

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ON JOB PERFORMANCE CONSIDERING THE MEDIATION ROLE OF JOB STRESS AMONGST THE EMPLOYEES OF FERDOWSI UNIVERSITY OF MASHHAD

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Abstract: *Organizational structure is a way to comprehensively integrate the internal efficiency and external effectiveness. If the organizational structure is troubled and cannot fulfill the environmental and organizational needs, the organization's effectiveness and efficiency are also undermined. Organizational factors and employees participation should be considered in order to design an appropriate structure. Since, the purpose of the current study is to examine the effect of organizational structure on job performance by mediation of job stress in the form of 7 hypotheses. This study is an applied research in terms of purpose, and descriptive-correlational in terms of method. The statistical population was comprised of employees of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad and a sample size of 288 was proposed by Cochran's formula, which was selected by simple random sampling. Data gathering tool was a questionnaire with 52 items in the form of 3 constructs including the organizational structure, job performance, and job stress. Both the inferential and descriptive statistics were used to report data and structural equation modeling to test the hypotheses. Research findings indicated that the positive effect of mechanical structure on job performance and its negative effect on job stress are statistically significant. On the other hand, organic structure had a negative and significant effect on job performance but not on job stress. Furthermore, job stress had a negative and significant effect on job performance, and was a mediator of the relationship between mechanical structure and job performance, but it does not mediate the relationship between organic structure and job performance.*

Keywords: *Organizational structure, mechanical structure, organic structure, job performance, job stress.*

INTRODUCTION

Every organization is created to realize special goal. Organizational structure and human resources are the main elements of any organization. Today, organizations are exposed to turbulent, changing and very complex environments. For this reason,

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they need structures which can adapt to these conditions in the best manner and give suitable responses to environmental changes. Organizational structure plays determining role in efficiency of an organization and affects other components. Internal efficiency can be combined with multilateral effectiveness in broader environment through structure (Pires and Robinson, 2014). If the organizational structure becomes defective or cannot give respond to environmental and organizational needs properly, it will have no efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, efficiency and effectiveness in organization require working participation of people and attention to organizational factors. The structure plays determining role in productivity of each organization and correct planning of each structure improves productivity and performance of human resources. So, the good performance requires the presence of special structure (Majidi *et al.*, 2011a). Internal structure of each organization can encourage or discourage performance in organization. Based on studies by Harrison in 1974, power distribution and flexibility increase performance and focus in decision-making and formality in working processes and relations reduce performance (Majidi *et al.*, 2011b).

Since the most important capital of organizations and factor of realization of goals and programs of each organization are the persons who work in that organization. The theorists believe that it is impossible to realize organizational goals without skilled, powerful, committed and pleased human resources. In fact, organizations try to survive, preserve order and grow to achieve profitability, efficiency, flexibility and continual improvement in their activities. For this reason, attention to personnel and their professional performance as the largest and the most important capital of organization are the phenomena which have grown considerably in the past decades. Undoubtedly, movement toward organizational goals and attaining those goals and progress of society are dependent on increase of performance of organizations (Ejehei *et al.*, 2009). One of the factors affecting job performance is job stress which has been converted into a common and expensive problem in workplaces so that many psychological and physical diseases resulting from work are due to excessive stress (Mehmanfar, 2005). When stress goes beyond a specified limit, it will reduce performance. The balanced stress level will increase the performance and if its rate is lower or higher than a level, the performance will be reduced (Dehghan *et al.*, 2011).

Personnel of the university are not safe against stress like other people in the society and are faced with it regularly at home, workplace and community and it will not be lower than other professions (Raeisi and Zahiri, 1998). Therefore, recognition of this phenomenon and its proper management and protection of mental health of personnel lead to increase of performance level and satisfaction (Gholipoor, 2014). Most of the responsibilities in all communities have been changed into universities. University will have great mission for creation of suitable

grounds for growth of the changers like decision-making in the country. Proper performance of the university will bring development and progress for society on the one hand and transfers society development trend into more elevated and more responsible place as a positive feedback on the other hand (Nistani and Rameshgar, 2013). Ferdowsi University of Mashhad has the third rank among the state universities based on national ranking system results of Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC) while it is regarded as the third university in the country in terms of age. Based on results of Scimago (SCI), it has attained the rank of 27 among the universities of Islam world.

Universities and attained rank 897 among universities of the world. Based on vision of the strategic document of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, this university is one of two top universities in the country in the course of science, theorization and technology development with reliable place among the first 10 universities of Islam World and among 500 top universities in the world with Iranian Islamic identity (Website of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, 2014). One of the organizational variables which can play effective role in realization of vision and development plans of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad is job performance. This variable is important because it can promote services on the one hand and improves its productivity on the other hand. Anyway, attempt to promote productivity of the university allows detection of structural shortages hidden in it considering structure and establishments of the university and prepares personnel to perform duties effectively and manage affairs better. Study of the structural characteristics of the university and proportion of these structures with their goals and activities and its effect on performance of the personnel has attracted less attention of the researchers (Taherpoor *et al.*, 2009). Considering the above facts, the researcher seeks to find an answer for this question: can organizational structure in the university promote job performance of the personnel?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure is defined as a formal allocation of working duties and administrative mechanism to control and integrate working activities (Liao *et al.*, 2010). Organizational structure can be defined as the ways and methods in which works are divided into separate duties and then there is coordination between them (Willem and Buelens, 2009). Organizational structure shows power distribution in organization and is not only a coordinated mechanism but also affects organizational processes. From this perspective, structure is not a framework but a flow which tries to prepare and equip organization dependent on quality

and quantity of environmental changes (Pawar and Eastman, 1997). Characteristics of organizational structure can be divided into two classes of structural dimensions and content dimensions (situational).

- (a) **Structural dimensions:** they mention the internal characteristics of organization and gain a basis with which organizations can be measured and compared. They include 12 variables that is administrative components, independence, concentration, complexity, delegation of power, formality, composition, professionalism, scope of control, specialism, standardization and general scope.
- (b) **Content dimensions:** they represent the entire organization and include strategy and goal, environment, corporate size, technology and culture (Daft, 2014).

All types of organizational structures are composed of characteristics of organizational structure which can be practically and theoretically divided.

- (a) **Practical structure:** it is divided into five sections of organization and grouping of the organization's activities.
 - 1. Practical structure based on five sections of the organization: According to Mintzberg, each organization has composed of five main sections each dominating the organization and the structure of organization will be designed in special form considering the element which organizations controls. For example, if organization is dominated and controlled by operating body, decisions will be made in non-centralized form with Professional Bureaucracy. In case the high section of organization takes power, centralized control will obtain a type of simple structure. If the middle section becomes the main operator of organization, the independent units will be established and Divisonal Structure will be created. If specialists of technical staff and its analysts dominate over the organization, controls will be applied through accurate standards and criteria and machine bureaucracy will be created. At the end, if the support staffs play dominant role, control will be applied through understanding among the members and adhocracy organization will be created. Of course, Mintzberg has introduced section 6 *i.e.* ideology of organization and mission organizational structure in his recent writings and finally, he also mentioned political majors of organization in section 7 and believes that a special structure cannot be imagined for it (Aghajani and Alizadeh, 2004).
 - 2. Practical structure based on grouping of organization's activities: based on grouping of the organizational units, all types of practical structure

are divided into task-based structure, product-based structure, geographical region-based structure, hybrid structure and matrix structure (Daft, 2014).

- (b) **Theoretical structure:** Burns and Stalker named two types of mechanical and organic structure as follows by studying 20 English companies for determining how structure and managerial actions of these organizations may vary based on environmental conditions (Sashkin and Morris, 1984).
1. **Mechanical structure:** this structure is adaptable to relatively fixed and static conditions. In this structure, tasks are divided based on the required specialties to solve or perform tasks and relations, affairs, procedures, instructions, circulars etc. are simple, transparent and clear (Rahmanseresht, 2013).
 2. **Organic structure:** this structure is suitable for varying conditions and adapts to the circumstances in which new and unfamiliar problems emerge permanently and are referred to the experts in the organization. In this structure, tasks are modified into the people, contacts and communications are established at any level, obligation of people in organization increases and relations, affairs, procedures, instructions, circulars etc. are not simple, transparent, and clear and this requires innovation, creativity and participation of personnel in performance of affairs (Rahmanseresht, 2013).

JOB PERFORMANCE

Job performance is defined as organizational value of job behaviors of personnel at different times and job positions. Organizational value is the estimation of activities and services of the employees by the organization such as performance of job duty or having suitable working relation with other employees. In another definition, job performance can be regarded as a variable among a set of behaviors which are performed by different people and the behaviors which are performed by similar people at different times (Borman *et al.*, 2003). Most researchers believe that job performance is a multidimensional construct of which two important dimensions include task performance and contextual performance. Task performance includes behaviors which are involved in activities relating to conversion and maintenance in organization such as production, management of inferiors, provision of services and sale of goods and contextual performance is defined as a behavior which is effective on psychological, social and organizational context in which work is done, for example, cooperative work with others, diligence for reaching difficult goals, following laws of organization etc. (Gellatly and Gregory Irving, 2001). Regarding job performance of employees in organizations, it can be considered from two standard and innovative perspectives. Standard

performance relates to the extent to which employees perform organizational duties. The organization which is only dependent on these predetermined tasks is regarded as a fragile social system. To adapt and confront with competition and uncertainty of the organizational environment, its managers should increase their standard working behaviors through creativity, promotion and understanding of new conditions and ideas for organizational changes. For this reason, innovative performance is regarded as a critical case for creative action by the organizations (Janssen, 2001). Robbins (2014) believes that there are main variables which are effective on behavior and performance of the employees and one of these variables is organizational structure. According to him, behavior of employees can be justified or predicted considering organizational structure. It means the structural relations which are created among the employees in organization have considerable effects on their attitude and behavior. What improves performance depends on to what extent organizational structure removes ambiguities.

JOB STRESS

job stress can be defined as collection of stressful factors and job related conditions which people agree to be stressful. In other words, stress resulting from job is the stress which a certain person suffers in a certain job. In this definition, there are some important points: to what extent the employed person has the experience (if he is experienced or inexperienced), to what extent he has strength and weakness against the current situation (it means adjustment power) and what personality he shows in workplace (Ras and Altmaier, 2013). Although job stress is different from the general concept of stress in some cases, it cannot be studied without it. There are different attitudes toward stress and its origin. For example, Selye defines stress as outcome of the pressures applied to the body leading to changes for adjustment and survival and stress includes undesirable stress and useful stress (Davison, 2006). Holmes and Rahe believe that stressful events of life have been defined as the events which person experiences during his life alternatively or continually.

According to attitude of person-environment's attitude or interactive attitude, stress occurs when there is no balance between demands and sources. This model indicates interaction between person and environment and environment and person. For this reason, any certain attitude between person and environment includes implicit effects or involvements between person and environment. If we look at job stress as the stress experienced by a special person in a special situation, we will have similar attitude to General Adaptation Syndrome attitude. Considering the employed person who is requested very much, is criticized by his supervisor, or suffers stress, it matches more with attitude of Holmes and Rahe.

On the other hand, person-environment (interactive) attitude also can hold true for job stress. Based on this theory, job stress is defined as interaction between working conditions and characteristics of the employees (Bagheri, 2004).

The aspects of job which increase job stress of employees include physical environment, not having control over some parts of work, weak interpersonal relations, promotion, and insufficient confirmation and loss of job (Khanifar, 2008). Kyriacou and Sutcliff (1987) believe that factors affecting job stress include high work volume, lack of professional growth, lack of social dignity, cold and unsuitable relations among employees and factors relating to low salary and benefits. Afrooz and Saleh (2008) divide job stress sources into five general classes of factors relating to job, structure and organizational climate, job change, relations among employees and organizational role.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Ogaard *et al.* (2008) in a research entitled "Perceptions of organizational structure in the hospitality industry: Consequences for commitment, job satisfaction, and perceived performance" on 734 managers and employees of Norway with regression method found that they had different perception about equal workplace. Experience of both groups about organizational structure (mechanical and organic) has positive relationship with obligation, job satisfaction, and job performance. If a good and suitable mechanical structure is provided, organic structure form will be also useful. The research which Harrison (1974) conducted for studying effect of organic structure on perceived job performance of 95 scientists in three large research libraries of USA with Compare Means *Test* of some populations concluded that the more organic the organizational structure, the more the perceived job perception would be.

A research was conducted by Ivancevich and Donnelly in 1975 as "Relationship between organizational structure and job satisfaction, anxiety, stress and performance" on 295 commercial sellers in three national organizations of USA with correlation method. Their findings indicated that sellers have perceived more job satisfaction considering self-actualization and independence, lower anxiety and stress and more performance efficiency in an organization with flat organizational structure than the sellers in an organization with medium and long organizational structure. Rahman and Zanzi (1995) distributed 150 questionnaires in professional accounting companies to compare organizational structure, job stress, and satisfaction in auditing and management consulting services. Findings of their studies which were analyzed with *t*-test and hierarchical regression indicated that as it was expected, auditing consulting service section was very

mechanical and management consulting service section has not been very organic. Employees of management consultation service section were more oriented toward organic organizational structure than employees of auditing consulting service section and there is positive and significant relationship between organizational structure (mechanical and organic) and job stress. Findings of the research by Chahar-Daoli and Mohsenvand (2014) in the study of relationship between organizational structure and job stress of 191 employees of Khuzestan Steel Industry which was conducted with correlation method show that there is positive and significant relationship between organizational structure (formality, complexity, and concentration) and job stress of employees.

Findings of the research by Arshadi and Damiri in 2013 on study of relationship between job stress and turnover intent and job performance and mediating role of organizational self-efficacy on 286 employees of National Iranian Drilling Company with Pearson correlation coefficient and hierarchical regression show that there is positive relationship between job stress and turnover intent and there is negative relationship between job stress and job performance.

The organizations which have self-efficacy have significantly modified relationship between job stress and turnover intent and job performance. Yazgat *et al.* (2013) in a research on 424 civil servants of Istanbul which studied job stress and job performance and studied mediating role of emotional intelligence with regression method and hierarchical regression method found that there is negative relationship between job stress and job performance, emotional intelligence has positive effect on job performance and modifies this relation. Another study which was conducted to investigate the above relationship by Ahmed and Ramzan (2013) on 144 employees of bank section of Pakistan with t test and correlation method indicates that there is negative correlation between job stress and job performance. Job stress significantly reduces personal performance. The organizations with friendly and participative environment have better performance than the organizations with stressful environment.

RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Considering variables and literature about this research, the conceptual model for studying effect of organizational structure on job performance with mediating role of job stress adapted from the research model of Manzoor *et al.* (2012), Kesler (2007), and Nasurdin *et al.* (2006) are given in Figure 1. This model indicates conceptual framework of research which includes organizational structure as independent variable, job performance as dependent variable and job stress as mediating variable.

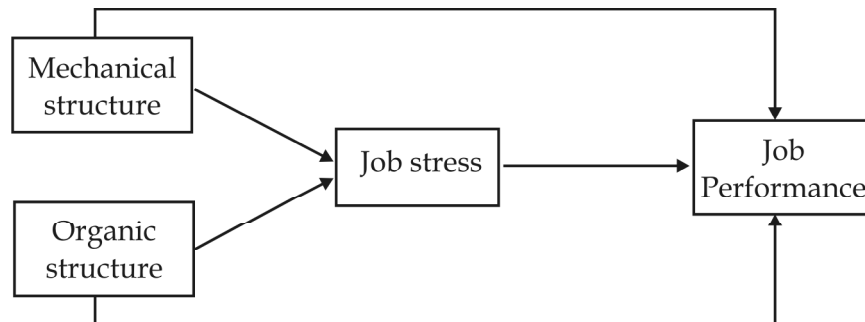


Figure 1: Research conceptual model

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The present research includes seven main hypotheses as follows:

Hypothesis 1: mechanical structure has a significant effect on job performance of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 2: organic structure has a significant effect on job performance of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 3: mechanical structure has a significant effect on job stress of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 4: organic structure has a significant effect on job stress of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 5: job stress has a significant effect on job performance of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 6: job stress mediates the relationship between mechanical structure and job performance of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Hypothesis 7: job stress mediates the relationship between organic structure and job performance of employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present research is applied in terms of goal and descriptive-correlative in terms of method. The statistical population of the present research includes all experts of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (1154 persons). A sample size of 288 was selected by using Cochran Formula at the error of 0.05, and by conducting simple random method. To collect secondary data, library method such as books, theses, articles, and internet sources were used and to collect primary data, field method such as questionnaire has been used.

In this research, descriptive analysis such as frequency distribution tables and descriptive diagrams are used to study and compare demographic information obtained from the questionnaire and inferential analysis such as Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and structural equation modeling are used for normality of variables and test hypotheses with SPSS and LISREL.

To measure the organizational structure variable, Sashkin and Morris's questionnaire was used (1984). This questionnaire includes 2 dimensions of mechanical and organic, which 6 questions have been used to measure each of its dimensions. The mentioned questionnaire was translated by Saboonchi in 2007 and its validity and reliability were reported suitable. To measure variable of job performance, Potterton's standard questionnaire (1990) which was translated by Saatchi *et al.* (2010) and of which validity and reliability were confirmed was used. To measure this variable, 15 questions have been used and to measure the job stress variable a standard questionnaire has been used which was developed by English Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in late 1990s. The mentioned questionnaire contains 35 questions and has been translated and validated by Azad Marz Abadi and Fesharaki (2010). It is necessary to note that each of the above questionnaires has studied attitude of people based on Likert five-point scale (completely agree, agree, neither *agree* nor disagree, disagree and completely disagree).

To evaluate validity of the questionnaires, two content validity and construct validity methods have been used. To evaluate content validity, the above questionnaires were studied and evaluated by the management professors and theorists to evaluate their adaptation to social norms and goals of the research. After final study, the organizational structure questionnaire was reduced to 8 questions and job performance and job stress questionnaires were reduced to 10 and 34 questions. To evaluate construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis was used and Cronbach's alpha method has been used to study reliability of questionnaires. Its results are given in Table 1.

Considering that Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.7 for all the variables, it can be said that the questionnaire has a good reliability.

Table 1
Cronbach's alpha coefficients

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mechanical structure</i>	<i>Organic structure</i>	<i>Job performance</i>	<i>Job stress</i>	<i>Total</i>
Cronbach's alpha	.774	.794	.911	.734	.815

Table 2
Demographic information

Gender			Age							Marital status					
Male	Female	Missed	Lower than 30	From 30 to 40	From 40 to 50	From 50 to 60	Greater than 60	Missed	Single	Married	Missed				
Frequency	60.1	38	1.9	15	45.9	30.1	7.1	.40	1.5	9.8	85.3	4.9			
Education level						Job tenure					Income				
Diploma or lower	Associate Degree	Bachelor	Master	doctorate	Missed	Lower than 10	From 10 to 20	From 20 to 30	Greater than 30	Missed	Lower than 10 million Riyals	From 10 to 20 million Riyals	Higher than 20 million Riyals	Missed	
Frequency	16.9	13.5	42.1	23.7	1.9	1.9	28.9	36.8	29.4	2.3	2.6	24.1	63.5	9.0	3.4

Variable	Organizational structure								Job performance									
	Organic				Mechanical				JP1	JP2	JP3	JP4	JP5	JP6	JP7	JP8	JP9	JP10
Item Factor Loading	.85	.89	.82	.67	.73	.82	.52	.31	.45	.46	.52	.61	.53	.61	.55	.57	.51	.58
t-value	13.14	9.91	13.25	11.79	12	12.76	7.94	4.45	11.79	9.68	9.32	11.00	10.16	10.39	9.66	9.97	9.73	9.70
Standard error	.065	.060	.062	.057	.061	.064	.065	.070	.038	.007	.056	.055	.052	.016	.057	.057	.052	.060
Variable	Job stress																	
Item	JS1	JS2	JS3	JS4	JS5	JS6	JS7	JS8	JS9	JS10	JS11	JS12	JS13	JS14	JS15	JS16	JS17	
Factor Loading	.35	.39	.33	.40	.43	.40	.48	.40	.44	.45	.54	.37	.43	.45	.55	.60	.65	
t-value	11.52	3.93	4.71	4.07	2.99	3.93	2.31	4.17	3.02	4.42	4.79	2.86	2.79	4.65	4.83	5.00	5.02	
Standard error	.007	.099	.070	.098	.144	.102	.208	.096	.146	.011	.113	.129	.154	.007	.114	.120	.129	
Item	JS18	JS19	JS20	JS21	JS22	JS23	JS24	JS25	JS26	JS27	JS28	JS29	JS30	JS31	JS32	JS33	JS34	
Factor Loading	.65	.47	.36	.42	.45	.36	.44	.42	.43	.34	.58	.78	.68	.48	.58	.45	.44	
t-value	4.99	4.67	4.53	4.88	4.76	2.05	4.31	4.32	4.21	4.24	3.32	3.31	4.17	3.9	2.47	4.29	4.53	
Standard error	.130	.101	.084	.086	.095	.069	.102	.097	.102	.014	.175	.236	.163	.123	.235	.105	.097	

Table 3
Investigating the validity of model

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Demographics

Based on the obtained results, 60.1% of the respondents are male, 38% of the respondents are female, and 1.9% didn't specify their gender as shown in Table 2. Age of most respondents was between 30 and 40 (45.9%) and 85.3% were married. Most of the people (42.1%) held bachelor's degree. the maximum experience is

between 10 and 20 years with 36.8% and income of 63.5% of the respondents is between 1 and 2 million.

Evaluating the Model Fitness

For evaluating the measurement models, we examined the relations between the latent and observed variables of the model. Here, the goal is to validate the measurements models. To evaluate the model validity, we studied the significance level between each of the latent variables or their related indices which its results are given in Table 3.

According to Table 3, it is observed that p-value 3 is greater than 1.96 in all cases and the factor loading is also greater than 0.3. Therefore, it can be concluded that the selected questions has a suitable factor structure for measuring the studied dimensions of the conceptual model.

Some of the most important fitness indices for evaluation of the structural equation model are given in Table 4.

Table 4
Model fitness indices

No.	Indices	Acceptable values	Obtained values
1.	χ^2/df	3 <	1.50
2.	RMR	.10 <	.068
3.	RMSEA	.10 <	.058
4.	NFI	.90 >	.94
5.	GFI	.90 >	.93
6.	CFI	.90 >	.91

As can be seen above, all the indices have a suitable value, and in general, confirm the validity of the structural model.

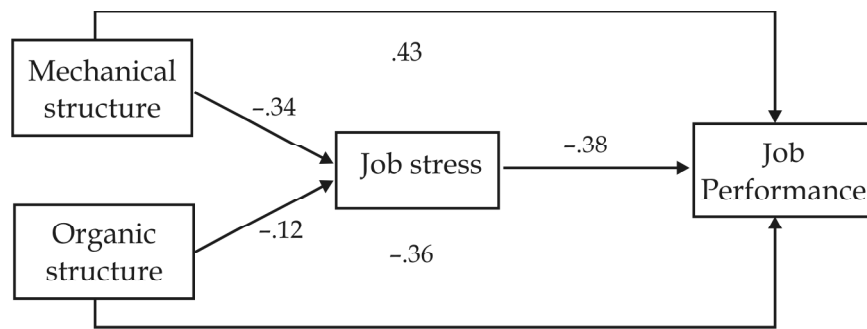


Figure 2: Structural model along with path coefficients

Testing the Hypotheses

To test the research hypotheses, the path coefficient is first calculated and then significance of these coefficients is investigated by the obtained *p*-values. Value of the estimated parameters shows to what extent the predicted relations are strong. Significant effect of each independent variable on dependent variables is specified with *t*-statistic. If this value is greater than 1.96 or lower than -1.96, the related hypothesis will be confirmed.

Table 5
Investigating the relationships between latent variables

No.	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t-value	Standard error	Result
1.	The effect of mechanical structure on job performance	.43	2.67	.13	Accepted
2.	The effect of organic structure on job performance	-.36	-3.04	.12	Accepted
3.	The effect of mechanical structure on job stress	-.34	-2.52	.13	Accepted
4.	The effect of organic structure on job stress	-.12	-1.02	.12	Rejected
5.	The effect of job stress on job performance	-.38	-3.62	.10	Accepted

Considering Table 5 which has been obtained based on the results of hypotheses testing, it can be mentioned that result of testing the first hypothesis is .43 considering the path coefficient and *t*-value (2.67) shows that the mechanical structure has positive and significant effect on job performance of the employees. For testing the second coefficient with path coefficient of -.36 and *t*-value of -3.04, it was concluded that organic structure had negative and significant effect on job performance of employees. Results of testing the third hypothesis with path coefficient of -.34 and *t*-value of -2.52 show that the mechanical structure has negative and significant effect on job stress of employees. for testing the fourth coefficient with path coefficient of -.12 and *t*-value of -1.02 which is greater than -1.96, it was concluded that organic structure had no significant effect on job stress of employees. Results of testing the fifth hypothesis with path coefficient of -.38 and *t*-value of -3.62 show that the job stress has negative and significant effect on job performance of employees.

Considering this fact that the third hypothesis (relationship between mechanical structure and job stress) and the fifth hypothesis (relationship between job stress and job performance) have been accepted, indirect effect of mechanical structure on job performance of employees is significant and its coefficient is equal to $[(-0.34) * (-0.38) = 0.13]$ and the sixth hypothesis is also accepted. According to Table 6, considering the obtained result and result of the first hypothesis which studies direct effect of mechanical structure on job performance of the employees

and its path coefficient is equal to 0.43, it can be said that direct effect of mechanical structure on job performance of employees is greater than its indirect effect. However, considering the fact that the fourth hypothesis (relationship between organic structure and job stress) has not been accepted, indirect effect of organic structure on job performance of the employees is not significant and the seventh hypothesis is not accepted.

Table 6
Investigating the relationships between latent variables

<i>Path</i>	<i>Direct effect</i>	<i>Indirect effect</i>
The effect of organizational structure on job performance through mediation of employees' stress	.43	.13

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

To study the effect of organizational structure on job performance with mediating role of job stress of the employees in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, seven hypotheses were introduced and positive and significant relationship was found between these two variables which is in line with the results of Ogard (2008) study. Negative and significant relationship was found between these two variables which is contrary to the results of Harrison (1974) study.

No significant relationship was found in hypothesis of effect of organic structure on job stress and there was positive and significant relationship between these two variables in hypothesis of effect of mechanical structure on job stress which is in line with studies conducted by Rahman and Zanzi (1995), Chahar-Daoli and Mohsenvand (2014) who obtained positive and significant relationship between organizational structure and job stress.

In hypothesis of the effect of job stress on job performance, negative and significant relationship was found between these two variables, which is in line with results of studies by Yozgat *et al.* (2013) and Ahmed and Ramazan (2013).

Few studies have considered mediating role of job stress in relationship between organizational structure (mechanical and organic) and job performance. Based on findings of the present research, the sixth hypothesis which mediates relationship between mechanical structure and job performance is accepted and the seventh hypothesis that job stress mediates relationship between mechanical structure and job performance and the seventh hypothesis that job stress mediates relationship between organic structure and job performance is not accepted.

Considering the average value for the research questions, each of the goals and desirability of each variable can be specified (desirable, relatively desirable and undesirable). In this scale, number 1 has the lowest score and number 5 has

the highest score. Distance between 1 and 2.33 shows undesirable area, distance between 2.33 and 3.66 shows relatively desirable area and distance between 3.66 and 5 shows desirable area (Mohammadi, 2008).

Table 7
The average of variable items

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mechanical structure</i>	<i>Organic structure</i>	<i>Job performance</i>	<i>Job stress</i>
Mean	3.51	3.17	4.34	3.39

Figure 3: The variables triplex spectrum

Considering Table 7 and Figure 3, it can be concluded that organizational structure of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad is oriented toward mechanical structure. Mashhadi Hosseini (2007) also studied organizational structure of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad in terms of formality, complexity, and concentration and found that the mentioned criteria are relatively high which matches with characteristics of mechanical structure. The job performance of the employees is high and their job stress has been assessed to be relatively high.

Implications

One of the main factors of strategic document vision is the university personnel and this important goal can be achieved by increasing the current level of job performance. Of the variables which increase their current job performance are identification and control of job stress sources and if this is not done, it will lead to early turnover, increase of absence in work, reduction of working motivation and demoralization in workplace and finally lead to negative results in performance and productivity of employees and organization. Another variable is the proportion between organizational structure and the current situations and changing environment. for this purpose, duties of employees should be continually reviewed and parallel and additional jobs should be omitted and the required jobs should be replaced, power delegation should increase among managers and authorities, process of work should be facilitated and unnecessary management levels should be omitted, freedom of action among the employees should increase and decisions should not be only approved by the high level managers and those who are affected by decisions should make their comments.

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