro-level results, the findings are interesting and point to the effect of public sector multiple climates and politics on individual and organizational performance. The implications of and directions for the future understanding of this arena should be developed in several tracks: (1) exploring the theoretical links between the complex setting of public sector environments, climates, and various outcomes of individuals and organizations; (2) dealing with the theoretical meaning of organizational politics in public agencies and its relationship with micro- and macro-level performance; (3) further development of the analytical methodology of linking the two levels of performance (micro and macro) and its usefulness; and (4) drawing conclusions from the findings that can be implemented in a practical manner in public agencies in general and, more specifically, in public schools and public education systems worldwide.

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