

The Impact of Organizational Structure on the Effectiveness of Communication from the Perspective of Employees in the Department of Education

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Abstract

The aim of the present research investigates the relation between organizational structure and effectiveness of communication. The research methodology is survey and correlative. All employees of Marivan education department were chosen as the statistical population that 92 persons of them were chosen through Sampling Morgan Table. The questionnaire was used to collect data. Experts' view and Cronbach's alpha was used for the validity and reliability of the inventory. Research data were analyzed by SPSS17 and LISREL 8.50 Software's. Statistical methods of Pearson correlation and structural equation modeling were used to analyze the data. The research results showed that organizational structure has a direct and positive relationship with ineffective communication. Also results showed that centralization, complexity and formality had the most influence on ineffective communication in current research sample respectively. In other words with increasing centralization, complexity and formality communication (diagonal, horizontal, upward and downward) in different levels of organization become ineffective.

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Introduction

In the last years, scientists of all categories have conducted various research projects regarding organizational communication from different perspectives, such as: human resources, management, psychology, sociology, organizational studies, public relations etc. Organizational communication is a field of study within the communication science. This type of communication represents the way that businesses, enterprises, companies, firms, institutions or groups communicate in their internal environment to their own members or employees, and how the organization as a whole communicates with people (clients, customers, vendors, suppliers, stakeholders, media, general public and etc.) outside its environment. Organizational communication is important factor to the health of an organization's members, as well as to the organization's relationship with outsiders.

Effective communication within organizations and between people leads to increased understanding and more satisfying relationships (Tseng & Lee, 2011). Communication is a major shaping force in the organization. Davelas (2002) stated that "the level of interaction among members of an organization is influenced by the structuring of channels of communication."

Every workplace includes a range of communication activities such as gathering, recording, and conveying simple routine information, giving and following instructions and participating in small formal work groups. In each of these activities, it is important that the organization has an adequate communication network where messages are received and sent effectively. Organizations that have excellent communication patterns tend to encourage their people to work cooperatively and more efficiently (Luthans, 2005). Usually, communication in organizations takes place within the hierarchical pyramid called the organizational structure.

An organizational structure defines how activities such as task allocation, coordination, and supervision are directed toward the achievement of organizational aims (Pugh 1990). It can also be considered as the viewing glass or perspective through which individuals see their organization and its environment (Jacobides. M. G. 2007). Organizational structure determines the manner and extent to which roles, power, and responsibilities are delegated, controlled, and coordinated, and shows how information flows between the levels of management. Organizational structure can boost coordination of communication, decisions, and actions. Realizing the close connection between organizational structure and communication there is an important question, is it possible relationship between two above variables?

Statement of Problem

There is no organization without communication. There are organizations with bad communication and these cannot be considered successful organizations. Managers spend the majority of their times communicating in several forms: meeting, face-to-face discussion, letters, emails etc. Also more and more employees realize that communication is a very important part of their work because a lot of work activities are based on teamwork among workers in different functional groups. Some researches tried to determine factors which have influences on effectiveness of organizational communication, this reason realizes that why communication has become more important in companies.

It is not possible to have good human relations without communication. An effective communication is required, not only for maintaining human relations, but also for achieving good business performance and organizational structure. Practical experience shows that there is no communication without organizational structure.

Organizational structure is one of the key variables which are influenced by the way the organizational communication are performed, so the proper organizational structure is very important for achieving the performance and make discipline of activities.

Sick and weak structure causes the weakness the flow of information in organization. Unsuitable structure decrease coordination among staffs and managers in different levels of organization far away from the objectives of the organization.

Therefore, the structure is a critical factor not only in what the organizations learn, but also in the way this information and knowledge is retained (Robbins, 2007).

With regard to these cases in this study, the effect of organizational structure on the effectiveness of communication will be discussed. And we will answer to this fundamental question: Is there a significant relationship between organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication?

Research theoretical basics

Organizational communication

Communication is transfer of information from sender to receiver, implying that the receiver understands the message. Communication is also sending and receiving of messages by means of symbols. In this context, organizational communication is a key element of organizational climate (Drenth et al, 1998). Finally, organizational communication is the process by which individuals stimulate meaning in the minds of other individuals by means of verbal or nonverbal messages (Richmond et al, 2005).

For efficient communication, it is necessary that the receiver understands the meaning of the message and indicates it to the sender through some expected reactions (Ivancevich, Matteson, 2002). Each organization must enable communication

in several directions: downward communication, upward communication, horizontal communication, and diagonal communication (Miljković, Rijavec, 2008).

Downward communication flows from top management to employees. This type of communication is characteristic for companies with an authoritative style of management.

Upward communication flows from employees to top management. The main task of this communication is to inform top management of the situation on the lower levels. It is the best way for top management to analyze the efficiency of downward communication and organizational communication in general (Miljković, Rijavec, 2008).

Horizontal communication flows between employees and departments, which are on the same organizational level. It enables coordination and integration of activities of departments, engaged in relatively independent tasks (Miljković, Rijavec, 2008).

Diagonal communication flows between people, which are not on the same organizational level and are not in a direct relationship in the organizational hierarchy. This type of communication is rarely used – usually in situations when it supplements other types of communication (Miljković, Rijavec, 2008). Diagonal communication is used, e.g. as labor unions organize direct meetings between employees and top management, avoiding the first line and middle level managers.

Organizational structure

Organizational structure is a system of task, reporting, and authority relationships within which the work of the organization is done. Thus, structure defines the form and function of the organization's activities. Structure also defines how the parts of an organization fit together, as in an organization chart (Aarabi, 2006, p.15)

The purpose of organization structure is to order and coordinate the actions of employees to achieve organizational goals. The premise of organized effort is that people can accomplish more by working together than they can separately. If the potential gains of collective effort are to be realized, however, the work must be coordinated (Aarabi, 2006, p.15)

Organizational structure is a method or manner which organizational activities are divided, organized, and coordinated by it" (Aarabi, 2006, p.15)

According to Stephen Robbins's theory organizational structure has been defined in three dimensions include: 1- Formality 2- Complexity 3- Centralization.

Formality

Formality is applied to regulations, methods, and written documents whereby are defined tasks description, instructions, and commands which employees and organization's members must observe and implement them (Daft, 2006, p.285). It

is rules and regulations that organization enacts for doing works and is a part of thing which is named formalization

Complexity

Complexity refers to the degree of separation which exists in the organization; in fact complexity means the number of tasks or sub-systems which are performed or existed inside an Organization (Robbins, 2006).

Centralization

Centralization is called the hierarchy of authority levels which can make decisions. In centralized organizations, senior managers and those who are at the head of organization have decision making right and in decentralized organizations, such decisions are made at lower levels.

Centralization can be described as a measure which individuals of units or organizational levels themselves have formal authority for choosing decision making solutions and thus employees have minimum power to exercise their views (Robbins, 2006, p.100).

Literature review

In studies conducted by Mitrofan & Bulborea (2013), The study was carried out in a banking organization, with the main objective of identifying the possible influence of communication on the importance given to interpersonal relationships by those who worked in a front-office department and by those who worked in a back-office department. The obtained results lead us to propose the organization of an improving intervention plan for situations characterized by pronounced dysfunctions.

Badea. (2014), showed to what extent the use of social media can improve organizational communication and what constraints and risks may occur resulting from this usage. The study has also presented several social media strategies and illustrated some of the constraints and risks which organizations that use this modern communication method are subject to.

Yildirim (2014), in an article called " the impact of organizational communication on organizational citizenship behavior" found among the organizational communication dimensions, only the dimension of communication with managers is significantly correlated with altruism and civic virtue dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior.

Barotian (2010), in a research entitled as "the relationship between the effectiveness of communication and staffs performance in Gas Company of Iran" found that there is a significant the relationship between the effectiveness of communication and staffs performance.

Spaho (2011), in a research entitled as "organizational communication as an important factor of company success: case study of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in this paper we will deal with the problem of communication between top management of the company and trade union in company.

Rho (2009), in a research found that frequent communication with clients plays an important role in reducing perceived red tape, and sector-based differences between public and nonprofit sectors influence the impact of communication type on red tape perception. The analysis controls for the organizational characteristics, job characteristics, and personal characteristics. The impact of organizational communication on public and nonprofit managers' perception of red tape.

Kasrai & Rahimi (2010), in an article entitled as " to investigate the relationship between organizational structure and effective communication in the retirement organization from perspective of staffs ,result shows there is a direct and positive relationship between organizational structure and effective communication.

Moradi et al (2014) , in an article called as , the relationship between the principle of ethic with effective communication of organization, showed that there is direct relationship between the principle of ethic with effective communication and whenever communication was increased organization productivity improves simultaneously.

Widhiastuti (2012), in an article called as , the effectiveness of communications in hierarchical organizational structure found that, the communication of hierarchical organizational structure face some problems in the role of bureaucracy, its cause the goals of target, program schedule, some decisions, and also the organization purpose weren't compatible with the expectation. An unequal socialization was also one of the causative agents that due to the long term bureaucratic.

Venkatachalam (1994) in a research called as Impact of Organizational Structure on Effective Communication Flow: The Case of Sharp-Roxy Corporation concluded that the existing levels of the organizational structural variables facilitated effective communication flow in the organization.

According to research theoretical basics and literature review, research conceptual model is as follows (Figure 1).

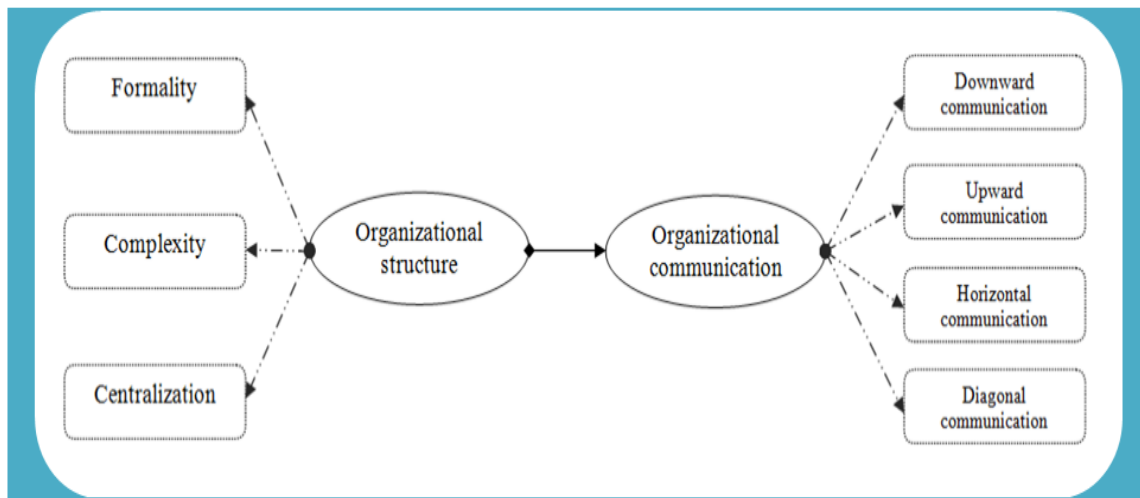


Figure 1 Conceptual Model of Research

Main hypothesis of research

There is a significant relationship between organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication.

Secondary hypotheses of research

- I. There is a significant relationship between formality and ineffective communication.
- II. There is a significant relationship between complexity and ineffective communication.
- III. There is a significant relationship between centralization and ineffective communication.

Methodology

This is an applied study in terms of purpose, descriptive in nature and survey in terms of method; it's also a cross-sectional study in terms of collecting data.

Time zone of the research is the spring of 2016. The statistical population in this study includes all formal and contractual employees of Education Department of Marivan city that has been reported to have 120 employees from which a number of 92 people were selected by Morgan table.

Data required for this study was collected in two ways: 1. Library method: The method has used books, theses, articles and databases for collecting data related to the study literature and history, 2. Field method: In this method, using the questionnaires and its distribution among the statistical sample, required data was collected.

To measure organizational structure used Robbins's standard questionnaire(1987) and to measure effective communication used made - research questionnaire that has the five-point Likert scale was used (very low to very high). The scores have been given are respectively: 1= very low, 2= low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high and was covered by (20) questions.

Determine the validity of questionnaires, the group of experts' idea was used. For the reliability of study tools, Cronbach's alpha method was used which value was 0.825 for the questionnaire of organizational structure and 0.746 for the questionnaire of the effectiveness of communication, indicating the questionnaire has required reliability (because the value obtained is more than 0.70 the measurement tools reliability is considered acceptable).

Using SPSS 17& LISREL 8.50 software's, the collected data was analyzed. The methods of Pearson correlation and linear regression were used to analyze data.

Findings

Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis and investigate the impact of each of the variables. Table one shows the relationship between all dimensions of organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication (The first hypothesis to the third hypothesis) which form the major and minor hypothesis of the present research.

Table 1. Pearson correlation between the dimensions of organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication

Third hypothesis	Second hypothesis	First hypothesis	
centralization and ineffective communication	complexity and ineffective communication	formality and ineffective communication	
0.668**	0.469**	0.426**	R
0.000	0.000	0.000	Sig
Main hypothesis			
0.000	Sig	<i>Relationship between organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication.</i>	
0.571**	R		
92	N		

The results of table one demonstrated that formality, complexity and centralization of organizational structure have a significant and positive relationship with the ineffective organizational communication at the level of sig .000, because this level of signification is less than the error rate of α (5%). Also R rate (Pearson correlation) shows that there is a high correlation between dependent and independent variables. In other words it shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational structure and ineffective organizational communication. On the other hand, this relationship is significant at the level of 1%.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Conceptual Framework of Research

Confirmatory factor analysis and goodness-of-fit test were used to evaluate the relationship between the conceptual framework and parameters of the present research based on LISREL software. Figure two indicate the relationship between these variables. LISREL output shows the relationship between independent variable (organizational structure) and dependent variable (ineffective organizational communication) as a non-standard estimation relationship.

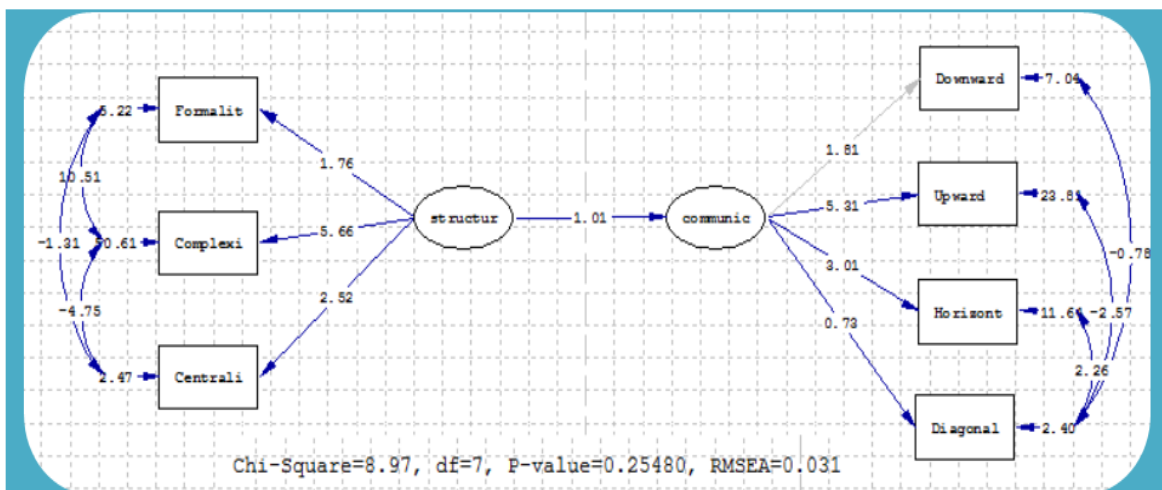


Figure 2: Factors analysis of conceptual model in the nonstandard estimate state

According to figure 2, P-value and RMSEA are 0.25480 and 0.031 respectively. Since RMSEA is less than .08 the model has a good validity. On the other hand since P-value is more than .05, so the selected model is appropriate for the present research. χ^2/df which is less than 3, shows the validity of the present model. The conceptual framework of the research is shown next to the confirmatory factor analysis model.

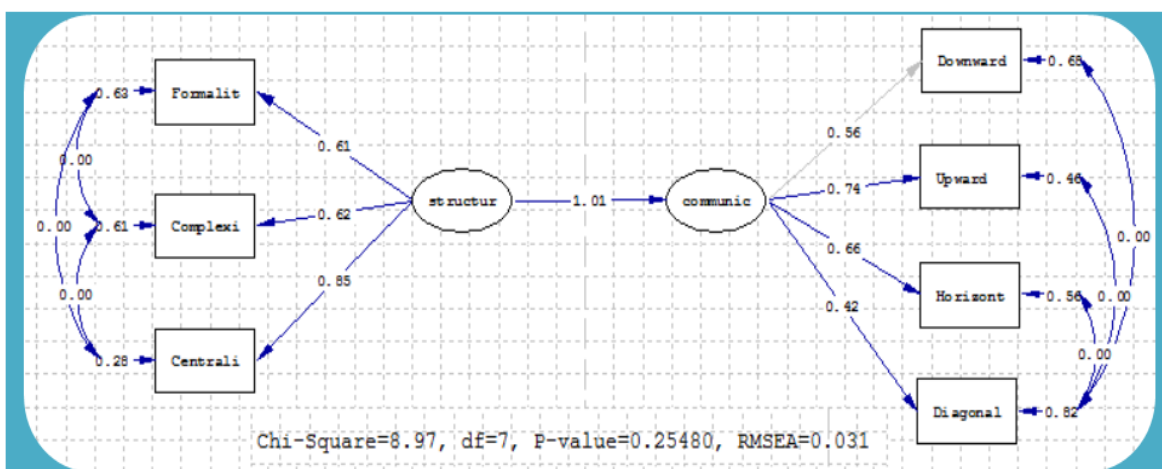


Figure 3: Factors analysis of conceptual model in the standard estimate state

As figure 3 demonstrates, the factor load of variables are more than .30 which is indicative of the correlation between variables and the impact of observed variables on latent variables. All the load factors of organizational structure and organizational communication variables have a coefficient near to one and this is indicative of the reliability of the research model. Standard estimation chart is also demonstrated.

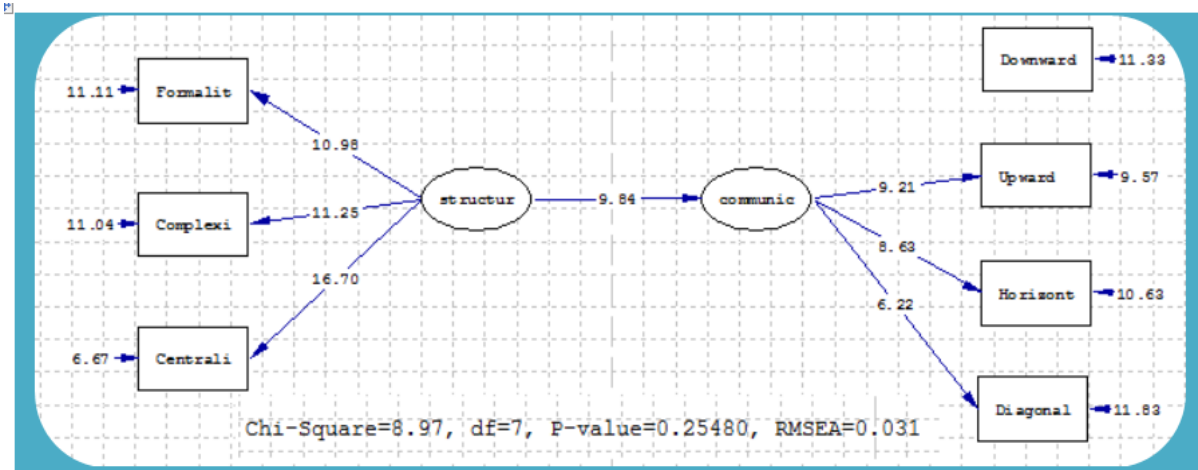


Figure 4: Factors analysis of conceptual model in the T- value state

Figure 4 shows the signification of coefficients and parameters of organizational structure and organizational communication dimensions of the research model. Numbers which are larger than 2 or smaller than -2, are significant. As shown in figure 4, all the numbers are larger than 2. There is a positive relationship between organizational structure and organizational communication. In other words, organizational structure is has been able to explain organizational communication in the statistical population of the present research. As shown in figure 4, the centralization of organizational structure (independent variable) with the coefficient of 16/70 had the greatest effect on ineffective organizational communication. Also complexity and formality dimensions of organizational structure are respectively the next influential elements on ineffective organizational communication.

To respond to main hypothesis could consider to different critical like (The goodness-of-fit was evaluated with indicators): Chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/df); comparative fit index (CFI); non-nor med fit index (NNFI); goodness-of-fit index (GFI) criteria, among others (Table 2). The observed variables or indicators were used to predict the latent variables. The model is in good condition.

Table 2: Fitness indices

Fit assessment index	Utility critic	Accept, critic	Research model
X2 = (Chi Square)	$0 \leq X2 \leq 3df$	$X2 \leq 3df$	$X2 \leq 3 * df = 8.97 < 21 (Df=7)$
X2 / df	$0 \leq X2 / df \leq 2$	$2 \leq X2 / df \leq 3$	1.28
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.05$	$RMSEA \leq 0.08$	0.031
NNFI	$0.95 \leq NNFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq NNFI$	0.99
GFI	$0.90 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$0.80 \leq GFI$	0.99
AGFI	$0.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	Close to GFI	0.97

Conclusions

The first hypothesis stated that there is a significant relationship between formality and ineffective communication. Results showed the hypothesis was confirmed. Organizational formality including laws and regulations, instructions, Job descriptions and procedures. As the cases increase organizational communication becomes ineffective especially in time they are ambiguous. Much emphasis on rules and regulations make ineffective communication among staffs in organization even it makes employees hopeless in doing their works and communication in organization make more slowly in comparison of the past.

The second hypothesis argues that there is a significant relationship between complexity and ineffective communication. The statistical results confirmed the hypothesis and showed when organizational complexity is increased organizational communication becomes ineffective. This means that when the number of tasks or sub-systems which are performed or existed inside an organization are increased communications become more and more inefficient and relationship among staffs will be slowly and ineffective.

The third hypothesis states that there is a significant relationship between centralization and ineffective communication. In centralized organizations managers make decisions without the involvement of employees so communication among staffs decreases dramatically and relationship in organization become ineffectively.

Also results showed that centralization, complexity and formality had the most influence on ineffective communication in current research sample respectively, on the other hand upward, diagonal, horizontal and downward communication were ineffective communication in organization respectively.

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