

Organizational Health Behavioral Index (OHBI): Basis for Strategic, Management, and Employee Engagement Planning for an Attached Agency of the Department of Agriculture, Philippines

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Abstract. This study evaluated the organizational health of an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines by developing an Organizational Health Behavioral Index (OHBI). The study used a descriptive quantitative design supplemented by qualitative analysis to capture 52 randomly selected employees' perceptions of their workplace environment. Data were collected using a standardized OHBI survey derived from Jaafari et al. (2023), which included aspects such as awareness, appreciation, interpersonal interactions, engagement, internal communication, employee persona, organizational culture, and employee voice. For quantitative data, descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used, whilst qualitative replies were analyzed thematically. The study found that the organization excelled in awareness ($\bar{x}=3.56$) and relations ($\bar{x}=3.36$), while internal communication ($\bar{x}=3.26$) and appreciation ($\bar{x}=3.15$) were regarded as successful but needed improvement. Employee engagement ($\bar{x}=2.80$) was identified as the most essential concern, requiring focused actions. Qualitative findings identified teamwork and camaraderie as organizational strengths, whereas unfavorable cultural pockets, limited career progression prospects, and workplace politics emerged as recurrent issues. The estimated OHBI score was 74.75, indicating a generally healthy organizational climate with opportunities for improvement. Based on these findings, the report suggests implementing strategic initiatives such as formal employee appreciation programs, improved internal communications, career development frameworks, transparent promotion processes, leadership development programs, and culture-building workshops. These ideas attempt to promote an organizational culture that is cohesive, appreciative, and engagement-driven, with a focus on employee well-being and professional development.

Keywords: Employee Engagement; Employee Persona; Management; Organizational Health Behavioral Index; Organizational Culture;

1. Introduction

In the Philippine government sector, organizational performance is deeply influenced by employee behavior, institutional culture, and management practices. While many public sector employees express appreciation for job stability, opportunities for public service, and the sense of purpose derived from contributing to national development, they also frequently report concerns such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, limited career advancement opportunities, inconsistent leadership practices, and lack of employee recognition. These recurring patterns of feedback, both positive and negative, highlight the critical need for a structured approach to understanding and addressing behavioral dynamics within government institutions.

Organizational health is an essential determinant of organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and operational sustainability (Kearney & Hays, 2021). It is defined by factors such as leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, internal communication, and cultural alignment. Organizational health plays a vital role in ensuring that public sector organizations can meet their mandates efficiently and sustainably. Despite its recognized importance, there is a noticeable gap in how government institutions systematically assess and integrate organizational health into its strategic and operational planning.

This research utilized Organizational Health Behavioral Index (OHBI) as a basis for enhancing strategic, management, and employee engagement initiatives within the Organization under study. In identifying and interpreting patterns in employee feedback and organizational practices, the OHBI aims to provide evidence-based insights for more informed planning and leadership decisions. By evaluating dimensions such as basic needs, corporate needs, and employee voice, this study sought to identify strengths and gaps in the Agency's organizational health and recommend targeted strategies for improvement.

2. Methodology

The research utilized a descriptive method with a standardized survey instrument to collect data on employee perceptions about their Organization. Quantitative data were examined employing descriptive and inferential statistical tools and techniques, and qualitative data from open-ended questions were assessed using thematic analysis.

The respondents were employees of an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines and selected using simple random sampling from a population of 637 employees, where 52 staff members responded to the survey.

To calculate the OHBI Score, the survey questions were divided into two subscales. Subscale A has sixteen items, including the dimensions of awareness, appreciation, relationship with colleagues, employee engagement, and internal communication. The items were evaluated using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree. The steps for scoring and calculating Subscale A are as follows:

1. Assign the numerical values of the responses: Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1.
2. For each respondent, sum each item's score in each dimension and divide it by the total number of items in that dimension.

3. Calculate the average dimension score from all respondents.
4. Average the dimension scores to get the overall Subscale A score.
5. To standardize to a scale of 100, normalize the Subscale A score using the formula:

$$\text{Subscale A Standardized Score} = \left(\frac{\text{Subscale A Score} - 1}{4 - 1} \right) \times 100$$

Subscale B is composed of ten items that include the thematic elements of employee persona, company culture, and employee voice. In contrast to Subscale A, Subscale B is qualitative data, consisting of both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. It required thematic analysis to see trends and patterns and used a scoring methodology. The evaluation and scoring procedures for Subscale B are as follows:

1. Group the questions into two themes of employee persona (personal interests, knowledge about coworkers, means of appreciation, most appreciated entity, and communication preference), organizational culture, and employee voice (positive and negative aspects).
2. Scoring guide for each code in the themes (Murray, 2014).
 - 2.1 Employee Persona: Assign a score of 4 (Strongly Agree) if mentioned by more than 50% of the respondents and assign a score of 3 (Agree) if mentioned by more than 25% of the respondents and assign no score if mentioned by less than 25% of the respondents.
 - 2.2 Organizational Culture:
 - 2.2.1 Positive Aspect: Assign a score of 4 (Strongly Agree) if 2 or more positive aspects were given, or if respondents gave a suggestion for further improvement, indicating their positive engagement with the Organization. Assign a score of 3 (Agree) if at least 1 positive aspect was given. Assign a score of 1 (Strongly Disagree) if no positive aspect was given.
 - 2.2.2 Negative Aspect: Assign a score of 1 (Strongly Disagree) if 2 or more negative aspects were given, or if respondents gave detailed feedback of the negative situation, indicating their strong sentiment with the Organization. Assign a score of 2 (Disagree) if at least 1 positive aspect was given. Assign a score of 4 (Strongly Agree) if no negative aspect was given.
3. Calculate the score across all respondents and average them to get each theme's score.
4. Average both theme's score to derive the overall Subscale B score.
5. To standardize to a 0 to 100 scale, normalize the Subscale B score using the formula:

$$\text{Subscale B Standardized Score} = \left(\frac{\frac{\text{Employee Persona} + \text{Corporate Culture}}{2} - 1}{4 - 1} \right) \times 100$$

Calculate the overall weight to derive the OHBI using the formula:

$$OHBI = \left(\frac{\text{Subscale A Standardized Score} + \text{Subscale B Standardized Score}}{2} \right)$$

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Basic Needs

Table 1 Basic Needs: Awareness, Appreciation and Relations

Statement	Mean	Remarks
Awareness		
I am aware of my organization's strategy and its future directions.	3.65	SA
I am implementing our organization's values in my daily work.	3.56	SA
I am aware of my organization's external and internal news.	3.40	SA
I am aware of my rights and privileges as an employee in my organization.	3.63	SA
Awareness Weighted Mean	3.56	SA
Appreciation		
My direct manager appreciates my work and my accomplishments satisfactorily.	3.38	SA
My organization appreciates my efforts by providing the necessary capabilities to better my work.	3.23	A
I rarely think about leaving (my organization) to work somewhere else.	2.83	A
Appreciation Weighted Mean	3.15	A
Relations		
My relationship with my colleagues in other departments is effective.	3.44	SA
My relationship with my line manager is perfect.	3.31	SA
My family's relationship with my organization is good (their awareness of the nature of my work, their appreciation of the services provided by my organization, and its news).	3.33	SA
Relations Weighted Mean	3.36	SA

Note: 1.00–1.75 "Strongly Disagree" (SD); 1.76–2.50 "Disagree" (D); 2.51–3.25 "Agree" (A); and 3.25–4.00 "Strongly Agree" (SA)

Table 1 shows the Basic Needs of employees in terms of awareness, appreciation and relations. Awareness scored an average weighted mean of 3.56 verbally described as strongly agree and verbally interpreted as the domain to be highly effective. Having strong awareness of the organization's strategy and future direction supports efficient management (Ng & Dileep, 2015) and can be capitalized in fostering collaboration among employees. The alignment of personal and organizational values increases organizational well-being and is a critical ingredient in the organization's success. When an organization's values coincide with those of its employees, it results in an improved work environment, enhanced productivity, increased job satisfaction, and reduced turnover (Albertie et al., 2023).

Appreciation had an average weighted mean of 3.15, verbally described as agree and can be verbally interpreted as the domain to be effective. Notably, among all assertions within the Appreciation domain, managerial appreciation received the highest level of agreement. Consequently, it can be deduced that employees seek alternative types of recognition that only the Organization can offer. Earlier studies suggest that positive and supportive organizational culture where employees feel valued, empowered and motivated leads to better performance. Whereas rigid organizations lead to poor communication, suppress creativity, and impede engagement (Siswanto, 2024). While employee appreciation and engagement correlate with better organizational health (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), career growth and opportunities hold equal importance in job satisfaction. Studies suggest that when employees are highly satisfied with their jobs, it leads to better productivity, quality and trust.

Lastly, Relation garnered an average weighted mean of 3.36, which can be verbally described as agree and verbally interpreted as the domain is highly effective. The data shows that the bond among colleagues is strong even outside the department of the respondents, which may suggest that there are strong interactions among colleagues in the Organization. Having positive relationship within the workplace increase happiness (Marsden, 2024), which in turn enhances creativity and productivity (Taylor & Westover, 2011). The relationship of the respondents' families with the Organization is also strong, as indicated by the strong agreement of the respondents on the statement "My family's relationship with my organization is good (their awareness of the nature of my work, their appreciation of the services provided by my organization, and its news)." Having a strong relationship between one's family and the employer positively contributes to meaningful work and positively affects an employee's self-esteem (Hwang et al., 2025).

3.2 Corporate Needs

Table 2 Corporate Needs: Engagement and Internal Communication

Statement	Mean	Remarks
Engagement		
I am keen to publish achievements and activities of my organization through my accounts on social media and my external meetings.	2.67	A
I don't feel the time I spend on developing my tasks while I'm working.	2.67	A
I know the professional history of my colleagues, their health, and how to deal with them in general.	3.06	A
Engagement Weighted Mean	2.80	A
Internal Communication		
My organization interacts very well with the international days compared to other organizations.	3.19	A
The services provided by internal communication during the last year were satisfactory, whether it was email communication messages or motivational initiatives and recreational and interactive activities).	3.23	A
Internal communication was able to reach me through various communication channels.	3.35	SA
Internal Communications Weighted Mean	3.26	A

Note: 1.00–1.75 "Strongly Disagree" (SD); 1.76–2.50 "Disagree" (D); 2.51–3.25 "Agree" (A); and 3.25–4.00 "Strongly Agree" (SA)

Table 2 shows the Corporate Needs in terms of engagement and internal communications. Engagement scored an average weighted mean of 2.80, which is verbally described as agree and can be verbally interpreted as the domain being effective. The data indicates a high level of engagement among colleagues inside the Organization. This assessment is corroborated by the high score of the statement "My relationship with my colleagues in other departments is effective" in the Relations table. Interestingly, respondents exhibit a noticeable reluctance to disclose work-related matters externally, even on social media platforms. This may have resulted from restrictions imposed by organizational policy as a public agency or may simply reflect the respondents' personal preferences. It is worth noting that among the domains, Engagement scored the lowest with an average weighted mean of 2.80. Although it is interpreted to be effective, this domain may be classified as an area of development. Various research (Bernardo et al., 2023; Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021; Singh et al., 2021; Taconis et al., 2018) proved that strong employee engagement leads to better performance, healthier organizational culture, increases satisfaction both by the employee and employer, and improves retention. Low employee

engagement does not only diminish the potential of the employee but is also threatens the organization’s ability to reach its goals.

On the other hand, Internal Communication scored an average weighted mean of 3.26, which can be verbally described as agree and can be verbally interpreted as the domain being effective. The statement “Internal communication was able to reach me through various communication channels” was determined to be highly effective, whereas the statements “My organization interacts very well with the international days compared to other organizations” and “The services provided by internal communication during the last year were satisfactory, whether it was email communication messages or motivational initiatives and recreational and interactive activities)” were classified as only effective. This implies that Internal Communication, despite its excellent delivery, may have been utilized solely for conveying work-related communications. While effective communication channels positively influence organizational performance (Musheke et al., 2021; Tkalac Verčič, 2021), internal communication may also be used to increase employee engagement, satisfaction and morale such as through appreciation and celebration of small wins (Miller, 2023).

3.3 Employee Persona

Table 3 Personal Interests

Personal Interest	Frequency	Percentage
Money and business	37	71.15%
Travel and tourism	37	71.15%
Sports and health	33	63.46%
Restaurants and cafes	31	59.62%
Entertainment and shopping	30	57.69%
Education and development	27	51.92%
Technology and E- games	25	48.08%
Volunteering and community service	16	30.77%
Culture and arts	15	28.85%
Plant and animal wildlife	9	17.31%

The above table shows the personal interests of the respondents, sorted from highest to lowest. “Money and business” and “Travel and tourism” were ranked the highest with 71.15%, followed by “Sports and health, ” “Restaurants and cafes,” and “Restaurants and cafes” with 63.46%, 59.62% and 57.69%, respectively. This shows the strong interest of the participants in income generation and leisure.

Table 4 Co-Worker Knowledge

Co-Worker Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
General information about them	35	67.31%
How to deal with them	32	61.54%
Their professional and academic history	32	61.54%
Their hobbies and talents	27	51.92%
Their health condition	21	40.38%
Not interested	2	3.85%

More than 50% of the respondents know general information about their colleagues, how to deal with them, their professional and academic background, their hobbies and talents. This can be inferred that employees in the Organization have strong bonds to the extent that they know personal information about each other. This is further supported by the high score of the statement “My relationship with my colleagues in other departments is effective” in the Relations domain.

Table 5 Means of Appreciation

Means of Appreciation	Frequency	Percentage
Taking care of my mental health.	46	88.46%
Appreciation by management.	38	73.08%
Taking care of my professional development and career development.	38	73.08%
Financial benefits and compensation.	31	59.62%
Verbal appreciation and gratitude.	27	51.92%
Taking care of my physical health.	26	50.00%
Involve me in important decisions.	26	50.00%
Announcing and highlighting my achievements.	14	26.92%
Clarify my rights and privileges.	12	23.08%
Gifts.	2	3.85%

Forty-six or 88.46% of the respondents said that taking care of their mental health is what they consider as the highest form of appreciation, followed by the appreciation by the management, and professional and career development tied at 73.08%. This underscores the importance of mental wellbeing of the employees, company recognition, professional growth and career development over financial benefits and compensation, which only scored 59.62%.

Table 6 Preferred Means of Communication

Preferred Means of Communication	Frequency	Percentage
Text messages, SMS	52	100.00%
Email	51	98.08%
Viber	40	76.92%
Workshops	31	59.62%
Telegram	29	55.77%
WhatsApp	25	48.08%
Intranet	20	38.46%
Server screens	5	9.62%
Wall stickers	4	7.69%
Snapchat	3	5.77%

Text messages (SMS) received the greatest preference, with 100% of respondents selecting it, followed by email at 98.08%, and Viber at 76.92%. The prevalence of texting, or Short Message Service (SMS), is unsurprising given that the Philippines was formerly recognized as the texting capital of the world owing to the multitude of text messages sent by Filipinos by the minute. Although alternative chat applications like Viber, Telegram, and WhatsApp are available, these programs necessitate data services that incur additional costs. Conversely, unlimited text service is typically included with basic prepaid and postpaid telecommunications plans.

3.4 Employee Voice: Qualitative Responses

Table 7 Positive and Negative Aspect

Aspect	Frequency	Percentage
Positive		
Teamwork	22	42.31%
Positive Culture	14	26.92%
Availability of Opportunities	14	26.92%
Work-Life Balance	14	26.92%
Good Communication	13	25.00%
Strong Leadership	9	17.31%
Negative		
Negative Culture	17	32.69%
Limited Benefits and Opportunities	11	21.15%
Workplace Politics	10	19.23%
Poor Leadership	6	11.54%
Overwork	5	9.62%
Poor Communication	5	9.62%
Poor Facility	2	3.85%

The feedback from respondents reveals starkly contrasting perspectives on various aspects, including work-life balance versus overwork, good versus poor communication, availability versus limitation of opportunities, and strong versus poor leadership. Subsequent investigation indicates that these conflicting responses exist across different divisions. For example, in one division, there were criticisms of the difficulty of interacting with colleagues, lack of office decorum, gossiping, toxic co-workers, and “palakasan” (use of connection to get a job or better position at work). At the same time, there was feedback on positive team culture, collaboration, professionalism, and good relationship with officemates, and opportunities for growth, which indicates a heterogeneous perspective. This implies that there is presence of subcultures within the Organization, resulting in divergent perspectives among the respondents.

Chandler (2010) defines subcultures as communities characterized by a shared set of rules and beliefs. Subcultures typically cluster around established divisions, although subcultures may emerge independently of existing organizational subdivisions, such as departmental or functional groups.

Martin (1992, as cited in Badia et al., 2020) identified three perspectives in the examination of organizational culture. First, research that proposed a homogeneous, cohesive organizational culture across the entire organization (integration). These represent the most prevalent studies. Second, exploration that identified distinct cultural expressions within the organization (differentiation). And lastly, a study that indicated the impossibility of achieving a cultural consensus due to the presence of diverse and occasionally conflicting perspectives (fragmentation).

Subcultures inside organizations significantly affect the overall work environment and shape employee perceptions. These microcosms, influenced by distinct values, beliefs, and behaviors, can cultivate a sense of belonging and community among employees, resulting in improved job satisfaction and productivity. In contrast, when subcultures conflict with the prevailing organizational culture, they may result in misunderstandings, discord, and reduced morale. Comprehending these relationships is essential for executives seeking to establish a unified and inclusive workplace that fosters multiple identities while conforming to broad business objectives (Vorecol, 2024).

3.5 OHBI Score

Table 8 The OHBI Score

Dimension	Average Score	Standardized Score
Subscale A	3.23	74.18
Awareness	3.56	85.42
Appreciation	3.15	71.58
Relation	3.36	78.63
Engagement	2.80	60.04
Internal Communication	3.26	75.21
Subscale B	3.26	75.32
Employee Persona	3.81	93.59
Personal Interest	3.78	92.53
Co-Worker Knowledge	3.90	96.70
Communication Preference	3.82	94.04
Appreciation Methods	3.94	98.14
Appreciated Entity	3.60	86.54
Organizational Culture	2.71	57.05
Positive	3.38	79.49
Negative	2.04	34.62
OHBI	3.24	74.75

Under Subscale A, “Awareness” had the highest standardized score of 85.42, suggesting the employees' strong awareness with the Organizations’ strategy and direction, values, internal and external news, and their rights and privileges as employees. “Engagement” scored the lowest at 60.04, calling for the need to take steps in increasing the internal and external engagements of the employees. Subscale B's Employee Persona achieved the highest standardized score of 93.59. This indicates that employees possess markedly comparable traits. It is crucial for leaders to understand the attributes of employee personas to acknowledge the distinctions among employees, enabling them to determine the most effective approach to address these nuances (Danzig, 2022). Subscale B's Organizational Culture received a comparatively low score of 57.05, primarily attributable to divergent perspectives among the respondents. It is important to recognize that while certain individuals perceive one facet of the Organization positively, others may hold an opposing viewpoint. These divergent perspectives present an opportunity for management to address its weakness and reinforce its strengths.

The composite OHBI of 74.75 currently lacks a benchmark for comparison or a standard scale for interpretation. At present, its value lies in the insights it provides about the different dimensions of the Organization. The main focus, for now, is not on comparing with others but on comparing the Organization with itself and implementing incremental changes to enhance its future OHBI.

4. Conclusions

The study reveals that, while the company excels at awareness, interpersonal relationships, and internal communication, significant issues remain in employee engagement, equal recognition mechanisms, and addressing subcultural disparities within divisions. Positive features like collaboration and excellent connections among colleagues lay the groundwork for a helpful work culture, but they are weakened by persistent challenges such as unfavorable culture pockets, workplace politics, and limited prospects for advancement.

The presence of opposing perspectives on similar organizational characteristics implies a fragmented culture shaped by various leadership styles, division-specific practices, and disparities in access to opportunities. This underlines the importance of consistent, inclusive, and transparent management approaches across all divisions.

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