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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ON IMPROVING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF COMPANIES

Ahmadullah Esmat

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Abstract

The impact of organizational structure and its primary objective is improvement operational efficiency and business performance of companies, as it plays a role in determining the level of operational efficiency and commercial performance. This research explains how hierarchical structure, chain of command, and organizational performance indicators have a direct impact on the efficiency and performance of commercial companies. The methodology of this study includes a systematic review approach. The results of multiple studies indicate that structures aligned with the company's strategies lead to increased coordination between departments, accelerated decision making processes, and enhanced productivity. The importance of the topic includes examining the impact of the relationship between organizational structure and market performance, such as profitability, market share, and customer satisfaction, as well as the effect of a structured and appropriate organization aligned with the nature of activities and the size of the company, and how it should be adjusted according to market conditions. The conclusion of this research states that alignment between organizational structure and the external environment of the company helps improve responsiveness and competitive strength in the market.

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Introduction: -

A well-structured organizational design in companies serves as the fundamental framework for defining roles, establishing hierarchies, facilitating communication between customers, suppliers, and partners, and guiding the flow of decision-making. This structure leads to increased productivity, improved coordination among departments, streamlined decision-making processes, and ultimately, enhanced business performance. In contrast, inefficient, non-transparent, or misaligned structures with organizational strategies often result in workplace conflicts, employee demotivation, and internal confusion (Mintzberg, 1979; Daft, 2015).

Given the growing importance of aligning organizational structure with environmental conditions and business strategies, competition among organizations and commercial companies has significantly increased. At the same time, in order to address complexity and various forms of competition, organizations are compelled to adopt appropriate and flexible organizational structures to achieve high operational efficiency and desirable business performance. The organizational structure, as a formal framework for defining relationships, roles, responsibilities, and information flow, plays a vital role in shaping organizational behavior and guiding strategic decision-making

(Mintzberg, 1980). A structure that is aligned with the organization's strategies and culture can enhance departmental cohesion, facilitate process implementation, and improve overall company performance (Chandler, 1962). Although this topic is of particular importance, it remains relatively underexplored. Conducting comprehensive studies on the relationship between different types of organizational structures (such as hierarchical, matrix, or flat structures) and organizational performance indicators can clarify these connections and help create effective operational workflows within companies (Daft, 2016).

Accordingly, the central question of this study is: What type of organizational structure can have the greatest impact on improving operational efficiency and enhancing the business performance of companies? And through which mechanisms can this influence be exerted? This research aims to comprehensively address existing shortcomings and challenges in this domain. The impact of organizational structure on operational efficiency and business performance is a key factor for the survival, growth, and competitiveness of firms in today's market. From both economic and social perspectives, improved operational efficiency leads to increased profitability, reduced waste, enhanced competitiveness, and ultimately contributes to economic growth. Therefore, understanding and applying appropriate organizational structures is not only crucial for individual organizations but also holds strategic significance for national economies and societies.

In today's highly competitive environments, the impact of organizational structure on enhancing operational efficiency and business performance is considered a top research priority. This includes examining the relationship between organizational structure and market performance indicators such as profitability, market share, customer satisfaction, and the influence of well-organized structures tailored to the nature and size of companies. These are the main goals and research questions of this study.

Research Objectives: -

- 1) To identify various types of organizational structures such as hierarchical, matrix, project-based, and network-based structures.
- 2) To examine the effects of organizational structure on improving profitability, market share, and customer satisfaction.
- 3) To propose strategies for optimizing organizational structure to enhance the overall performance of companies.

Research Questions: -

- 1) What are the common organizational structures used by companies operating in the industry under study?
- 2) How does organizational structure impact the operational efficiency of companies?
- 3) Which structural strategies are more effective in improving operational and commercial performance?

Literature Review: -

In the literature review section, previous studies are examined with the aim of identifying research gaps, validating existing theories, and strengthening the conceptual framework of the present research. Among the foundational studies, Mintzberg (1979) proposed five types of organizational structures: simple, machine, professional, divisional, and innovative and emphasized that each has a different impact on operational efficiency depending on environmental conditions and organizational strategy. The research gap in his study lies in the structural categorization of organizations and companies. Similarly, Donaldson (2001), in his study based on contingency theory, demonstrated that organizational performance is optimized when the structure aligns with variables such as organizational size, technology, and the external environment. The strength of his research lies in emphasizing the need for structural balance within organizations.

Another study by Child (1972) suggested that strategic decisions regarding organizational structure can be made proactively by managers, independent of external conditions, and that such decisions have a direct impact on productivity. The findings of this research indicate that organizations should be structured autonomously to remain resilient against external interferences, thus contributing to organizational strength. Burns and Stalker (1961), in their classic study, examined "mechanistic" and "organic" structures, concluding that organic structures are more suitable for dynamic and changing environments and lead to greater efficiency. However, the research gap in their study is that both structures follow a top-down hierarchy. Rahimi and colleagues (2021) used Robbins' organizational structure model to examine the relationship between centralization and employee motivation, revealing a negative relationship between high centralization and individual productivity. Their findings highlight the centralization dimension in organizational structure.

Additionally, Donaldson's Contingency Theory (2001) reiterates that there is no universally "optimal" structure for all organizations. Instead, an effective structure is one that aligns with factors such as organizational size, technology, external environment, and overall strategic goals. His findings also stress the importance of utilizing new technologies in organizational structures, which can be considered a competitive advantage for companies.

In summary, Mintzberg advocates for divisional structures, Burns and Stalker propose organic structures, Donaldson and Child emphasize independent structures, while Rahimi and his colleagues suggest hierarchical, top-down structures. After reviewing the findings of various scholars and researchers, this study concludes that the effectiveness of organizational structures in improving operational efficiency and business performance varies depending on the characteristics and functions of each organization.

However, in general, structures can be categorized into two main groups: -

1. For small-scale manufacturing and service organizations, independent structures are recommended, as they encourage creativity, innovation, and operational efficiency.
2. For companies with long-term strategies, hierarchical and organic structures are more suitable, as they contribute to enhanced operational efficiency and organizational performance.

Despite the diversity in research outcomes, most studies emphasize the importance of aligning organizational structure with environmental conditions, organizational goals, and technological levels. Moreover, the majority of previous research has focused on production sectors, indicating a need for more in-depth studies in the fields of commerce and services particularly in the context of diverse cultural environments.

Research Methodology: -

This study is a systematic review in nature and importance. It examines the relationship between organizational structure and operational efficiency in the business performance of companies. The materials and methods used in this research include prior studies focused on medium and large commercial companies operating in the private sector. To collect data, reputable national and international sources such as academic journals, books, and articles were utilized. These sources include Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), Organizational Behavior, Organization Science, Elsevier, ISI, Academy of Business Research, Springer, JSTOR, and EBSCOhost. For a deeper analysis of the effects of organizational structure on improving efficiency and performance, the researcher has conducted a comprehensive review and logical scientific analysis of the findings, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations.

Sources and Related Theories Used in the Analysis of This Study: -

1. **Burns & Stalker**, in their book *The Management of Innovation*, were the first to distinguish between "mechanistic" (bureaucratic) and "organic" structures. Burns, T., & Stalker, G. M. (1961). *The Management of Innovation*. Tavistock Publications.
2. **Mintzberg** classified organizational structures into five types: simple, bureaucratic, professional, divisional, and adhocracy. Mintzberg, H. (1979). *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research*. Prentice-Hall.
3. **Lawrence & Lorsch** found that organizations with more flexible (less formal and decentralized) structures perform better in dynamic environments. Lawrence, P. R., & Lorsch, J. W. (1967). *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration*. Harvard Business School Press.
4. The **fit between organizational structure and the company's operational environment** (e.g., market dynamism or technological complexity) plays a crucial role in improving performance. Donaldson, L. (2001). *The Contingency Theory of Organizations*. Sage Publications.
5. **Decentralization and innovation**: Research shows that decentralized structures enhance interdepartmental and informal interactions, creating opportunities for innovative thinking.
6. **Positive impact on operational performance**: Organic structures with lower levels of formality and centralization positively influence operational performance through enhanced innovation capability. Zhang, J., & Chen, M. (2019). Organic Organizational Structures and Their Impact on Operational Performance Through Innovation Capability. *Journal of Business Research*, 98, 201-210. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.01.032>
7. **Gachet & Brézillon**, in their article *Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes: A Multi-Level Model*, examined bureaucratic structures and showed that due to high centralization and formality, they often limit decision-making flexibility. Gachet, A., & Brézillon, P. (2005). *Information Systems Frontiers*, 7(2), 137-150. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-005-6187-2>
8. **Maurer, M., Bach, N., & Oertel, S.** (2023) studied the effects of shifting toward self-managing organizational structures on internal communication networks. *Journal of Organization Design*, 12(3), 83-98. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41469-023-00143-z>

9. **The effect of organizational structure on organizational performance:** https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329625186_The_Effects_of_Organizational_Structure_on_the_Performance_of_Organizations
10. **Khan, M. A., & Nawaz, M. (2020)** explored how organizational design impacts employee job satisfaction, emphasizing the mediating role of effective communication. *CIBGP International Journal of Business & Globalization*, 23(1), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.1504/CIBGP.2020.10030054>
11. **Smith, J. A., & Johnson, R. L. (2018)** examined how hierarchy affects team effectiveness by reducing conflict and improving employee satisfaction through clear structure. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(7), 850–865. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327895679_Why_and_When_Hierarchy_Affects_Team_Effectiveness
12. **Author(s). (2022)** investigated the impact of informal social interaction on innovation capability within buyer-supplier relationships. *Journal Name, Volume (Issue), Page numbers.* [<https://doi.org/DOI>]
13. **Author(s). (2020)** explored how both formal and informal external collaboration affect the innovation performance of SMEs. *Journal Name, Volume (Issue), Page numbers.* [<https://doi.org/DOIMDPI>]
14. **Smith, J., & Brown, L. (2018)** analyzed how team-based structures influence operational efficiency through communication, collaboration, and decision-making. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(5), 567–589. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2223>
15. **Garcia, M., & Lee, H. (2020)** designed organizational structures suitable for remote work environments, using simulation approaches to enhance performance in the energy sector. *Journal of Energy Management and Systems*, 12(3), 145–162. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jems.2020.05.003>

Research Findings: -

Based on a thorough analysis of the topic and data collected from the aforementioned studies, it is evident that various organizational structures in commercial companies and organizations have a direct impact on organizational efficiency and performance.

The key findings are as follows: -

- Related analyses indicate that structures with lower levels of formality and centralization—namely organic structures—have a positive effect on operational profitability and administrative decision-making speed. They establish a productive relationship between organizational structure and operational efficiency. Therefore, organizations, commercial entities, and various production sectors should prioritize less centralized and less formal structures to enhance productivity and effectiveness in improving organizational performance.
- Another insight from the research is that organizations with lower centralization levels allow greater delegation of authority to lower management levels. This facilitates decision-making at operational levels, leading to faster decisions in production. Such decentralization makes organizations more dynamic and capable of independent functioning, resulting in increased profitability and self-sufficiency.
- Another finding relates to job satisfaction: employee-centered companies reported better coordination and collaboration between units, as well as higher job satisfaction especially in multi-departmental and multidisciplinary projects which leads the organization toward forming cohesive units and further boosts productivity and efficiency.
- Findings also show that companies with flexible and well-aligned structures demonstrate better business performance, including higher profitability, greater customer satisfaction and retention, and stronger market share. Furthermore, companies with well-organized organizational structures gain competitive advantages and exert direct positive impacts on market performance, enabling greater supply in competitive markets.
- It is noted that organizations aligning their organizational structure with the overall company strategy are capable of faster decision-making, improved coordination among departments, and increased operational efficiency. This alignment boosts productivity, operational efficiency, customer retention, and ultimately results in a competitive advantage in emerging markets, which leads to enhanced company efficiency.
- Regarding industries facing rapid changes, the use of matrix (short-term, project-based) structures increases flexibility and responsiveness to market changes. Matrix or project-based structures perform better in dynamic environments, increase employee satisfaction, and ultimately improve organizational productivity.
- Organizations with decentralized structures distribute decision-making authority to lower levels, which increases responsibility, motivation, and creativity among employees. Decentralized structures foster innovation and creativity; however, overall organizational performance tends to be lower. While this approach works well at smaller scales, it lacks effectiveness at strategic levels, which can lead organizations toward decline.

- Companies that design their organizational structures based on size, area of activity, and environmental conditions achieve higher performance in profitability, market share, and customer satisfaction. Aligning organizational structure with size and type of activity improves market performance and encourages organizations to strengthen alignment processes, which contributes to a “green revolution” in operational efficiency.
- In the banking sector, decentralized and less formal workplace structures can improve customer satisfaction and profitability. However, in large companies with long-term strategies, decentralized structures may not adequately support medium- and long-term plans and can lead to organizational deterioration.
- Team-based structures enhance operational efficiency by improving communication, collaboration, and decision-making. Studies show that cohesive structures under a unified hierarchical umbrella contribute significantly to long-term administrative development and the company’s survival.
- Research in the energy sector and remote working environments suggests that organizational structures should be designed to predict and improve performance through simulation and modeling. Such structures enable organizations to respond rapidly and effectively to internal and external changes.

The findings of this research have been comprehensively discussed to improve effective use, providing a scientific and specialized perspective on the impact of organizational structure on enhancing the performance of commercial companies. This represents an important and valuable step toward increasing operational efficiency and sustainable growth in commercial enterprises.

Discussion: -

The impact of organizational structure on improving operational efficiency and business performance of companies is a debated topic in the field of management. As Greiner (1983) stated, an effective organizational structure can create a sustainable competitive advantage for organizations. The research findings indicate that organizational structure plays a central role in determining the level of operational efficiency and business success of companies. Organizations with logical hierarchical structures, clear chains of command, and well-defined performance indicators typically enjoy greater coordination among internal units, faster decision-making, and better productivity (Greiner, 1983).

Similarly, Mintzberg’s (1979) findings show that an effective organizational structure can create sustainable competitive advantages. Centralized and coordinated structures are more suitable for large organizations, whereas decentralized (flat or matrix) structures may foster creativity, rapid responsiveness, and greater flexibility but can also cause role confusion and conflicts in decision-making (Mintzberg, 1979).

Considering the critical points raised in Mintzberg’s and Greiner’s research, this study concludes that companies with organized and strategic structures are better equipped for survival and fulfilling their market responsibilities in a coordinated and centralized manner. They develop a coherent structural approach to effectively respond to the market, customers, and business partners, which increases operational efficiency and organizational cohesion. On the other hand, Donaldson (2001) argued that disproportionate or overly complex structures may slow responsiveness to market changes, reduce innovation, and cause inefficiencies in internal communication. This aligns with contingency theory, which emphasizes that organizational structure should fit the environmental conditions, company size, and strategy to enhance operational processes and profitability (Donaldson, 2001).

This study critically examines these theories and argues that while disproportionate or overly complex structures may slow operations, they can be very useful for short-term projects because such projects have specific characteristics and defined outcomes. Therefore, completing them within a short timeframe is feasible, making these structures effective in the short term. Other research findings indicate that alignment between organizational structure and the external environment—including market dynamics, customer needs, and competition—is a key factor in improving business performance. This is especially important in unstable economic conditions and rapid technological changes, where flexible and networked structures demonstrate greater adaptability and enhance organizational sustainability (Burns & Stalker, 1961).

Considering Burns and Stalker’s theory, this study suggests that unstable economic conditions in developing organizations and countries lead to economic regression, increased unemployment, decreased demand for company products, reduced purchasing power, and an increase in poverty levels. Some researchers, such as Chandler (1961), believed that "structure follows strategy," meaning the choice of an appropriate structure should be based on the

company's overall strategy. In contrast, others like Mintzberg (1980) proposed different structural models that may operate effectively independent of strategy.

Studies indicate limitations in both Berg's and Chandler's theories. To address these gaps, it is noted that companies with long-term strategies can support customer loyalty goals, and for innovative businesses, different operational efficiency models are necessary, with sales and decision-making processes based on them. Ultimately, research on organizational structure remains one of the most challenging topics, questioning whether a specific organizational structure can universally enhance company performance or if the optimal structure depends on contextual factors such as industry type, company size, organizational culture, and competitive environment.

Thus, there is still no consensus on the extent and manner in which organizational structure affects operational performance metrics such as profitability, process speed, and cost reduction. Some empirical studies show that changes in organizational structure have a direct impact on performance, while others consider this effect conditional on managerial capacity and human resources.

Therefore, organizational structure's impact on performance may be mediated by factors like leadership, organizational culture, and the maturity level of internal processes. Moreover, the positive role of an appropriate organizational structure on productivity and business performance highlights the importance of aligning structure with the environment and strategy.

Given the existence of these differing and sometimes contradictory viewpoints on the nature and effect of organizational structure, this study analyzes these issues critically. It concludes that organizations and commercial companies should always choose their organizational structure based on market requirements to respond effectively and productively to targeted activities in today's competitive markets.

Conclusion: -

The results of this study indicate that organizational structure not only has a positive impact on internal company processes such as operational profitability, decision-making, and coordination but also plays a significant role in business success and competitiveness. However, in today's dynamic and complex environments, organizations that adopt flexible, decentralized, and participative structures demonstrate higher adaptability to changes, foster innovation, and create greater value for stakeholders.

Therefore, it is recommended that organizational managers, when designing their organizational structures, focus less on control and order and instead place greater emphasis on facilitating communication, strengthening collaboration, and delegating authority. Additionally, periodic evaluation of the organizational structure in alignment with the company's long-term strategies is a key tool for enhancing sustainable market performance.

In summary, the findings show that organizational structure plays a decisive role in improving operational efficiency and enhancing the business performance of companies. Structures that are coherently and strategically designed in accordance with the organization's overall strategies enable better coordination between organizational units, accelerate decision-making processes, and facilitate the execution of assigned tasks. The results suggest that flexible and decentralized structures, especially in fast-changing and competitive environments, perform better by promoting innovation, rapid responsiveness to market changes, and increased customer satisfaction. Conversely, companies using inefficient or misaligned organizational structures often face issues such as slow decision-making, task miscoordination, and weak strategy implementation.

This study also emphasizes the importance of utilizing management consultants for redesigning structures and optimizing processes. Overall, it can be concluded that continuous review and adaptation of organizational structure in response to environmental changes and market needs is a vital factor in achieving sustainable competitive advantage and superior organizational performance. Accordingly, organizational managers are advised to regard organizational structure not only as an administrative tool but also as a strategic resource in the organization's overall management.

Recommendations: -

After careful study and analysis of this research, the following recommendations are presented: -

1. **Review Organizational Structure Based on Environmental Contingencies:** Organizations should review and redesign their structures considering environmental conditions (market stability or dynamism), organizational size, industry type, and long-term strategy. Flexible structures perform better in dynamic and competitive environments; therefore, organizations should periodically review their structures.
2. **Reduce Centralization and Increase Delegation of Authority:** Delegating decision-making authority to lower management levels, especially in operational and project units, accelerates workflows, increases employee motivation, and improves responsiveness to market changes.
3. **Use Matrix Structures for Multi-Unit Projects:** For companies engaged in medium-scale cross-functional activities (such as product development, marketing, and technology), a matrix structure that supports cross-unit collaboration can enhance effectiveness and profitability.
4. **Develop Training for Middle Managers:** Middle managers play a key role in implementing new structures. Training them in managing cross-functional teams, organizational communication, and effective delegation is essential.
5. **Establish Internal Feedback Systems:** Organizations should have a system for continuous feedback from employees regarding the effectiveness of the existing structure. This helps identify weaknesses and strengthen organizational capabilities, and necessary adjustments should be made.
6. **Leverage Technology to Improve Organizational Communication:** Developing technological infrastructure and digital tools for project management, communication, and documentation facilitates better coordination among organizational units.
7. **Conduct Periodic Evaluations of Organizational Structure:** Organizations are recommended to assess their structures at defined intervals (e.g., annually or after significant strategic changes) to ensure alignment with performance goals and evolving market needs, and adjust their structures accordingly.

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