

## THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ON ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND EFFECTIVENESS

Latifi M., Shooshtarian Z.\*

**Abstract:** Employees in all organizations want to work in an environment of trust where they make a real contribution to achieve the goals and objectives. This article is on defining and measuring of organizational structure and its impact on the organizational effectiveness and trust. The population from which we drew our sample consisted of all employees of corporations operating in medium and large industries in Fars Province in Iran. The results have shown that there is a significant relationship between organizational structure and trust dimensions. Regarding to effectiveness dimensions, there is a significant relationship between organic structure and effectiveness, and there is no significant relationship between mechanistic structure and effectiveness dimensions. In addition the results of MANOVA indicate that there are significant differences between industries from trust dimensions point of view.

**Key words:** organic structure, mechanistic structure, employee's trust, effectiveness, goal achievement

### Introduction

Sablynski (2003) defined organizational structure as "how job task formally divided, grouped and coordinated". According to Dalton (1980), "organizational structure may be considered the anatomy of the organization, providing a foundation within which organizations function". Dalton categorized the organizational structure into traditional hierarchical organization and high performance organization. Traditional hierarchical organization is any long, complex administrative structure with job specialization and complex rules based on the principle of hierarchical authority, job specialization and formal rules (Machinsky, 1990). High performance organization is called organic organization that is designed to bring out the best in people and create an exceptional capacity to deliver high results (Dalton, 2000). Organic organization refers to a dynamic, loosely controlled, organization capable of modulating size and activities based on changing external and internal demands (Ledbetter, 2003). Organizational structure can be viewed as the way responsibility and power are allocated inside the organization and work procedures are carried out by organizational members (Teixeria et al., 2012). Daft (1998) mentioned eight dimensions of organizational structure: formalization, specialization, standardization, centralization, professionalism, complexity, hierarchy of authority and personnel ratios. Organization effectiveness is defined as meeting organizational objectives, adapting to dynamic environment and surviving in the future. According to Richard

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et al. (2009) organizational effectiveness captures organizational performance plus the myriad internal performance outcomes normally associated with more efficient or effective operations and other external measures that relate to considerations that are broader than those simply associated with economic valuation, such as corporate social responsibility. Lee and Choi (2003) defined organizational effectiveness as organizational member's perceptions of the degree of the overall success, market share, profitability, growth rate and innovativeness of the organization in comparison with key competitors. Organizational effectiveness is far more than the ability of your company to make sales or to turn a profit. Rather, it focuses on the overall effectiveness in these short-term areas, as well as sustainability, concern for the environment, corporate culture, talent management, leadership, innovation, strategy, engagement, and communication. Organizational effectiveness requires that we take a more holistic view. "Effectiveness" means different things to different organizations, but we can agree that it means survival and a competitive edge in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Mihaicz, 2012).

Tan (2000) defined organizational trust as employee's feeling of confidence that the organization will perform actions that are beneficial, or at least not detrimental to him or her. The organizational trust is the global evaluation of an organization's trustworthiness as perceived by the employee (Hollander Vineburgh, 2010). The term organizational trust may be better described as intra-organizational trust. This term can be used in different ways: the relationship between workers and their immediate superiors or the relationship between workers and those running the organization. Cook and Wall (1980) concluded that trust between individuals and group within organizations is a highly important ingredient in the long-term stability of the organization and the well-being of its members. Gordon Shea (1984) proclaimed that companies with less trust will ultimately be less productive. The low levels of productivity will create an environment that does not support trust, therefore not allowing trust to arise between individuals (Dammen, 2001). According to Mishra (1996), there are four dimensions of organizational trust: competence, openness and honesty, concern for employees and reliability. Competence is a generalized perception that assumes the effectiveness not only of the leadership, but also of the organization's ability to survive in the market place. Openness and honesty are referred to when speaking in respect to organizational trust. This dimension involves the amount and accuracy of information shared, as well as the way in which it was communicated (Shockley, 2000). Concern for employees is the efforts by others to understand the feeling of caring, empathy, tolerance and safety when in business activities. Reliability deals with the questions: can you count on your co-worker, team, supplier, or organization to do what they say? Do they act consistently and dependently? (Dammen, 2001)

Identification is increased to other dimensions of organizational trust by Shockley and Zalabak (2000). Identification measures the extent to which we hold in common goals, norms, values and beliefs associated with our organization's culture. Three dimensions of trust suggested by McKnight and others (2002)

disposition to trust, structural assurance and trust belief. Disposition to trust is people's general tendency to trust others, and can be considered one type of personal trait. Structural assurance is the trust perception about the institutional environment. Trust belief is the perception that the trustworthiness the vendor consist of the set of specific beliefs about integrity benevolence and competence (Luo et al., 2010). Powely (2012) presented three components of trust. It includes: competence or a sense of efficiency to meet expectations, Integrity or the belief that one is honest and open and benevolence or the belief that one has a responsibility to look out for others and not to take advantage of another.

### Literature Review

In a study among 80 British corporations, Dalton et al. (1980) found that, formalization and performance is contingent. Small organizations are more effective with little formalization and larger organizations are more effective with formalized structures. The results of Kessler's research (1999) in 229 academic departments throughout the United State and Canada have shown that organizational structures don't directly affect faculty members' productivity, and organizational structure moderated the relationship between abuse and job performance such that highly productive faculty members working in more organically structured departments commit fewer instances of abusive behaviors. According to Dammen (2001), a significant relationship exists between the structure of organization and overall levels of both trust and job satisfaction. Ledbetter (2003) investigated the effect of organizational structure on Organizational effectiveness in Texas Grand Prairie Fire Department. The results have shown that environment, technology, size, strategy, goals, culture and philosophy impact on organizational structure and a definite connection is between organizational effectiveness and organizational structure. Hao and colleagues (2007) studied about the relationship between organizational structure and performance, especially through organizational learning and innovation, based on evidence from Austria and China. The findings have shown that in a hi-technology or knowledge intensive industry, organizational structures affect organizational performance mainly through innovation and organizational learning. But in traditional industry, such as labor- or capital-intensive industry, organizational structure impacts organizational performance mainly through innovation. In 2009, Seykora showed that the edge organization operating in a high trust environment produces the most accurate results in the least amount of time. Additionally accuracy performance in the rigid hierarchy was more resilient than the flexible edge structure to change in trust level. Kasrai and Alirahimi (2009), in an investigation which conducted in retirement organization in Iran, showed that there is a significant and negative relationship between complexity and effectiveness of communication. Also this result is similar to the relationship between centralization and effectiveness of communication. Zhang and others (2010) studied the possible mediating role of knowledge management in the relationship between

organizational culture, structure, strategy and organizational effectiveness. The results suggest that knowledge management fully mediates the impact of organizational culture on organizational effectiveness and partially mediates the impact of organizational structure and strategy on organizational effectiveness.

According to Vineburgh (2010) higher levels of empowerment, higher levels of support for innovation, and lower levels of interpersonal conflict were associated with higher levels of organizational trust. Lewis (2011) conducted a study in order to examine the effects a bureaucratic organization on communication capacity of management information system. The results identified traditional organizational structures create vertical and horizontal boundaries impeding communication. The findings determined the critical aspects to improve communication through the reduction of boundaries was direct leadership support for a centralized management information system team with clear responsibility, accountability and authority to facilitate organizational communication. Veisi (2012) in an investigation which conducted in Bank found out that the positive relationship is between organic structure and participatory culture. Also there is significant relationship between mechanical structure and bureaucratic culture. Powley and Nissen (2012) examined the effect of trust levels and organizational design on performance. The results have shown that trust and organizational design have strong interactions and that hierarchical organizations experience performance levels well below flexible organizational structures.

Aghajani and others (2013) found the significant relationship between organizational structure and employee creativity in Saveh Pars Company. Also the results have shown the significant relationship between the level of formalization, complexity, centralization and creativity of employee. Shaemi Barzoki and colleagues (2013) determined organization's structure dimensions effect on organizational trust. They found that formalization, standardization, hierarchy of authority, centralization and professionalism dimensions had affected organizational trust and complexity, specialization, employee ratio and management ratio dimensions didn't affect organizational trust in this company.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Population and Samples**

In the cross sectional study which was done from December to March 2013, the population was consisted of all employees of corporations operating in medium and large industries in Fars Province in Iran. The industries were included 5 groups (oil and petroleum, rubber and plastic, building, chemical and food). The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size and a total of 350 employees were calculated. 208 participants were enrolled (response rate 59.42%) and 142 (40.58%) were excluded because of incomplete questionnaires.

### Measures and Variables

The standard instrument which was used to assess the organizational effectiveness was the Persian version of the Parsons' Scale (1977). This instrument includes 28 items and can evaluate the organizations ability to perform four duties which are adaptation, goal achievement, integration and latency. To determine the reliability, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was applied and obtained coefficient was 0.94. In addition we used Pain (2003) questionnaire to gather information about organizational trust. This instrument has 11 items and assesses many dimensions of organizational trust, like competence, openness and honesty, concern for employees and reliability. Reliability of this scale was 0.82. Shaskin and Morris questionnaire (1984) was considered in order to collect organizational structure data. This scale includes two dimensions; organic and mechanistic structures. The reliability of this scale was 0.81.

Because the questionnaires were adapted to Iranian culture, the content validity of the questionnaire was assessed by a panel of experts comprised of management academics and experts views. The first section of the survey instrument requested demographic information about participants including age, experience and education. The second section of the instrument is about the type of industry and organization size.

The basic variables include the organizational structure, organizational trust and organizational effectiveness. Each questionnaire consists many sub-variables:

- *Organizational structure*: organic structure and mechanistic structure.
- *Organizational trust*: competence, openness and honesty, concern for employees and reliability.
- *Organizational effectiveness*: adaptation, goal achievement, integration and latency.

### Analysis Methods

The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software was utilized to perform the required statistical analysis of the data. The mean values, standard deviation, Pearson Correlation, MANOVA and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. Pearson correlation is a measure of the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables that is defined as the (sample) covariance of the variables divided by the product of their (sample) standard deviations. In this research, the Pearson correlation was used to determine whether or not the organizational structure has a significant effect on organizational trust and effectiveness. Null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis have been generated and summarized as follows:

H0:  $r_j = 0$

H1  $r_j$

Where  $r_j$  is the correlation coefficient and factor  $j$  includes four dimensions of trust (competence, openness and honesty, concern for employees and reliability)

and four dimensions of effectiveness (adaptation, goal achievement, integration and latency). The null hypothesis states that there is no correlation between the two quantitative variables.

In this study the MANOVA was employed in order to test whether there are differences between the means of the identified group of subjects on a combination of dependent variables. In this study dependent variables are dimensions of effectiveness and trust. Independent variables represented by the type of industry and size of industries.

### Findings

The first part of the survey instrument was about some socio demographic data such as age, education and job experience. Descriptive statistics for the first part are presented in Table 1 and 2.

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Participants' Age and Participants' education**

Categories Age:	Frequency	Percent	Categories Education:	Frequency	Percent
1) Less than 25 years	55	27%	1) elementary	31	15%
2) 25-35	94	45%	2) high school	48	23%
3) 36-45	40	19%	3) university	129	62%
4) more than 45 years	19	9%			
Total	208	100%	Total	208	100%

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Participants' Experience**

Categories Job Experience	Frequency	Percent
1) Less than 2 years	37	18%
2) 2-5	49	23%
3) 6-10	58	28%
4) 11-15	31	15%
5) more than 16 years	33	16%
Total	208	100%

In this study the industries were included 5 groups (oil and petroleum, rubber and plastic, building, chemical and food) and 67% of the industries are medium. In order to provide knowledge of the relationship between the dependent variable (effectiveness and trust) and Independent variables (Organizational structure), Pearson correlation method was applied. The results of correlations between the score of organic structure and trust dimensions have shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Correlations between the Score of Organic Structure and Trust Dimensions**

	Organic Structure	Openness and honesty	Competence	Concern for employees	Reliability	Trust
Organic Structure						
Pearson Correlation	1	0.594**	0.308**	0.308**	-0.012	0.554**
Sig ( 2 - tailed )		.000	.000	.000	0.862	.000
N	208	208	208	208	208	208

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 3, openness and honesty, competence and concern for employee's dimensions, at the 1% level of confidence, are positively correlated with the organic structure, and the relationship between openness and organic structure is greater than others. Table 4 shows relationship between the score of mechanistic structure and trust dimensions.

**Table 4. Correlations between the Score of Mechanistic Structure and Trust Dimensions**

	Mechanistic Structure	Openness and honesty	Competence	Concern for employees	Reliability	Trust
Mechanistic Structure						
Pearson Correlation	1	0.501**	0.254**	0.292**	-0.276**	0.414**
Sig ( 2 - tailed )		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	208	208	208	208	208	208

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results of Table 4 have shown that openness and honesty, competence, concern for employees' dimensions and trust as a whole, at the 1% level of confidence, are positively correlated with the mechanistic structure. The relationship between mechanistic structure and reliability is negative. Also the correlation coefficient between organic structure and trust is greater than between mechanistic organization and trust. It is suggested that organizations should attempt to design and build an appropriate and flexible structure to increase the trust of employees. In organizations by low level of trust, employees operate under high level of stress. They spend a great deal of effort justifying past decisions or looking for scapegoats when something doesn't work out. The correlation between the score of organic structure and effectiveness dimensions is shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Correlations between the Score of Organic Structure and Effectiveness Dimensions**

	Organic Structure	Adaptation	Goal Achievement	Integration	Latency	Effectiveness
Organic Structure						
Pearson Correlation	1	0.401**	0.376**	0.354**	0.438**	0.395**
Sig ( 2 - tailed )		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	208	208	208	208	208	208

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 5, there is significant relationship between all of effectiveness dimensions and organic structure. The relationship between latency and mechanistic structure is greater than others. At the 1% level of confidence, there is a positively correlated between effectiveness as a whole and organic structure. The results show that organizations with organic structure take the approach of emphasizing skills that will allow the worker to better serve the company by solving problems and interacting with customer and other workers. The more flexible an organization, it moves toward the more effectiveness. By this way, organization able to meet objectives, adapt to dynamic environment and survive in the future. Table 6 shows relationship between the score of mechanistic structure and effectiveness dimensions.

**Table 6. Correlations between Mechanistic Structure and Effectiveness Dimensions**

	Mechanistic Structure	Adaptation	Goal Achievement	Integration	Latency	Effectiveness
Mechanistic Structure						
Pearson Correlation	1	-0.098	0.014	-0.09	0.302**	-0.055
Sig ( 2 - tailed )		0.959	0.843	0.194	.000	0.984
N	208	208	208	208	208	208

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 6, there is not significant relationship between the most of effectiveness dimensions and mechanistic structure. At the 1% level of confidence, there is a positively correlated between latency and mechanistic structure. The mean of organic structure score is 2.57 and the mean of mechanistic score is 3.78. This result indicates that in Fars Province industries, mechanistic structure is dominant. In this study the MANOVA was employed in order to test whether there are differences between the means of the identified group of subjects on a combination of dependent variables. In this study dependent variables are the



dimensions of effectiveness and trust. Independent variables represented by the type of industry and industries size. The results of MANOVA for dimensions of effectiveness with industries and size have shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. The Results of Multivariate tests (Dimensions of Effectiveness)<sup>b</sup>**

Effect	Value	F	Sig
<b>Industry</b>			
Pillai's Trace	0.40	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.810
Wilk's Lambada	0.96	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.791
Hotelling's Trace	0.042	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.823
Roy's Largest Root	0.042	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	0.854
<b>Size</b>			
Pillai's Trace	0.015	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.541
Wilk's Lambada	0.985	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.429
Hotelling's Trace	0.015	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	.543
Roy's Largest Root	0.017	2.121 <sup>a</sup>	0.545

a. Exact Statistic; b. Design: Intercept + Industry

According to Table 7, there are no significant differences between 5 industries and two sizes of organization from the stand point of dimensions of effectiveness. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. The results of MANOVA for dimensions of trust with industries and size have shown in Table 8.

**Table 8. The Results of Multivariate tests (Dimensions of Trust)<sup>b</sup>**

Effect	Value	F	Sig
<b>Industry</b>			
Pillai's Trace	0.124	7.130 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Wilk's Lambada	0.876	7.130 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Hotelling's Trace	0.141	7.130 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Roy's Largest Root	0.141	7.130 <sup>a</sup>	.000
<b>Size</b>			
Pillai's Trace	0.184	8.749 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Wilk's Lambada	0.852	8.749 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Hotelling's Trace	0.173	8.749 <sup>a</sup>	.000
Roy's Largest Root	0.179	8.749 <sup>a</sup>	.000

a. Exact Statistic; b. Design: Intercept+ Industry

According to Table 8, our calculated F value is more than our tabulated value so that we can say there are significant differences between trust dimensions in 5 industries. Therefore the null hypothesis is not accepted. Also the results have shown that there are significant differences between dependent variables in medium and large organizations. It means that the mean of competence, openness and honesty, concern for employees and reliability are different between medium and large companies. Thus the null hypothesis is not accepted. In this study, ANOVA was employed in order to more details. This process was applied

individually for dimensions of trust in industries. The results of ANOVA have shown that there are significant differences between five industries from the stand point of honesty, concern for employee and reliability. The results indicate that from competence dimension point of view, there are no differences between industries. If the overall F-test shows the vector of means of the dependent variables is not the same for all the groups, Post-Hoc univariate tests of group differences are used to determine just which group means differ significantly from others. The results of Post-Hoc test indicate that from trust dimensions point of view, the meaning full differences are arising from food industry.

### Concluding Remarks

This article is on defining and measuring of organizational structure and its impact on the organizational effectiveness and trust. The results have shown that openness and honesty, competence and concern for employees dimensions, at the 1% level of confidence, are positively correlated with the organic structure, and the relationship between openness and organic structure is greater than dimensions. Therefore a significant relationship between organizational structure and trust dimensions exists in organizations. The results consist with Demman (2001), Vineburgh (2010) and Powley (2012) findings.

Regarding to effectiveness dimensions, there is a significant relationship between organic structure and effectiveness, and there is no significant relationship between mechanistic structure and effectiveness dimensions. The results show that organizations with organic structure take the approach of emphasizing skills that will allow the worker to better serve the company by solving problems and interacting with customer and other workers. The more flexible an organization, it moves toward the more effectiveness.

By this way organization able to meet objectives, adapt to dynamic environment and survive in the future. The achieved consequences didn't alignment with the results obtained by Sablinski (2003), but the results are agreement with Hao (2007), Casaszar (2008), and Alirahmani (2009).

In addition the results of MANOVA indicate that there are significant differences between industries from trust dimensions point of view and there is no difference between industries the stand point of the effectiveness dimensions. The results of Post-Hoc test indicate that from trust dimensions point of view, the meaning full differences are arising from food industry.

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## WPŁYW STRUKTURY ORGANIZACYJNEJ NA ZAUFANIE I EFEKTYWNOŚĆ ORGANIZACYJNĄ

**Streszczenie:** Pracownicy wszystkich organizacji chcą pracować w atmosferze zaufania, gdzie wnoszą rzeczywisty wkład w realizację celów i zadań. Artykuł ma na celu określenie i pomiar struktury organizacyjnej i jej wpływ na efektywność organizacyjną i zaufanie. Populacja, z której zaczerpnięto próbę składała się ze wszystkich pracowników korporacji działających w średnich i dużych gałęziach przemysłu w Prowincji Fars w Iranie. Wyniki wykazały, że istnieje istotne powiązanie pomiędzy strukturą organizacyjną i wymiarami zaufania. W odniesieniu do wymiarów efektywności, występuje znaczący związek pomiędzy strukturą organiczną i efektywnością, a nie ma istotnej zależności pomiędzy strukturą mechanistyczną a wymiarami efektywności. Ponadto wyniki wielowymiarowej analizy wariancji MANOVA wskazują, że istnieją znaczne różnice między gałęziami przemysłu z punktu widzenia wymiarów zaufania.

**Słowa kluczowe:** struktura organiczna, struktura mechanistyczna, zaufanie pracownika, efektywność, osiągnięcie celów

## 组织结构的信任和组织效率的影响

**摘要:** 所有組織的員工希望在互信，在那裡做的目標和任務的實際貢獻的氛圍中工作。文章是識別和衡量組織結構及其對組織效率和信任的影響。人口從該測試採取由所有企業員工在法爾斯伊朗全省大中型工業工作。結果表明，存在的組織結構和信任的尺寸之間的顯著關係。相對於效率的尺寸，存在的有機和效率的結構之間的顯著關係，並且在結構和機械效益的尺寸之間沒有顯著關係。此外，方差MANOVA的多因素分析的結果表明，在信任的尺寸方面產業之間顯著的差異。

**關鍵詞:** 有機結構，機械結構，員工信任，效率，實現目標