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The organizational climate and its relationship with academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at Thi Qar University

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to construct and design scales for organizational climate and academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Thi-Qar. It seeks to identify the relationship between the scales of organizational climate and academic stress among these students, as well as to extract the standards and levels for both scales. The research population consisted of 849 students, divided into an exploratory sample of 12 students, a construction sample of 120 students, and an application sample of 80 students, resulting in a sample percentage of 24.97%. The researcher reached several conclusions, the most important of which were the construction of the organizational climate scale with 45 items belonging to three domains, and the construction of the academic stress scale with 45 items also belonging to three domains. The results showed varying frequencies and percentages, indicating high, very high, average, and low levels; however, the average level was predominant in the organizational climate scale, while a low level was predominant in the academic stress scale.

Keywords: *Organizational Climate, Academic Pressures, College Students*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Research and Its Importance:

Sports psychology is one of the branches of general psychology that aims to study the behavior of athletes and the psychological influences that affect their athletic performance, in addition to examining the factors that impact sports activity. The goal of studying sports psychology is to discover the factors that influence athletic personality to enhance and improve sports performance.

The study and understanding of sports psychology can elevate athletic levels by harnessing the additional energy present within individuals, which should be utilized more effectively when necessary. Considering that sports psychology is a branch of sports and training sciences, the focus of the study may include attempts to describe, interpret, and predict behavior in sports situations when required.

It is worth noting that the university environment is not merely a place for learning academic skills; it is a community where students interact and influence one another. The social relationships among students, as well as between students and professors, significantly affect the social atmosphere of the university, which in turn impacts educational outcomes.

Therefore, it is essential to provide the necessary educational resources and capabilities to create an appropriate psychological university climate for students, such as university administration and related decisions and instructions, teaching staff and teaching methods, university facilities, which include courtyards, sports fields, buildings, and others, as well as student activities and human relationships among the students themselves. A university climate that meets the needs of students and fulfills their expectations will lead to achieving academic adjustment, while a university climate that a student dislikes—due to its failure to provide enjoyable experiences and meet their needs and requirements—will result in a failure of their university, personal, and social adjustment.

Academic stress is considered a type of psychological arousal that occurs when external demands exceed an individual's ability to cope. This stress is associated with health, educational requirements, work environments, and social relationships, all of which impact the psychological, physical, and emotional state of the student. University students may face more complex issues compared to previous educational stages, as they encounter greater academic demands that align with their

personalities and ideas at this age, along with changes in family relationships and academic social life. Some students, upon entering university, may exhibit stress strategies due to the sudden change in environment from one stage to another, which can negatively affect their coping with stress. However, some stress is necessary for personal growth and responsibility.

This highlights the importance of researching the role of the organizational climate in understanding the level and type of relationship with the academic stress faced by college students, and the effort to improve it by reducing stress and enhancing the academic and personal experience of students, as it has a significant impact on their psychological well-being.

1.2 Research Problem:

The university stage is one of the most important phases of education that has garnered the attention of most developed countries due to its significant impact on societies, as it involves the youth of the nation and its promising future. Therefore, efforts must be united from all responsible parties during this stage to improve the reality of higher education and overcome the various challenges faced by university students within the campus environment. These challenges may include psychological or social issues, in addition to academic burdens, whether theoretical or practical.

Stress is often the starting point for many problems experienced by university students, such as anxiety, fear of exams, and failure. As the complexities of life increase, individuals are exposed to numerous situations of failure and frustration in fulfilling their desires and meeting their diverse needs. This leads them to experience psychological pressures, which form the primary foundation upon which other pressures, such as economic, social, academic, and familial pressures, are built.

Academic pressures are considered one of the most significant sources of psychological stress for university students at this age, as it represents a turning point in character development and self-expression. Students bear the responsibility of overcoming the challenges of interacting with peers and professors, as well as the difficulties of academic subjects, by managing all the pressures they face to develop their academic and emotional potential. This can be achieved by creating a positive university atmosphere that students find appealing, where they feel a sense of belonging to their university, appreciate its unique contributions, and engage with it in addressing their problems. The university's continuous efforts to help students reach their maximum aspirations highlight the research problem, which aims to identify the level and type of relationship between the university climate and academic pressures, while attempting to propose appropriate solutions to this important relationship.

1-3 Research Objectives:

1- To construct and design scales for organizational climate and academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Dhi Qar.

2- To extract the standards and levels for the scales of organizational climate and academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Dhi Qar.

3- To identify the relationship between the scales of organizational climate and academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Dhi Qar.

1-4 Research Fields:

1-4-1 Human Field: Students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Dhi Qar 2024-2025

1-4-2 Spatial Field: Classrooms in the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Dhi Qar.

1-4-3 Temporal Field: 1/11/2024 – 15/5/2025

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FIELD PROCEDURES:

3-1 Research Method: The researcher used a descriptive method with a survey approach and correlational relationships due to its suitability for the nature of the current study.

2 Research Population and Sample: The research population was identified as the students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Science at Thi Qar University for the academic year 2024/2025, totaling (849) male and female students across all levels. A sample of (250) students was randomly selected from all levels, after which a number of student questionnaires from the construction sample and the application sample were excluded due to incorrect responses or failure to submit electronically. Consequently, the total sample consisted of (212) students, distributed as follows: an exploratory trial sample of (12) students, a construction sample of (120) students, and an application sample of (80) students. The percentage of the research sample was (24.97%) of the research population, with the samples divided as follows:

1- The construction sample consisted of (120) students, representing (14.13%) of the research population. This sample includes the methodological procedures required for conducting the statistical analysis necessary to construct the research scales.

2- The exploratory trial sample consisted of (12) students, representing (1.41%) of the research population. The

methodological procedures for this sample involve testing the research scales in an exploratory manner.

3- The application sample consisted of (80) students (40 male and 40 female), representing (9.42%) of the research population. The research scales were applied in their final forms through this sample

2-3 Research Tools:

2-3-1 Means of Information Collection:
1- Arabic and foreign sources and references.
2- Previous studies and research.
3- The international information network (the Internet).
4- Questionnaire forms.

2-3-2 Means of Data Collection:
1- Observation.
2- Personal interviews.
3- Tests and scales.
4- Registration forms.

2-3-3 Means of Data Analysis:
1- Statistical methods.
2- Electronic and manual calculators.
3-4 Field Research Procedures:
Procedures for constructing and standardizing the organizational climate and academic stress scales.
2-4-1 Purpose of Constructing the Research Scales: One of the important steps in constructing a specific scale is to clearly define the purpose (objective) of the scale and the intended use of this scale. The early need to define the purpose of the test when deciding to build it follows the hypothesis that the shape of the test and some of its characteristics differ based on the purpose of the test (Alawi and Radwan: 2002, 320).

2-4-2 Defining the Phenomenon to be Studied: Before starting the descriptive study and constructing and standardizing the study scales in accordance with the theoretical reference framework and reaching a solution to the problem, it is necessary to define the phenomenon to be studied.

2-4-3 Defining the Areas of the Scales.

To determine the domains of the Organizational Climate Scale and the Academic Stress Scale among students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Thi-Qar, the researcher reviewed various sources, studies, and previous research related to the topic, in addition to conducting personal interviews.
First: Domains of the Organizational Climate Scale
1 - Organizational Structure
2 - Work Environment
3 - Incentives

Second: Domains of the Academic Stress Scale
1 - Academic Stress
2 - Social Stress
3 - Personal Stress

2-4-4 Presentation of the Initial Form of the Scales
The initial form of the scale was presented to a group of (11) experienced and specialized experts in the field of sports psychology, testing, and measurement to ensure the validity of the scale items and their appropriateness for the domain in which they were placed. The experts then provided their feedback and comments on the scale items.
2-4-5 Pilot Study: After the study scales were prepared for application on a preliminary sample, the researcher selected (12) students from the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Thi-Qar from all stages on Thursday, January 16, 2025, to ensure their understanding of the scales.

Table (1) Shows the means, standard deviations, and skewness coefficients for the sample of the construction.

Coefficient of Skewness	Standard Deviation	The Median	Mean	Scale
0.394	6.76	165	164.76	Organizational Climate

0.512	4.43	144	144.32	Academic Pressures

6. Main Experiment:

After completing the procedures for constructing the research scales, the researcher applied the organizational climate scale, which consists of 45 items, and the academic stress scale, also consisting of 45 items, to the main application sample of students from the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at Thi Qar University, totaling 80 male and female students from all four levels, from February 16, 2025, to February 20, 2025. The questionnaires were then collected and prepared for statistical analysis.

2.7 Statistical Tools:

The researcher used Excel and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to process the data.

3. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION:

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results obtained from the application of the organizational climate and academic stress scales on the main research sample through the research tool (the questionnaire), and then statistically processed the results using the SPSS software to review and analyze the questionnaire items.

5.1.1 Presentation and Analysis of Statistical Indicators for the Organizational Climate Scale and Its Domains:

Table (2) Shows the statistical indicators of the organizational climate scale and its domains.

Level	Torsion	Standard Error	The Hypothetical Medium	Standard Deviation	Mean	Number of paragraphs	The sample	Areas of Organizational Climate Scale	
High	**1.46**	**0.83**	**45**	**7.02**	**52.95**	**15**	**80**	Organizational Structure	**1**
Medium	**1.69**	**0.91**	**45**	**7.38**	**47.80**	**15**		Work Climate	**2**
High	**0.97**	**0.721**	**45**	**9.47**	**59.40**	**15**		Incentives	**3**
High	**1.33**	**0.665**	**135**	**5.95**	**163.05**	**45**		**Organizational Climate Scale**	

Table (3) shows the means, standard deviations, and hypothetical means for the organizational climate scale and its domains. The mean for the organizational climate scale was (163.05), while the standard deviation was (5.95). The standard error was (0.965), which is a low value indicating internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.33), indicating a moderate distribution of the sample along the normal distribution curve, and it is considered homogeneous as it lies within (±3). The hypothetical mean was (135).

For the organizational structure, the mean was (52.95) with a standard deviation of (7.02) and a hypothetical mean of (45), along with a standard error of (0.83), which indicates internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.46), indicating a moderate distribution of the sample along the normal distribution curve, which also fell within (±3).

For the work climate, the mean was (47.80) with a standard deviation of (7.38), a hypothetical mean of (45), and a standard error of (0.91). The skewness coefficient was (1.69), indicating a moderate distribution of the sample along the normal distribution curve.

Regarding incentives, the mean was (59.40) with a standard deviation of (9.47), a hypothetical mean of (45), and a standard error of (0.721). The skewness coefficient was (0.97), indicating a moderate distribution of the sample along the normal distribution curve.

3-1-1-1 Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results of the Organizational Climate Scale Levels and Domains

Table (3) Shows the levels and domains of the organizational climate scale.

Incentives		Organizational Structure		Organizational Structure		Climate Scale		Standard Score	Raw score for the domain	Raw score of the scale	Levels
The Ratio	Repetition	The Ratio	Repetition	The Ratio	Repetition	The Ratio	Repetition				
%20	16	%10	8	%12.5	10	%13.75	11	69-80	75-63	225-189	Very High
%30	24	%23.75	19	%27.5	22	%33.75	27	57-68	62-51	188-153	High
%36.25	29	%41.25	33	%46.25	37	%37.5	30	45-56	50-39	152-117	Medium
%7.5	6	%17.5	14	%8.75	7	%8.75	7	33-44	38-27	116-81	Low
%6.25	5	%7.5	6	%5	4	%6.25	5	20-32	26-15	80-45	Very Low

Table (3) shows the levels of the university climate scale among students of the College of Physical Education. Those who achieved a very high level numbered (11) students, representing (13.75%); a high level (27) students, representing (33.75%); a medium level (30) students, representing (37.5%); a low level (7) students, representing (8.75%); and a very low level (5) students, representing (6.25%).

As for the levels of the organizational structure, those who reached a very high level numbered (10) students, representing (12.5%); a high level (22) students, representing (27.5%); a medium level (37) students, representing (46.25%); a low level (7) students, representing (8.75%); and a very low level (4) students, representing (5%).

Additionally, regarding the levels of the work climate, those who achieved a very high level numbered (8) students, representing (10%); a high level (19) students, representing (23.75%); a medium level (33) students, representing (41.25%); a low level (14) students, representing (17.5%); and a very low level (6) students, representing (7.5%).

Finally, concerning incentives, those who reached a very high level numbered (16) students, representing (20%); a high level (24) students, representing (30%); a medium level (29) students, representing (36.25%); a low level (6) students, representing (7.5%); and a very low level (5) students, representing (6.25%).

The researcher attributes the significant results obtained by the sample in the Organizational Climate Scale and its dimensions, which range from average to high, as a positive outcome due to the favorable conditions and natural factors surrounding the educational process. These include social relationships and a good administrative and academic environment that positively influence the prevailing climate within the college. This, in turn, enhances students' willingness to work, participate, and take on responsibilities, ultimately prompting them to pay attention to educational situations and engage in all related activities. This aligns with the findings of the study by Qaddash (2020), which confirmed that "the nature of the prevailing climate in educational institutions plays a crucial role in solidifying relationships to achieve balance and continuity in work, satisfying needs, and achieving goals" (Qaddash, 2020, p. 127). Additionally, the study by Maxwell (2017) emphasized that "students' positive perceptions of the academic climate significantly affected their outcomes and performance in educational fields" (Maxwell, 2017, p. 8). Given that the university is an important educational institution that directly influences students' behavioral orientations, most students' professional personality traits are shaped within the university context.

3- 1-2 Presentation of the statistical indicators for the Academic Stress Scale and its domains:

Table (4) Shows the statistical indicators of the academic stress scale and its domains.

Level	Torsion	Standard Error	The Hypothetical Medium	Standard Deviation	Mean	Number of paragraphs	The sample	**Academic Stress Scale and Its Domains**	

Average	**1.26**	**0.867**	**45**	**6.16**	**49.15**	**15**	Academic Stress - Social Stress - Personal Stress	Academic Stress **1**
Low	**1.06**	**0.774**	**45**	**8.97**	**42.85**	**15**		- Social Stress **2**
Low	**1.13**	**0.645**	**45**	**6.93**	**44.90**	**15**		- Personal Stress **3**
Average	**0.698**	**0.592**	**135**	**3.54**	**142.60**	- Academic Stress Scale		**Academic Stress Scale**

Table (4) shows the arithmetic means, standard deviations, and hypothetical means for the Academic Stress Scale, with an overall mean of (142.60) and a standard deviation of (3.54). The standard error was (0.792), which is a low value indicating the internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (0.698), indicating that the distribution of the sample is moderately aligned with the normal distribution curve and is considered homogeneous if it falls within (±3). The hypothetical mean was (135), where the level of the University Climate Scale was high, while the Academic Stress Scale was at a medium level.

For each domain of the Academic Stress Scale, the arithmetic mean for the "Academic Pressure" domain was (51.15) with a standard deviation of (6.16) and a hypothetical mean of (45). The standard error was (0.867), indicating the internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.26), indicating that the distribution of the sample is moderately aligned with the normal distribution curve, which fell within (±3).

In contrast, the arithmetic mean for the "Social Pressure" domain was (47.85) with a standard deviation of (8.97) and a hypothetical mean of (45). The standard error was (0.774), indicating the internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.06), indicating that the distribution of the sample aligns moderately with the normal distribution curve.

For the "Personal Pressure" domain, the arithmetic mean was (49.90) with a standard deviation of (6.93) and a hypothetical mean of (45). The standard error was (0.645), indicating the internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.13), which indicates a moderate alignment of the sample distribution.

3–1-2-1 Presentation of the Results of the Academic Stress Scale Levels and Areas, Analysis, and Discussion

Table (5) Shows the levels of the Academic Stress Scale and its areas.

Personal Pressures		Social Pressures		Academic Pressure		Stress Scale		Raw scores for the domain	Standard Score	The raw score	Levels
The ratio	Repetition	The ratio	Repetition	The ratio	Repetition	The ratio	Repetition				
%3.75	3	%2.5	2	%7.5	6	%10	8	75-63	69-80	-189 225	Very High
%18.75	11	%15	12	%20	16	%23.75	19	62-51	57-68	-153 188	High
%35	28	%32.5	26	%40	32	%36.25	29	50-39	45-56	-117 152	Medium
%38.75	31	%36.25	29	22.5	18	%27.5	22	38-27	33-44	-81 116	Low
%8.75	7	%13.75	11	%10	8	%2.5	2	26-15	20-32	80-45	Very Low

Table (6) illustrates the levels of academic stress among students of the College of Physical Education. Those who reached

a very high level numbered (8) students, representing (10%); a high level comprised (19) students, accounting for (23.75%); a medium level included (29) students, which is (36.25%); a low level had (22) students, making up (27.5%); and a very low level consisted of (2) students, representing (2.5%).

Regarding the domain of (academic stress), those who reached a very high level numbered (6) students, representing (7.5%); a high level included (16) students, accounting for (20%); a medium level comprised (37) students, which is (46.25%); a low level had (13) students, making up (16.25%); and a very low level consisted of (8) students, representing (10%).

In the domain of (social stress), those who reached a very high level numbered (2) students, representing (2.5%); a high level included (12) students, accounting for (15%); a medium level comprised (26) students, which is (32.5%); a low level had (29) students, making up (36.25%); and a very low level consisted of (11) students, representing (13.75%).

Finally, in the domain of (personal stress), those who reached a very high level numbered (3) students, representing (3.75%); a high level included (15) students, accounting for (18.75%); a medium level comprised (34) students, which is (42.5%); a low level had (21) students, making up (26.25%); and a very low level consisted of (7) students, representing (8.75%).

The researcher attributes the results obtained by the research sample regarding the levels of the academic stress scale, which ranged according to the sequence of (average, low, and high) in the (academic stress scale) and its domains (academic stress, social stress, and personal stress), to a positive outcome for the research sample. This is because the lower the academic stress on the student, the more positive the environment is for them. The researcher attributes the varying levels of academic stress to an average and low level based on students' responses to the scale items, which include the abundance of social relationships among the students themselves or with the teaching staff, who played an effective role in reducing stress. Additionally, engaging in sports and extracurricular activities contributed to lowering academic stress. The researcher believes that practicing sports is, in itself, a remedy that helps alleviate psychological stress as it reduces anxiety and tension, improves mood, and alleviates health issues. This is supported by the study by Stoltz (2014), which stated that "stress and anxiety are indicators of low physical activity" (Stoltz, 2014, p. 81).

4–3 Presentation of the correlation between the organizational climate scale and academic stress, along with its analysis and discussion:

Table (7) Shows the means, deviations, and correlation coefficient between the organizational climate scale and the academic stress scale.

Sig	Correlation Coefficient	Standard Deviation	Mean	The Scale
0.01	**0.89 -**	**5.95**	**163.05**	Organizational Climate
		3.54	**142.60**	Academic Pressures

Table (6) illustrates the results of the relationship between the organizational climate and academic stress scales for students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Science at Thi-Qar University. The researcher used the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the correlation between the two scales. The results showed a significant inverse correlation between the scales, with a correlation coefficient of (-0.89) at a significance level of (0.01). This indicates that the organizational climate has an inverse effect on academic stress. According to the results obtained by the researcher, the nature of the relationship between the university climate scale showed that most students' responses were at a medium to high level. In addition, the academic stress scale indicated that most responses were at a medium to low level. Therefore, the researcher concluded from the results presented in Tables (30 and 32) that students of the College of Physical Education have a normal climate and stress levels. This result is positive, as the climate within the university or college, from the researcher's perspective, directly and automatically affects the student's level and academic achievement. This is supported by Ali (2016), who stated that "the university climate affects educational outcomes, as individuals within the university influence each other, and the relationships between students and faculty members, as well as among students themselves, are greatly affected by the climate."

(Ali, 2016, p. 183) also mentions (Al-Qahtani, 2020) that "neglecting to improve the university climate does not help the university fulfill its desired mission, and consequently lowers the appreciation of students and staff for their educational institution's climate, as well as their belongingness, which affects students' motivation to learn. Moreover, there is a direct relationship between a positive climate and the improvement of staff behavior and performance in achieving the institution's goals, as it helps satisfy their needs. Individual behavior is determined by the interactions between individual needs on one hand and their perceptions of the organizational environment on the other" (Al-Qahtani, 2020, p. 557).

4. CONCLUSIONS

In light of the study's results, the researcher reached the following key conclusions:

- A measure of organizational climate was developed consisting of 45 items belonging to three domains.
- A measure of academic stress was developed consisting of 45 items belonging to three domains.
- A high and medium level of responses appeared with varying frequencies and percentages; however, the medium level was predominant in the organizational climate measure, while a weak level was predominant in the academic stress measure.

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