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# Organizational Climate, Social Adjustment and Professional Development as Correlates and Predictors of Growth Mindset among High School Teachers

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**Abstract:**

Growth mindset is relevant to teachers' continuing learning, professional adaptability and responses to instructional challenges. However, teachers' growth-oriented beliefs should also be examined in relation to their organizational and professional contexts. This study investigated the relationships of organizational climate, social adjustment and professional development with growth mindset among high school teachers in Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu, India. A quantitative normative survey design was adopted. Data were collected from 700 high school teachers selected through simple random sampling. Growth mindset, organizational climate, social adjustment and professional development were measured using established or study-specific Likert-type instruments. Pearson product–moment correlation and multiple linear regression were used. Growth mindset was positively correlated with organizational climate ($r = .690$), social adjustment ($r = .671$) and professional development ($r = .676$), all $p < .001$. The three variables were also positively intercorrelated. The multiple regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 696) = 469.713$, $p < .001$, with $R = .818$ and $R^2 = .669$ (adjusted $R^2 = .668$). Each predictor made a significant positive unique contribution; social adjustment had the largest standardized coefficient ($\beta = .340$), followed by organizational climate ($\beta = .335$) and professional development ($\beta = .310$). The findings indicate that growth mindset is associated with the social, organizational and professional experiences of teachers. Because the design is cross-sectional, the results indicate association and statistical prediction, not causation.

**Keywords:** growth mindset; high school teachers; organizational climate; social adjustment; professional development; multiple regression.

## Introduction

Growth mindset refers to the belief that abilities and competencies can be developed through learning, effective strategies, effort and constructive feedback. In educational settings, this belief is relevant not only to students but also to teachers, whose professional roles require continuing adaptation to curriculum changes, diverse learners and evolving instructional practices. Dweck and Leggett (1988) situated implicit

theories of ability within a social-cognitive account of motivation, while Dweck and Yeager (2019) reviewed the development and application of mindset research.

Teachers' growth-oriented beliefs do not operate in isolation. The organizational climate of a school shapes the conditions under which teachers communicate, collaborate, exercise autonomy, access resources and participate in decisions. A supportive climate may provide opportunities to experiment with teaching approaches and learn from setbacks. Conversely, unsupportive working conditions may constrain teachers' willingness or capacity to engage in professional learning.

Social adjustment is also relevant to teachers' professional functioning. Teaching involves sustained interaction with students, colleagues, administrators, parents and the wider school community. Constructive interpersonal relationships, communication, cooperation and conflict management may be associated with teachers' readiness to respond adaptively to professional challenges. Professional development, meanwhile, provides structured and informal opportunities to update subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, reflective practice and technological competence. Avalos (2011) and Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of sustained and practice-oriented teacher learning.

Previous research has examined teacher mindset in relation to work engagement, perseverance, self-efficacy and teaching practices (Zeng et al., 2019; Laine & Tirri, 2023; Mudrák et al., 2025). Other strands of research have considered school climate, professional learning and teacher adjustment. The present study brings organizational climate, social adjustment and professional development together in one empirical model to examine their associations with growth mindset among high school teachers.

## Objectives

The study aimed to: (a) examine the relationship between growth mindset and organizational climate; (b) examine the relationship between growth mindset and social adjustment; (c) examine the relationship between growth mindset and professional development; and (d) determine the combined and unique statistical contributions of the three variables in predicting growth mindset.

## Method

### Research design and participants

A quantitative, cross-sectional normative survey design was used. The sample comprised 700 high school teachers working in Government, Government-Aided and Private high schools in Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu, India. The thesis reports that simple random sampling was adopted. The sample included 341 male and 359 female teachers. Participants represented different age groups, teaching experience categories, subject specializations, school management types, school localities, mediums of instruction and school types.

### Measures

Growth mindset was measured using the eight-item Growth Mindset Scale attributed in the thesis to Sigmundsson and Haga (2024), with five response options and a possible total score of 8–40. Organizational climate was measured using the 38-item scale attributed to Khurshid and Zahur (2012), covering organizational clarity and standards, team commitment, autonomy, support/intimacy, and rewards/risks. Social adjustment was assessed using the 37-item scale developed by the investigator for high school teachers. Professional development was measured using the scale attributed to Yodida Bhutia (2014), comprising 68 items across knowledge, commitment/accountability, leadership/personal

effectiveness, and self-upgrading/extended reading. The reliability coefficients of .83, .81, .91 and .93, respectively; the professional development coefficient was estimated by split-half method.

**Data collection and analysis**

The permission was obtained from educational authorities and school heads, participation was voluntary, confidentiality was assured, and questionnaires were administered personally. Pearson product–moment correlations were calculated to examine bivariate relationships. Multiple linear regression was used with growth mindset as the dependent variable and organizational climate, social adjustment and professional development as simultaneous predictors. Statistical significance was set at .05; the reported correlation results are significant at $p < .001$.

**Results**

**Descriptive statistics**

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | Observed range |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Growth mindset | 700 | 23.37 | 2.903 | 16–34 |
| Organizational climate | 700 | 117.92 | 18.340 | 61–178 |
| Social adjustment | 700 | 109.90 | 16.409 | 63–164 |
| Professional development | 700 | 101.51 | 18.986 | 49–172 |

The sample mean scores were 23.37 for growth mindset, 117.92 for organizational climate, 109.90 for social adjustment and 101.51 for professional development. These are descriptive scores; their interpretation as low, moderate or high should follow the validated scoring manuals and cut-offs for each instrument. The thesis explicitly classifies the overall social adjustment mean as moderate.

**Correlations among study variables**

| Variable | Growth mindset | Organizational climate | Social adjustment | Professional development |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Growth mindset | 1.000 | .690** | .671** | .676** |
| Organizational climate | .690** | 1.000 | .518** | .576** |
| Social adjustment | .671** | .518** | 1.000 | .507** |
| Professional development | .676** | .576** | .507** | 1.000 |

Growth mindset showed positive relationships with organizational climate ($r = .690$, $p < .001$), social adjustment ($r = .671$, $p < .001$) and professional development ($r = .676$, $p < .001$). Organizational climate had the strongest bivariate association with growth mindset, although the three coefficients were relatively close. The three predictor variables were also positively intercorrelated ($r = .507$ to $.576$).

**Multiple regression**

| Predictor | B | SE B | Standardized β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 5.6876 | .4842 | — | 11.747 | < .001 |
| Organizational climate | .0531 | .0045 | .335 | 11.903 | < .001 |
| Social adjustment | .0602 | .0047 | .340 | 12.742 | < .001 |
| Professional development | .0474 | .0043 | .310 | 11.095 | < .001 |

Model fit: $R = .818$; $R^2 = .669$; adjusted $R^2 = .668$; standard error of estimate = 1.673; $F(3, 696) = 469.713$, $p < .001$.

The three predictors jointly explained 66.9% of the observed variance in growth mindset. Each predictor retained a significant positive coefficient after adjustment for the other two. Social adjustment had the largest standardized coefficient (β = .340), closely followed by organizational climate (β = .335) and professional development (β = .310). The estimated equation was: Growth Mindset = 5.688 + 0.053(Organizational Climate) + 0.060(Social Adjustment) + 0.047(Professional Development).

**Discussion**

The findings show that growth mindset among the sampled high school teachers was positively associated with all three contextual and professional variables. The association with organizational climate is consistent with the view that teachers' beliefs and practices are embedded in workplace conditions. A school climate characterized by trust, communication, collegial relationships, autonomy and support may provide conditions in which teachers can seek feedback, collaborate and try new approaches. The present data, however, do not establish the direction of influence.

The positive relationship between growth mindset and social adjustment suggests that teachers' growth-oriented beliefs co-occur with constructive social and professional interactions. Teaching requires cooperation and relationship management across multiple groups. It is plausible that socially adjusted teachers experience more opportunities for reciprocal learning and support, but this interpretation requires further testing.

Professional development was also positively related to growth mindset. This is compatible with research emphasizing teachers' continuing learning and the role of reflective, collaborative and sustained professional development (Avalos, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Postholm, 2018). The association may be reciprocal: teachers who believe in improvement may be more inclined to pursue professional learning, while learning experiences may reinforce their belief that competence can develop.

The regression model explained 66.9% of the variance in growth mindset in this sample. The standardized coefficients were similar in magnitude, indicating that no single predictor overwhelmingly dominated the model. Social adjustment showed the largest unique statistical contribution, but the small differences among standardized coefficients should not be overinterpreted without confidence intervals and formal coefficient comparisons. The results support an integrated view of teacher growth mindset in which social, organizational and professional factors are considered together.

**Implications**

School leaders may strengthen conditions that support teacher collaboration, open communication, fair decision-making, professional autonomy and access to resources. Teacher development programmes may combine subject and pedagogical learning with reflective practice, peer mentoring and opportunities to address interpersonal challenges. Teacher educators and policymakers should treat growth mindset as one component of a broader professional environment rather than as an individual attitude that can be changed independently of working conditions.

**Limitations and future research**

The study was cross-sectional and conducted in one district; causal conclusions and broad generalization are therefore unwarranted. All major constructs were measured through self-report instruments, creating the possibility of common-method bias. The supplied thesis does not report missing-data handling, assumption checks, multicollinearity diagnostics, confidence intervals, residual analysis or influential-case diagnostics. Future studies should use longitudinal or multilevel designs, include multiple districts, combine self-report with observational or administrative measures, and test measurement models and possible mediators.

**Conclusion**

Among 700 high school teachers in Virudhunagar District, growth mindset was positively associated with organizational climate, social adjustment and professional development. These three variables jointly provided a statistically significant prediction of growth mindset and explained 66.9% of its variance in the fitted model. The findings highlight the importance of considering teachers' beliefs alongside the social, organizational and professional contexts in which they work.

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