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Mediating Effect of Ethical Climate on the Relationship of Personality Types and Employees Mindfulness

Rowena Imelda A. Ramos

Adventist University of the Philippines, Putting Kahoy, Silang Cavite 4118, Philippines

Ryan Ray M. Mata

Manila Adventist College, Pasay City, Philippines

Rosalie C. Nacar

Occidental Mindoro State College, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, Philippines

Abstract---Globalization and technological advancement bring changes to the organization as well as to the behaviors of the employees. As a result, this descriptive-correlational study examined the effect of perceived ethical climate on individual differences – personality types and psychological state – mindfulness among employees. Purposive sampling was utilized to include 203 participants from different higher institutions who agreed to answer a questionnaire in google forms that were distributed through their emails. Results revealed respondents' personality types have high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and open-mindedness with moderate level of extraversion and low level of negative emotionality. Individual and organizational mindfulness of the participants were considerably very high. The participants perceived their organizations to have high level of consideration on rules, standard operating procedures and law and professional codes with moderate regard personal morality. More importantly, results of structural equation modeling established the claim that ethical climate increases the significant association of personality types to employees' mindfulness. With the evident association of personality types and mindfulness, trainings should be provided to enhance employees' personality and deal with possible differences. The significant mediating effect of ethical climate encourage organizational leaders to establish a work environment that uplifts employee's morale to increase mindfulness.

Keywords---ethical climate, mediating effect, mindfulness, personality types, structural equation modeling.

Introduction

With the advent of globalization and technological advancements, leaders and members of organizations are facing changes that may lead them to stress and perform negative behaviors. According to [Kee et al. \(2019\)](#), and [Ortet et al. \(2020\)](#), mindfulness has been given substantial interest in various disciplines including organizational sectors. Mindful individuals are fully aware of the current situation and react in a nonjudgmental way ([Ortet et al., 2020](#)). [Mesmer-Magnus et al. \(2017\)](#), and [Bajaj et al. \(2016\)](#), assert that the state of being mindful varies from person to person. [Karlin \(2018\)](#), concluded that the practice of mindfulness improves decision-making skills and encourages employees to succeed in organizational challenges and individual pressures.

Personality types including the domains of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, negative emotionality, and open-mindedness were explored in this study as correlates of mindfulness. The abovementioned characteristics of individuals lead scholars and researchers to further investigate how each of these personalities relates to individual, group, or organizational behavioral outcomes. In recent years, scholars and researchers also tried to look at the relationship between personality types and mindfulness. [Mehta & Hicks \(2020\)](#), ascertained a positive significant correlation of agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience while neuroticism showed a negative association. Similar results with the study of [Ortet et al. \(2020\)](#), were concluded among university participants. The ethical climate which refers to the collective perceptions among organizational members to what constitutes right behavior was also considered in this study. [Newman et al. \(2017\)](#), claimed that the ethical climate which results from organizational policies and leadership practices affect the ethical decision of the members of the organization as well their behaviors and attitude at work.

Previous studies dealt with the relationship of personality types to ethical climate and unethical behavior. For instance, the study of [Umukoro et al. \(2019\)](#), revealed that extraversion yielded favorable perceptions of law, code, and rule while neuroticism did not reflect any significant prediction of the included dimensions of ethical climate. [Koodamara et al. \(2021\)](#), also conducted a study among post-graduate business students and found out that extraversion exhibited a positive correlation while agreeableness and conscientiousness showed negative correlations with unethical behavior. On the other hand, they found out that neuroticism and openness to experience yielded no significant connection with unethical behavior. [Nguyen et al. \(2020\)](#), asserted that mindfulness is an antecedent of ethical climate or unethical behavior. [Newman et al. \(2017\)](#), conducted a publication analysis on the research that associates ethical climate to ethical and work behaviors, and they concluded that there was few research that links ethical climate and psychological state like mindfulness.

This present study was designed to deal with that insufficiency of examining the effect of ethical climate on the relationship among personality types and employees' mindfulness. Further, this research answered the following questions:

- What are the personality types of the respondents in terms of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, negative emotionality, and open-mindedness?
- How do the respondents perceive their organization's ethical climate when it comes to law and professional codes, rules and standard operating procedures and personal morality?
- What is the level of individual and organizational mindfulness of the respondents?
- Is there a significant relationship between personality types, perceived ethical climate and extent of mindfulness of the respondents?
- What is the effect of the perceived ethical climate to the relationship between personality types and employees' mindfulness?

Methods

Participants and procedure

The descriptive-correlational design was considered fit for the study to get a sufficient and detailed measurement of the variables and examine the relationships between them. Purposive sampling was used to include administrators, faculty, and staff of selected higher education institutions. Respondents were selected without regard to their age, marital status, work position, and educational attainment. 203 respondents answered the research instrument. However, two of them failed to finish it, thus their responses were excluded from the analyses ([Permatasari & Ratnawati, 2021](#); [Lestariasih & Dewi, 2021](#)).

Research instrument

The four-part survey questionnaire was administered through Google Forms. An informed consent form was given to the respondents which stated their participation is not mandatory and that they have the right to withdraw. Honesty in answering the questions was emphasized to ensure accurate results. The first part of the instrument was a constructed questionnaire to determine the demographic profile of the respondents which includes age, marital status, educational attainment, and work position. The second part identified the personality types of the respondents. [Soto & John \(2017\)](#), developed the BFI-2-S, a shorter version of the Big-Five Factor Markers from the International Personality Item Pool ([Goldberg, 1992](#)). The alpha reliabilities of this scale domains averaged 0.73 to 0.84. The assessment for mindfulness at work was done with the developed and validated questionnaire of [Manier \(2019\)](#). Both individual and organization domains α have a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=0.85$. [Cullen et al. \(1993\)](#), developed the Revised Ethical Climate Questionnaire (RECQ). This study adopted the 12 items under the scopes of rules standard operating procedures, law and professional codes, and personal morality. The reliability of these scales in this study was 0.76 which indicates a very good level. Researchers seek the approval of the mentioned authors of the research instruments ([Kim et al., 2009](#); [Wilson & O'Connor, 2017](#); [Evans et al., 2009](#)).

Data analysis

The data gathered was statistically analyzed, evaluated, and summarized. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the respondents' demographic profile, personality types, level of mindfulness, and types of ethical climate. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the variables. Structural Equation Modeling was employed to determine the role of ethical climate in the relationship between personality types and mindfulness (Haldorai et al., 2020; Sarkis et al., 2010; Harnett et al., 2016). The fitness of the model was evaluated using the goodness of fit indices. Aside from the chi-square and degrees of freedom to test differences, the following indices were reported: root means a square error of approximation ($0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq .08$), the goodness of fit ($.90 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1.00$;) and Comparative Fit Index ($.95 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1.00$).

Results

This descriptive-correlational study was intended to determine the relationship of personality types, ethical climate, and mindfulness among employees of selected higher educational institutions. This study further determined the effect of ethical climate in the association between personality types and employees' mindfulness (Jackman, 2020; Elçi et al., 2015; Sert et al., 2014).

Personality types of the respondents

Table 1 displays the personality types of the respondents. Descriptive analysis showed that participants have high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and open-mindedness. Meanwhile, the results also disclosed that participants have a moderate level of extraversion and a low level of negative emotionality.

Table 1
The personality types of the respondents

	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval		Interpretation
			Lower bound	Upper bound	
Agreeableness	23.53	3.09	23.10	23.96	High
Conscientiousness	23.13	3.66	22.62	23.64	High
Extraversion	19.40	3.44	18.92	19.88	Moderate
Negative Emotionality	14.69	3.95	14.14	15.24	Low
Open-Mindedness	21.00	3.32	20.54	21.46	High

Legend: Very Low = 5.00-10.49; Low = 10.50-15.49; Moderate = 15.50-20.49; High = 20.50-25.49; Very High = 25.50-30.00

Perceived ethical climate of the respondents

Table 2 demonstrates the extent of ethical climate as perceived by the respondents. The results indicated that participants have high levels of perceived ethical climate on law and professional codes as well as on rules and standard

operating procedures (Nagimova, 2021; Nyandra et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2021). On the other hand, the results also disclosed that participants have a moderate level of perceived ethical climate on personal morality.

Table 2
Level of the perceived ethical climate of the respondents

	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval		Interpretation
			Lower bound	Upper bound	
Law and Professional Codes	4.09	0.67	4.00	4.18	High
Rules and Standard Operating Procedures	3.97	0.56	3.89	4.05	High
Personal Morality	3.20	0.77	3.09	3.31	Moderate

Legend: Very Low = 1.00-1.49; Low = 1.50-2.49; Moderate = 2.50-3.49; High = 3.50-4.49; Very High = 4.50-5.00

Employees' mindfulness

Table 3 explains the extent of mindfulness of the respondents. The results indicated that participants have very high levels to both individual mindfulness and organizational mindfulness (Altizer et al., 2021; Cumming, 2014; Glomb et al., 2011).

Table 3
Extent of respondent's mindfulness

	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval		Interpretation
			Lower bound	Upper bound	
Individual Mindfulness	5.66	0.63	5.57	5.75	Very High
Organizational Mindfulness	5.54	1.10	5.39	5.69	Very High

Legend: Extremely Low = 1.00 – 1.49; Very Low = 1.50-2.49; Low = 2.50-3.49; Moderate = 3.50-4.49; High = 4.50-5.49; Very High = 5.50-6.49; Extremely High = 6.50-7.00

Relationship of personality types and employees' mindfulness

Table 4 presents the correlation between subscales of personality types and employees' mindfulness. Results showed that agreeableness ($r(199) = .29, p < .001, d = 1.53$), conscientiousness, ($r(199) = .35, p < .001, d = .75$), extraversion ($r(199) = .23, p = .001, d = .47$), and open-mindedness ($r(199) = .16, p = .02, d = .32$) are positively correlated with individual mindfulness. On the contrary, negative emotionality is negatively correlated with individual mindfulness ($r(199) = -.29, p < .001, d = -.61$). Results also showed that agreeableness ($r(199) = .28, p < .001, d = .58$), conscientiousness ($r(199) = .20, p = .004, d = .41$) and extraversion

($r(199) = .16$, $p = .03$, $d = .032$) are also positively correlated with organizational mindfulness. Conversely, negative emotionality is negatively correlated with organizational mindfulness ($r(199) = -.22$, $p = .001$, $d = -.45$).

Table 4
Correlation of personality types and employees' mindfulness

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Agreeableness	23.53	3.09						
2. Conscientiousness	23.13	3.66	.61** .000 [.51, .69]					
3. Extraversion	19.40	3.44	.21** .003 [.07, .33]	.36** .000 [.24, .48]				
4. Negative Emotionality	14.69	3.95	-.48** .000 [-.58, -.37]	-.50** .000 [-.60, -.39]	-.33** .000 [-.45, -.20]			
5. Open-Mindedness	21.00	3.32	.26** .000 [.12, .38]	.32** .000 [.19, .44]	.44** .000 [.32, .55]	-.29** .000 [-.41, -.15]		
6. Individual Mindfulness	5.66	.63	.29** .000 [.16, .41]	.35** .000 [.22, .46]	.23** .001 [.10, .36]	-.29** .000 [-.42, -.16]	.16* .022 [.02, .29]	
7. Organizational Mindfulness	5.54	1.10	.28** .000 [.15, .40]	.20** .004 [.07, .33]	.16* .023 [.02, .29]	-.22** .001 [-.35, .09]	-.003 .967 [-.14, .14]	.43** .000 [.31, .54]

Note: M = mean and SD = Standard Deviation. The values in the square brackets show the 95% confidence interval.

Relationship of personality types and perceived ethical climate

Table 5 presents the correlation between subscales of personality types and perceived ethical climate. Results showed that agreeableness ($r(199) = .18$, $p = .013$, $d = .36$) and conscientiousness, ($r(199) = .16$, $p = .026$, $d = .32$) are positively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of personal morality. In contrast, negative emotionality is negatively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of personal morality ($r(199) = -.23$, $p = .001$, $d = -.47$). Results also showed that conscientiousness ($r(199) = .14$, $p = .050$, $d = .28$), extraversion ($r(199) = .18$, $p = .011$, $d = .37$) and open-mindedness ($r(199) = .16$, $p = .02$, $d = .032$) are positively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of rules, and standard operating procedures. Conversely, negative emotionality is negatively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of rules, and standard operating procedures ($r(199) = -.19$, $p = .008$, $d = -.39$). Further, results also revealed that agreeableness ($r(199) = .19$, $p = .008$, $d = .39$), conscientiousness ($r(199) = .19$, $p = .006$, $d = .39$), and extraversion ($r(199) =$

.17, $p = .013$, $d = .35$) are positively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of law and professional codes. Yet, negative emotionality is negatively correlated with perceived ethical climate on the subscale of law and professional codes ($r(199) = -.24$, $p = .001$, $d = -.49$).

Table 5
Correlation of personality types and perceived ethical climate

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Agreeableness	23.53	3.09							
2. Conscientiousness	23.13	3.66	.61** .000 [.51, .69]						
3. Extraversion	19.40	3.44	.21** .003 [.07, .33]	.36** .000 [.24, .48]					
4. Negative Emotionality	14.69	3.95	-.48** .000 [-.58, -.37]	-.50** .000 [-.60, - .39]	-.33** .000 [-.45, -.20]				
5. Open-Mindedness	21.00	3.32	.26** .000 [.12, .38]	.32** .000 [.19, .44]	.44** .000 [.32, .55]	-.29** .000 [-.41, -.15]			
6. Personal Morality	3.20	.77	.18* .013 [.04, .31]	.16* .026 [.02, .29]	.086 .222 [-.05, .22]	-.23** .001 [-.35, -.09]	.13 .059 [-.004, .27]		
7. Rules and Standard Operating Procedures	3.97	.56	.08 .24 [-.06, .22]	.14* .050 [.0006, .27]	.18* .011 [.04, .31]	-.19** .008 [-.32, -.05]	.16* .02 [.03, .30]	.10 .16 [-.04, .24]	
8. Law and Professional Codes	4.09	.67	.19** .008 [.05, .32]	.19** .006 [.06, .32]	.17* .013 [.04, .31]	-.24** .001 [-.36, -.10]	.12 .081 [-.02, .26]	.27** .000 [.14, .39]	.62** .000 [.53, .70]

Note: M = mean and SD = Standard Deviation. The values in the square brackets show the 95% confidence interval.

Relationship of perceived ethical climate and employees' mindfulness

Table 6 presents the correlation between subscales of perceived ethical climate and employees' mindfulness. Results showed multiple correlations such as perceived ethical climate on personal morality ($r(199) = .23$, $p = .001$, $d = .47$) and rules and standard operating procedures, ($r(199) = .30$, $p < .001$, $d = .63$), and law and professional codes ($r(199) = .32$, $p < .001$, $d = .32$) are positively correlated with individual mindfulness. Likewise, results also indicated that perceived

ethical climate on personal morality ($r(199) = .33, p < .001, d = .70$) and rules and standard operating procedures, ($r(199) = .34, p < .001, d = .72$), and law and professional codes ($r(199) = .41, p < .001, d = .90$) are positively correlated with organizational mindfulness.

Table 6
Correlation of perceived ethical climate and employees' mindfulness

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Personal Morality	3.20	.77				
2. Rules and Standard Operating Procedures	3.97	.56	.10 .16 [-.04, .24]			
3. Law and Professional Codes	4.09	.67	.27** .000 [.14, .39]	.62** .000 [.53, .70]		
4. Individual Mindfulness	5.66	.63	.23** .001 [.09, .36]	.30** .000 [.17, .42]	.32** .000 [.19, .44]	
5. Organizational Mindfulness	5.54	1.10	.33** .000 [.20, .45]	.34** .000 [.21, .46]	.41** .000 [.29, .52]	.43** .000 [.31, .54]

Note: M = mean and SD = Standard Deviation. The values in the square brackets show the 95% confidence interval.

Mediating effects of perceived ethical climate on the relationship between personality types and employees' mindfulness

Structural equation modeling Analysis of Moment Structures was utilized to analyze the mediating role of perceived ethical climate to the relationship of personality types to employees' mindfulness. Figure 1 shows the good-fit model of interaction between personality types and employees' mindfulness as mediated by perceived ethical climate (Guidetti et al., 2019; Teresi et al., 2019; Giluk, 2009).

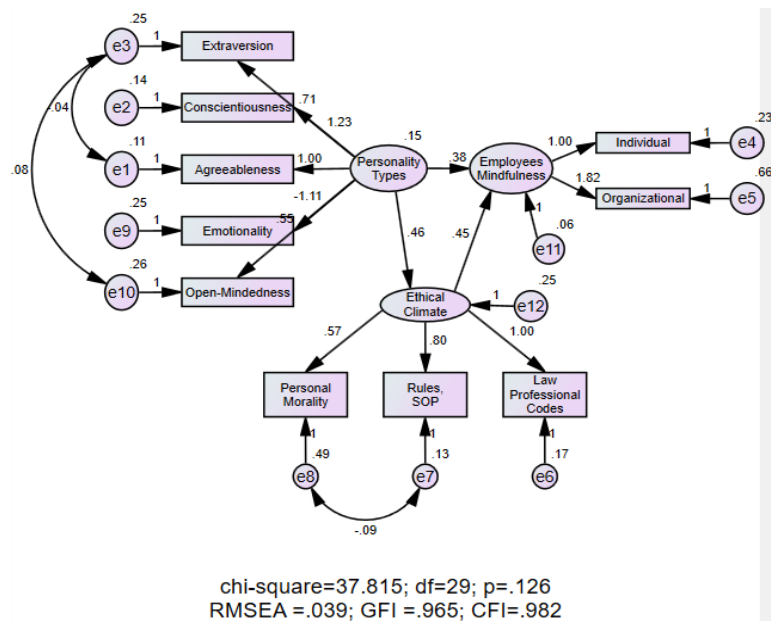


Figure 1. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between personality types and employees' mindfulness as mediated by the perceived ethical climate

Table 7 showed that personality types have a significant effect on employees' mindfulness ($B = .38, p = .001$) and on perceived ethical climate ($B = .46, p = .001$). Likewise, the perceived ethical climate has also a statistically significant effect on employees' mindfulness ($B = .45, p = .001$).

Table 7
Regression weights, T values, P- values of the path analysis

	Regression Weight β	t-values	p values	Interpretation
Personality Types -> Employees' Mindfulness	.38	3.75	.001	Significant
Personality Types -> Perceived Ethical Climate	.46	3.63	.001	Significant
Perceived Ethical Climate -> Employees' Mindfulness	.45	5.22	.001	Significant

The specific effects of personality types on mindfulness were presented in Table 9. The direct effect of personality types on employees' mindfulness is statistically significant with $\beta = 0.363$ and $p = .003$. Similarly, the indirect effect of personality types on employees' mindfulness as mediated by ethical climate is also significant with $\beta = .197, p = .001$. Thus, the total effects of personality types on employees' mindfulness increased to $\beta = 0.560, p = .001$, and is indeed significant. Therefore, ethical climate partially mediates the relationship of personality types to employees' mindfulness (Wadlinger & Isaacowitz, 2011; Baer et al., 2019).

Table 8
Standardized estimation

	Standardized Estimation	p-value	Interpretation	Type of Mediation
Direct Effect	0.363	.003	Significant	Partial
Indirect Effect	0.197	.001	Significant	
Total Effect	0.560	.001	Significant	

Effects of Personality Types to Employees' Mindfulness as Mediated by Perceived Ethical Climate

Discussion

The result of this study illustrated that higher education institutions' employees regardless of their demographic status have high levels of personality types in terms of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and open-mindedness while the level of extraversion is moderate. On the contrary, their negative emotionality is low. Mead (2021), believed that having negative emotions are a normal part of a personality, which when handled well, can be beneficial to one's well-being. The high level of the agreeableness of the respondents leads them to be approachable and responsive to others' needs (Ackerman, 2017; Bucher et al., 2019; Ortet et al., 2020). Also, the level of their high scores of conscientiousness tells that they can regulate their impulse control and participate in goal-directed manners (Bucher et al., 2019; Grohol, 2019; Ortet et al., 2020). Additionally, with their high levels of extraversion, they are friendly and open in sharing their thoughts (Bucher et al., 2019; Lim, 2020; Ortet et al., 2020). Further, having high open-minded employees are means high curiosity levels to become independent (Bucher et al., 2019; Gray, 2017; Ortet et al., 2020). On the other hand, since the respondents have a low level of negative emotionality means that they have no issues in balancing their negative emotions.

The respondents perceived their institution to have a high emphasis on laws and professional codes, as well as set rules and standard operating procedures yet with moderate regard for personal morality. Trevino & Nelson (2021), mentioned that a code of ethics establishes standards and advocates ethical behavior in the organization and guides the employees to not commit unethical behavior. The ethical climate is classically defined by Victor & Cullen (1987), established shared perceptions of categorized or casual procedures and policies which influence expected ethical behaviors in the organization. The employees' mindfulness was very high as shown in the findings of this study. Mindfulness is a pleasing characteristic that encourages maximum human functioning (Nguyen et al., 2020; Small & Lew, 2021). Individual mindfulness is a pleasing characteristic that encourages maximum human functioning (Nguyen et al., 2020; Small & Lew, 2021). The high level of respondent's mindfulness results in controlled thoughts, improved healthy lifestyle, and enhanced self-regulation behaviors, and established valuable social relationships (Bajaj et al., 2016).

Evidently, personality types, mindfulness, and perceived ethical climates have a significant relationship to each other. These findings support the study of Barkan

et al. (2016), as mentioned by Tang & Braver (2020), that personality traits can be utilized to influence mindfulness. Particularly, agreeableness and open-mindedness were considered as predictors of enhancing mindfulness (Mehta & Hicks, 2020; Ortet et al., 2020). Most importantly, the effect of personality types on mindfulness increased when the perceived ethical climate was entered into the structural equation modeling.

Conclusion

The results of this study significantly addressed the cited scarcity in the literature of establishing the mediating role of ethical climate on the effect of individual differences as measured by personality traits on the psychological state of mindfulness. Thus, organizations should employ programs that will regulate one's personality traits as it can significantly influence mindfulness at work. Further, a high level of ethical climate should be empowered in an organization to generate better outputs from the employees. Enhancing employees' personalities can turn them to mature professionals and become effective and efficient in attaining the organization's success. Personality training can be planned by organizations to nurture employees' patience, confidence, and effectiveness despite of differences. In addition, higher institutions should also develop programs or activities that will help employees consistently cultivate their mindfulness. Participating in mindfulness training programs can contribute to innovative work behavior and increase engagement. Additionally, a purposeful emphasis on mindfulness as a possible developmental lever for leaders in the framework of conferring on personality-related behaviors may be useful.

Establishing a positive and supportive ethical climate increased mindfulness at work towards greater productivity. Leaders should also consider uplifting the ethical climate of the organization especially, on the personal morality of the employees. When employees realized the reasons to act according to communicated policies but are given room to keep their autonomy at work, they tend to be more ethical. Further, when employees feel that their work makes decisions by organizational mindfulness, they are inclined to experience a more engaging connection with their work and their peers.

Ethics statement

The Ethics Review Board (ERB) of the participant's institution approved the conformity of the study with the principles of human research ethics. The respondents consented to participate in the study by the stipulations enumerated in the informed consent form. Confidentiality of the gathered information was highly established.

Author contributions

All three authors developed this study and contributed to this paper. Ryan Ray Mata and Rosalie Nacar compiled the related literature to establish the need of conducting the research and give support to the findings of the present research. Rowena Imelda Ramos secured the endorsement of the Ethics Regulatory Board of the institutions of the respondents as well as the consent of the authors of the

research instruments. She also performed the statistical analysis, interpret the results and elaborate the discussions.

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