

MEASUREMENT OF THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE DIMENSIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

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Abstract

The study aimed to measure the effects of the dimensions of the organizational structure: formality, centralization and complexity on the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in the city of Laghouat. A questionnaire was developed with a sample size of 72 employees. Descriptive software analysis of sample characteristics and structural equation modelling were used using the partial least squares method (PLS-SEM). The hypotheses were also tested using the Bootstrapping method. The results revealed a significant effect of the formality dimension on the effectiveness of internal communication. However, the results did not show a statistically significant impact of the complexity and centralization dimensions on the effectiveness of internal communication in the organization. Hence, the present research paper recommends adopting the informal approach to managing organizational tasks. Correspondingly, it is desirable to reduce and merge administrative levels for better effectiveness of internal communications. All of this will have a positive impact on the organization's decision-making process through the availability of timely information.

Keywords: *Organizational structure; Formality; Centralization; Complexity; Effectiveness of Internal Communications.*

JEL Codes :*M10; M20; L20; L22.*

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Introduction

Rapid developments in the field of management and business have made organizations adopt contemporary strategies, especially in the field of administrative functions. The organizational structure is one of the pivotal factors that affect various organizational aspects. In this regard, management theories, with their various orientations, have contributed to scientific management, bureaucracy, administrative theory, and the theory of principles in developing this field of research. The organizational structure is the cornerstone of organizational function because it illustrates the framework of authority and decision-making processes. Organizations must develop an organizational structure reconciling its operational scope and empowering members to carry out tasks effectively. Mintzberg (1998) emphasizes the essential role of organizational design in the success of an organization. Mintzberg's insights into the components of organizational structure and adaptation of structures based on the organization's scope of activities and size help promote effective coordination and division of tasks. An effective organizational structure supports solid internal communication among the organization's employees. In addition, it facilitates the process of making decisions promptly.

On the other hand, the internal communications model is a critical factor in the success of the organization and is closely related to human resources. An effective internal communication ensures that information is exchanged accurately and quickly, crucial for making informed decisions. The communication model within an organization includes methods of exchanging information between employees across various departments and levels. It is necessary for coordination across all organizational functions, strengthening the employee's social links, and contributing positively to achieving the organization's overall goals. The design of an organizational structure affects its communication dynamics. The organizational structure paves the way for defining roles, responsibilities and hierarchy of authority within an organization. The latter collectively affects the effectiveness of internal communications. Hence, this study explores the effects of the organizational structure dimensions, formality, centralization, and complexity on the effectiveness of internal communications within the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat City.

Literature Review

An organizational structure is a framework that defines the relationships between jobs and clarifies the responsibilities of individuals and groups to achieve the organization's goal (Mintzberg, 1972). It is a tool that ensures the division of tasks, the definition of duties, and the coordination between jobs and individuals in the organization (Gholam, Mehrpour, & Nikooraveshb, 2016, p.456). Thus, the organizational structure determines the mechanism

by which employees interact with each other at different levels, exchange information, and participate in decision-making (Miguel, José, Javier & Raquel, 2017, p. 2). The organizational structure is how responsibility and authority are distributed within an organization and through which employees carry out business processes (Teixeira, Koufteros & Peng, 2012, p. 70). Hence, an organizational structure is a set of pre-defined roles, relationships, and patterns that interact to achieve the organization's common goal. It represents the functional framework that aligns with the resources and goals set by the organization in its strategy and embodies its culture, which directly affects the company's ability to attract, engage, and retain employees (Dignum, Dignum, & Sonenberg, 2006, p. 219). It is also how an organization divides tasks and ensures coordination at all administrative levels. It mainly depends on balancing functional specialization with coordination between individuals and groups within the organization to achieve the goal of functional integration (Janićijević, 2013, p. 37). Also, Adeoye (2018) stated that an effective organizational structure plays a role in positively influencing employees and their jobs, as an effective organizational structure is always designed to attract and accommodate high-performing individuals and work to achieve the organization's strategic goals. Heintze and Bretschneider (2000) point out that the application of information technology in any organization can affect its structure. For instance, adopting information technology applications may reduce the number of organization members and thus reduce the organization's size. Furthermore, information and communication technology can reduce or increase employment at a certain level within the organization, which leads to significant changes in the organization's structure.

However, Mintzberg (1998) claims five coordination mechanisms, which vary according to the organization's activity and size. Mutual adjustment is used in organizations that have a small number of employees and mostly use informal communication. Direct supervision is applied when the number of workers is large, and the organization needs a supervisor to ensure their coordination. Standardization: There are three types of standardization mechanisms, which differ based on the complexity of the tasks to move from one mechanism to another: standardization of work processes, which is widely used in organizations with production lines; standardization of outputs, which aims to be related to efficiency; and standardization of skills, which is based on acquired experience. In the same context, Fred (2012) proposed five components of the organizational structure. The strategic apex: These components are located at the highest level within the organization. The operational core: These components refer to the members of the work team who are directly involved in the manufacturing or service process. The middle line exists as a link between the strategic apex and the operational core. The technostructure aims to serve the

organization by supporting other employees. Support staff sustain the production process indirectly, especially in large organizations.

Generally, the dimensions of organizational structure refer to formalization, centralization, and complexity. Formalization is adherence to rules and procedures according to a hierarchy. Formalism is preferred to promote organizational consistency. Overly formal organizations may limit the creativity of their employees (Schminke, Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2000, p. 296; Daugherty, Chen & Ferrin, 2011, p. 29). Centralization refers to the degree to which decision-making authority is focused at the top levels of an organization (Mahmoudsalehi, Moradkhannejad & Safari, 2012, p. 521). The process of decision-making is very complex and multi-phased (Dimitrieska et al., 2017, p.189) and is viewed as the degree to which lower hierarchical levels partake in strategic decisions (Nowotny, Hirsch & Nitzl 2022, p. 3). It is crucial to know the nature of the organization in this area. For instance, the organization is centralized if the manager makes most of the decisions. Conversely, in decentralized organizations, more authority is given to lower-level employees, and such decisions are made at lower levels (Ghorbani, Noghabi & Nikoukar, 2011, p. 2033). In this regard, the organization's structure influences knowledge management processes by influencing communication patterns between members and determining where decisions are made (Mahmoudsalehi, Moradkhannejad & Safari, 2012, p. 521).

On the other hand, complexity refers to the degree of detail and branching within the organization (Rahmanseresht, Mahmoudi & Ghaderi, 2016, p. 249). It also indicates the number of tasks or subsystems performed or existing within the organization. The complexity increases as the communications and transactions between individuals and groups in the organization increase. The degree of complexity reflects the differentiation within the different elements that make up the organization. Increased complexity indicates multiple administrative levels in the organization (Daryani & Amini, 2016, p. 361).

Communication within management has become a continuous trouble for organizational employees (Chew et al., 2023, p. 4). Communication is a multifaceted process that involves sending and receiving information and often requires multiple attempts to establish mutual understanding through various means (Bayad et al., 2021, p. 17). Internal communication is exchanging information among employees or managers within the organization (Bahchachi, 2021, p. 424). Internal communication is a means of spreading organizational culture and values among employees. It is also a tool for strengthening and enhancing ties among employees. Internal communication helps in aligning employee behaviour with customer needs. Likewise, it helps provide information and awareness about the organization's goals. Quickly integrating new employees into the organization is one of the essential pillars of internal communication. Internal communication is a specific communication between individuals within the organizational structure. It is also a critical

factor in assessing the value of an organization's intangible assets and is associated with higher performance and service levels (Verghese, 2017, p.104-105; Constantin & Baias, 2015, p. 976; Ruck & Welch, 2012, p. 294).

Milly (2020) stated that internal communication in the organization seeks to achieve goals. The most important are clarifying policy ambiguity, correcting misinformation, addressing misleading positions within the organization, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, facilitating communication between officials and workers, sharing results and strengthening social ties between employees through communication and participation. In addition, one of the most important goals of internal communication is the effective management of information in terms of understanding, development, and appropriate presentation. For instance, managers use different communication channels to interact with employees. Face-to-face communication is the most effective tool for conveying complex information because it facilitates feedback, natural language, multiple cues, and personal focus. Therefore, effective communication with individuals on specific tasks at different times requires flexible communication behaviors. Hence, managers work to generate the most significant number of effective communication methods and tools to foster communication between employees and their supervisors or colleagues to ensure that information is delivered in a timely and accurate manner (Linjuan, 2015, pp. 3-4).

Research problem, hypothesis and sample

The purpose of the current research is to evaluate and analyze the extent of the impact of the dimensions of the organizational structure on the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat. The study relied on the null hypothesis, H0: There is no impact of the dimensions of the organizational structure (formality, centralization, complexity) on the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat at a significance level of $(0.05 \leq \alpha)$. The questionnaire tool was designed based on the study literature. The distribution targeted the employees of the Gas and Electricity Distribution Directorate in Laghouat. In this regard, (72) questionnaires were distributed. Table No. 1 summarizes the contents of the questionnaire items.

The researchers started by naming each dimension and then describing the abbreviations of the questionnaire questions. For example, the phrases related to the Formalization dimension were abbreviated as F1 to F4. The same approach was applied to the other dimensions and their respective phrases, as follows:

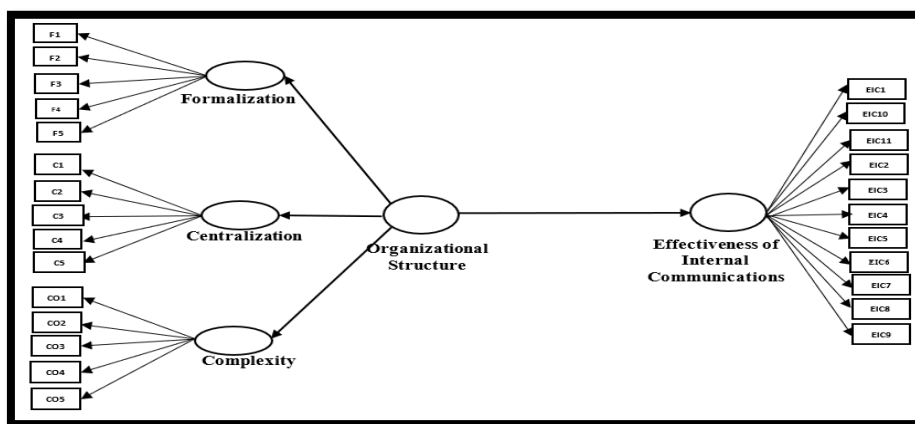
Table no. 1 – Detailed Statement of the Statements Comprising the Survey

Variables	Dimensions	Item
Organizational Structure	Formalization	F1 - F5
	Centralization	C1 - C5
	Complexity	CO1 - CO5
Effective Internal Communication		EIC1-EIC11

Source: researchers' processing

For more clarification on the study model according to the (SEM) through the (PLS) method and using the SmartPLS 4 software, Figure 1 is presented:

Figure no. 1 The general structural model of the study using the Structural Equation Modeling approach



Source: researchers' processing

Table no. 2 – Demographic Characteristics of Employees

Variables		N	%
Gender	Male	43	59.7
	Female	29	40.3
Age	Less than 30 years old	22	30.55
	Between 31 and 49 years old	37	51.38
	Over 50 years	13	18.05
Academic Qualification	Top Management	8	11.12
	Middle Management	17	23.61
	Executive Management	47	65.27
Experience	Less than 5 years	6	8.33
	10–6 years	31	43.05
	More than 11 years	35	48.61

Source: researchers' processing

It was evident from the above table that the number of male workers was 43, representing about 60% of all workers, while the number of female workers reached 29. This is due to the nature of work in the institution, as most jobs involve physical effort, especially among the technical staff. We also observe that the age group from 31 to 49 years of age was predominant, as this group is in its prime, offering high levels of performance due to their experience in addition to the standard working age. This is followed by the group aged 50 years and older, who are workers mostly with seniority in the institution, and finally, the group aged 30 years and younger, who are newly employed workers, mostly graduates of technical institutes and centers. Regarding the job level, most of the study sample were control and execution agents, totaling 47 workers. This focus on the operational management level was to assess the effectiveness of upward internal communications. This was followed by managerial staff and senior frames. As for seniority, the predominant group had 11 years or more of tenure, with 35 workers, followed by those who had been there from 6 to 10 years, supporting the study results that the majority in the sample are experienced and familiar with the matters related to the study. The least tenured group, with 5 years or fewer, comprised 6 workers.

Evaluation of Measurement Model

Convergent Validity

Table number 3 presents the results of the convergent validity test.

Table no. 3 – Convergent Validity test.

Variable	Item	FL	C R	AVE	Cronbach's Alfa
Formalization	F1	0.853	0.928	0.721	0.903
	F2	0.847			
	F3	0.870			
	F4	0.845			
	F5	0.831			
Centralization	C1	0.838	0.891	0.647	0.863
	C2	0.762			
	C3	0.907			
	C4	0.789			
	C5	0.714			
Complexity	CO1	0.860	0.870	0.666	0.837
	CO2	0.802			
	CO3	0.836			
	CO4	0.763			
	CO5	0.586			

Effective Internal Communication	EIC1	0.849	0.973	0.768	0.970
	EIC2	0.826			
	EIC3	0.891			
	EIC4	0.906			
	EIC5	0.922			
	EIC6	0.880			
	EIC7	0.774			
	EIC8	0.908			
	EIC9	0.902			
	EIC10	0.853			
	EIC11	0.918			

Source: researchers' processing

All the items have external loading coefficients greater than 0.7, except for statement CO5, whose loading coefficient is 0.586, which is removed from the final scale. In addition, all Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients are statistically significant and acceptable as they are greater than 0.7, and all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are statistically significant and acceptable as they are greater than 0.5. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha values for all dimensions exceed 0.7, indicating the reliability and consistency of the study tool.

Discriminant Validity Test

Cross-loading test

Cross-loading test refers to an item's correlation with the dimension to which it belongs to be greater than its correlation with other dimensions

Table no. 4 – Cross loading.

Item	Formalization	Centralization	Complexity	Effective Internal Communication
F1	0.853	0.192	0.263	0.426
F2	0.847	0.169	0.275	0.402
F3	0.870	0.230	0.180	0.456
F4	0.845	0.147	0.233	0.370
F5	0.831	0.208	0.173	0.391
C1	0.052	0.789	0.140	0.072
C2	0.267	0.907	0.210	0.259
C3	0.018	0.762	0.065	-0.028
C4	0.224	0.838	0.123	0.193
C5	0.235	0.714	0.131	0.267
CO1	0.258	0.082	0.860	0.107
CO2	0.128	0.148	0.802	0.044
CO3	0.331	0.213	0.836	0.163

CO4	0.060	0.107	0.763	0.018
EIC1	0.439	0.126	0.083	0.849
EIC2	0.316	0.077	0.061	0.826
EIC3	0.461	0.137	0.054	0.891
EIC4	0.363	0.167	0.105	0.906
EIC5	0.394	0.216	0.136	0.922
EIC6	0.436	0.206	0.017	0.880
EIC7	0.459	0.071	-0.072	0.774
EIC8	0.403	0.241	0.132	0.908
EIC9	0.284	0.303	0.130	0.902
EIC10	0.402	0.230	0.094	0.853
EIC11	0.351	0.253	0.203	0.918

Source: researchers' processing

Table 4 depicts that all items are more strongly related to their dimensions than other dimensions, indicating no confounding items in the study model.

Fornell-Larcker criteria test

This test refers to the correlation between variables. The correlation ratio between each dimension and itself must be greater than that of other dimensions. The Fornell Larcker test compares latent variable correlations with the square root of the AVE of the construct. Each construct's square root value should be greater than the highest correlations with any other construct (Rabhi et al., 2023, p54). Table No 5- Depicts the results of Fornell-Larcker criteria test.

Table no. 5 – Variable Correlation test.

Variable	Effective Internal Communication	Complexity	Centralization	Formalization
Effective Internal Communication	0.876			
Complexity	0.116	0.816		
Centralization	0.216	0.175	0.805	
Formalization	0.413	0.265	0.223	0.849

Source: researchers' processing

Table No. 5 reveals no overlap between the study dimensions because their correlation with themselves is higher than other dimensions.

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Criterion test

Table No 6. Shows the results of HTMT test.

Table no. 6 – HTMT test.

Variable	Effective Internal Communication	Complexity	Centralization	Formalization
Effective Internal Communication				
Complexity	0.130			
Centralization	0.221	0.191		
Formalization	0.466	0.276	0.235	

Source: researchers' processing

All HTMT values are below the threshold level of 0.9. Thus, the dimensions have discriminant validity in the study's measurement model.

Evaluation of the Quality Indicators of the Study Model

Model quality indices indicate that the study model is of high quality. The values of (R^2 , F^2) were used to evaluate the structural model indices. Table No 7 illustrates the results:

Table no. 7 –Quality Indicators of the Study.

Indicator	Variable	Result	Decision
(R^2)	Effective Internal Communication	0.490	Intermediate
(F^2)	Organizational Structure	0.961	High impact
	Formalization	1.909	High impact
	Centralization	0.015	No effect
	Complexity	0.053	Feeble effect

Source: researchers' processing

The R^2 value estimates the model's explanatory power. Hence, the R^2 value is 0.490; this indicates that the predictor variable of structural organizational dimensions influences 49% of the endogenous variable of internal communication effectiveness. The remaining percentage, 51%, is influenced by other predictor variables. However, for the effect size, it is evident that the organizational structure impacts internal communications, where the impact ratio reached 0.961. This impact was primarily through formalization, with a high impact ratio of 1.909. Meanwhile, the other dimensions (centralization, complexity) had a feeble impact of less than 0.3.

Hypotheses Testing Results

The bootstrap method was used to test the study hypotheses using the SmartPLS-4 program. It is considered one of the modern methods for testing hypotheses and was developed by Preacher and Hayes. It is a resampling test. One of the advantages of this method is that it does not depend on the normal distribution, which makes it suitable for

studies with small sample sizes (Badawi, 2019, p. 49). The results of the hypotheses test are as follows:

Table no. 8 – Hypotheses test results.

	Original sample	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	Decision
O S → EIC	0.700	0.078	8.987	0.000	Supported
F → EIC	0.839	0.061	13.747	0.000	Supported
C → EIC	0.071	0.063	1.132	0.258	Rejected
CO → EIC	-0.137	0.079	1.719	0.086	Rejected

Source: researchers' processing

Note: O S = Organizational Structure; F = Formalization; C = Centralization; CO = Complexity; EIC = Effective Internal Communication

Table 8 shows that the p-value was 0.000, less than the significance level ($0.05 \leq \alpha$). Hence, the main alternative hypothesis of the study is acceptable, which states that the dimensions of the organizational structure impact the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat. Also, it is observed that there is an impact of the dimensions of the organizational structure on the effectiveness of internal communications at the Directorate of Electricity and Gas Distribution in Laghouat through the dimension of formalization, where the p-value for this dimension was 0.000, indicating a very high impact, and the first sub-hypothesis was accepted. The other dimensions, centralization and complexity, had no impact on the effectiveness of internal communications, with p-values of 0.258 and 0.086, respectively, which are higher than the significance level ($0.05 \leq \alpha$). Therefore, the second and third sub-hypotheses were rejected because their p-values were higher than the significance level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study sought to investigate the effects of the organizational structure and its dimensions on the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat. The literature reviews dealt with the organizational structure and internal communication as they affect many variables, the most prominent of which are the effects that affect the performance of employees and the development of creativity among employees; after the theoretical and field study, the following set of results were reached. The organizational structure represents the scope of supervision and responsibility and defines the powers of individuals according to the hierarchy. The organizational structure ensures coordination between functions and administrative levels and determines the patterns of institutional communication. The organizational structure has five mechanisms that ensure coordination between functions and levels. These mechanisms are joint consensus, direct supervision, standardization (processes, results, qualifications),

and the transition from one mechanism to another through the size of the institution and the degree of complexity. The organizational structure also consists of five units: the strategic summit, the hierarchical branch, the operational centre, technicians, and support functions. Among the models used in studying the organizational structure are those concerned with the degree of formality, centralization, and complexity. On the other hand, internal communication is a process through which information is transferred and exchanged between individuals within the organization through many means of communication to achieve goals. Internal communication cultivates a culture of participation and teamwork and strengthens social ties among workers. In addition, internal communication enhances a good understanding of information and its exchange at appropriate times to make effective decisions. There are many means of internal communication, including personal interviews, Internet and social networking sites, written communication, or e-mail. However, it was found that face-to-face communication is the most effective means of communication.

The field study using the statistical program Smart PLS-4 indicated that the study model indicators are significant. The convergent validity evidence Factor Loading, CR, AVE, and Cronbach's Alpha results are excellent. The discriminant validity evidence represented by the fit index (cross-loading), the variable correlation CV, and the HTMT test demonstrate no overlap between the statements and axes. The model quality indicators are good, especially the effect size indicator (F^2). The dimensions of the organizational structure affect the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat through the formality dimension, which had a very high degree in the institution. Also, the degree of formality significantly affects the effectiveness of communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat.

In contrast, the degree of centralization and complexity does not affect the effectiveness of internal communications in the Electricity and Gas Distribution Directorate in Laghouat. The study recommends relying on the informal framework to enhance the social relations of employees in the organization. It enhances cohesion among the individuals working in the institution through informal organization. Encouraging work in a team system by developing training programs for workers and urging them to work as a team. Adopting an organizational structure that aligns with the organization's field of work and adopting the project structure in the projects carried out by the institution. The study points out the necessity of relying on oral means of communication between employees and reducing the degree of formality in employees' dealings with each other. The informal framework achieves the goals of a formal organization if the goals are consistent and compatible.

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Appendix

code	item	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
F1	The organization is keen to follow the sequence and gradation of authority to complete the task.					
F2	The organization is keen to illustrate official relationships clearly.					
F3	The organization has all procedures and guidelines in writing form.					
F4	The organization follows up on various instructions to accomplish tasks.					
F5	The Communication between units is done formally according to regulations and instructions.					
C1	The organization has an appropriate organizational structure to complete tasks efficiently.					
C2	Formulating goals for the administrative unit involves several procedures, the most important of which requires senior management's decision.					
C3	The organization is keen to distribute authority effectively.					
C4	The organization is distinguished by the participation of all individuals in decision-making.					
C5	The organization is keen on the autonomy of the responsible person to make decisions related to his work without referring to higher levels.					
CO1	The organization is accurate in determining the tasks of individuals.					

CO2	There is difficulty in carrying out tasks according to the laws and procedures followed.					
CO3	The organization is keen to illustrate the duties of its members and the level of their authority without difficulty.					
CO4	Individuals perform various tasks when carrying out their activities.					
CO5	Individuals are trained, and the relationship between all levels is constantly clarified.					
EIC1	Formal and informal procedures for communication and coordination are established within the organization.					
EIC2	Communication tools are diverse and effective.					
EIC3	The Administration has sufficient information to integrate and coordinate administrative functions.					
EIC4	There is a trend among managers to enhance their capabilities and skills using formal communication.					
EIC5	The communication process involves all organizational levels.					
EIC6	Information reaches all members of the organization clearly and understandably.					
EIC7	For informal communication, the organization seeks to hold informal meetings.					
EIC8	Horizontal communication achieves the quality of consultation, participation and coordination.					
EIC9	The administration treats informal communication as an existing reality that is used to benefit its business and objectives.					
EIC10	Internal communication contributes to making decisions that support strengths and improve weaknesses.					
EIC11	Managers prefer to provide instructions and tasks verbally.					