

RESEARCH ARTICLE

What Offers Albanian Reality in Organizational Communication?

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Abstract

The object of this study will be to compare and contrast means of effective communication throughout the public and private sector in Albania and how this effective communication connects with other factors such as job satisfaction, organisation hierarchy, style of management and how information is passed on. Currently there are only few studies available in Albania about this subject. This study will build and strengthen knowledge on the topic. Main aims are: To explore ways of communication used in both public and private sector. To discover the effectiveness of these ways of communications and to compare aspects of communication on public sector and that private.

Keywords: *Effective communication, Means, Public sector, Private sector.*

Introduction

The definition of communication is sharing of information between senders and receivers and perception of the meaning between other individuals. Communication is considered a very important part of the management process. Communication skills vary between individuals and organisations. So structure organisations can make it easier or harder to redeliver the required information by influencing the effective communication. These barriers could be connected with the means and methods of communication. Studies and experience show that organizational hierarchy structure is characterised from a two forms hierarchy communication, which appears as:

- Downward communication means not only information flow but the interpersonal relationship too. The information cascades down in a chain configuration from the top to the manager, who transmits it to the staff.
- Upward communication differs as it sends information from the bottom to the top. This method of communication allows staff to communicate freely their ideas and problems at work. This form of communication is a powerful tool in collective negotiation.

Max Weber and Roberto Michaels say that as organisation grows the power is concentrated in hands of few people in higher positions and hierarchy communication expands. Two other authors Ray Pahl and Jack Winkler disagree, and

state that sometimes it's the opposite. They observed that delegation of the power (top to the bottom) downwards happens more in the bigger organisations. The CEO who has overall responsibility, delegates the day to day management of departments to nominated heads of departments and doing so they break the downward barriers of communication.

Communication tools continuously evolve as technology evolves. Traditional forms (nonverbal) of communication varies from memos, reports, notice board, postal mail to new ones like online communication, email, fax etc. Forms of verbal communication differ from face to face conversations to meetings, telephone etc.

Methodology

This study sample is represented by 76 employees from public and private sector in cities of Shkodra, Vlora and Tirana, respectively 17.1% of this group are from the private sector profitable, 35.5% from the non-profit private sector, 22.4% from the public sector in central level, 23.7% from the public sector in regional level. The majority of the respondents are females (56.6%) and 43.3% are males.

The age groups are as 38.2% are between 20-29 years old, 30.3% are 30-39 years old, 18.4% are between 40-49 years old and 10.5% over 50 years old.

The criterion of inclusion in the study was:

- Age over 24years old
- Experience at work
- Public or private sector
- Position at work

Tools

This is a survey study of a small scale (n=76). A semi structured questionnaire with 17 questions is used as an instrument. The existing literature and the information taken straight from the organisation members are used for the questions. The questionnaire aim is to compare and measure the efficiency of different forms of communication in public and private sector. The survey takes 10 to 15 minutes and confidentiality is protected

Ethics

The survey is designed in a way to minimise false results. Consent is obtained prior to complete the questionnaire and the subject of the survey is known to the participant while their anonymity is guaranteed. Human, financial and time resources

are minimal. A standard tool has been used to ensure the quality measures. The choice of only 8 organisations lowers the credibility. The results of this survey don't represent the whole employees' population so we can't make generalizations. The subjects of this survey know that they are taking part on a survey so this may result in not very sincere answers. (Effect Hawthorn)

Results and Discussion

The survey results show that the main forms of communication in Albanian organisations (public or private) are: meetings, face to face conversations, telephone, and email. However, the staff expresses they would prefer face to face conversation and email and dislike staff meetings and telephone as forms of communication in their organisation. (Fig.1). Staff meetings and email are used more in the nonprofitable private sector. Meanwhile memo, reports, written orders are used more in the central public sector. Regional public sector uses more normal postal system, due to distance (Fig. 2), and staff meetings are only for selected staff.

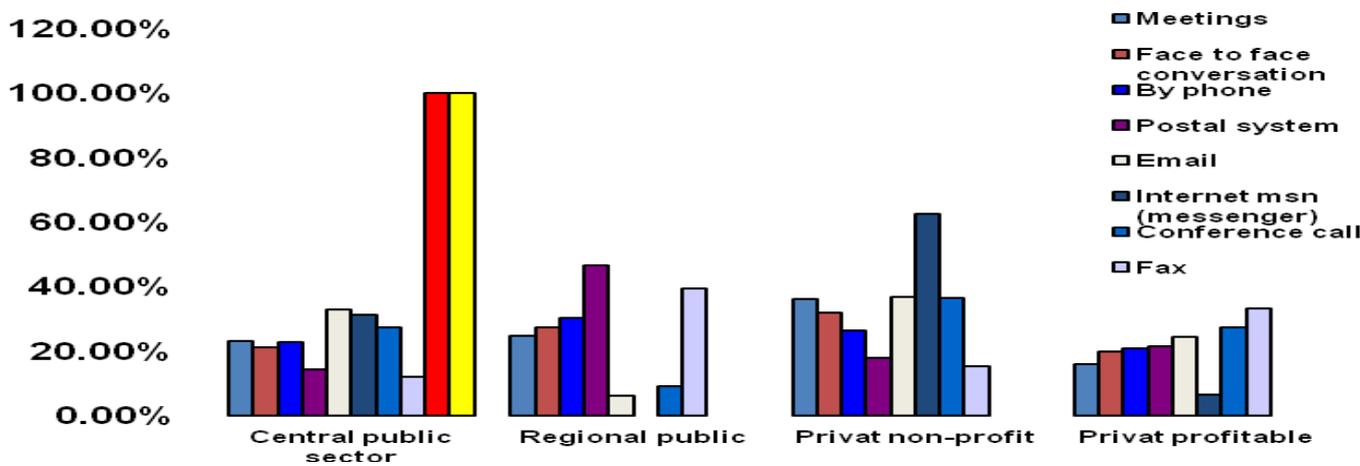


Fig. 1: Forms of communication according to the sector

Positive aspects here include:

- The information provided in relation to the objectives execution from all the departments. (It may be shown here the misunderstanding

or lack of clarity in the objectives and goals definition).

- A better collaboration between departments can be achieved.
- Immediate feedback about work performance is provided.
- Formal records are kept; this insures individual responsibilities for what's been done and for what needs to be doing.

The difficulty is that not everyone is free to attend while time is wasted in long meetings. Another point studied here is to show the factors which determine the tools of communication used by the company (Fig. 3).

The most mentioned communication problem by respondents was the fact of overloading and that was the main factor which prevents them to communicate with each other. This problem is highlighted in non profitable private sector and in central public sector, while this is not very common for private non profitable sector. Staff in

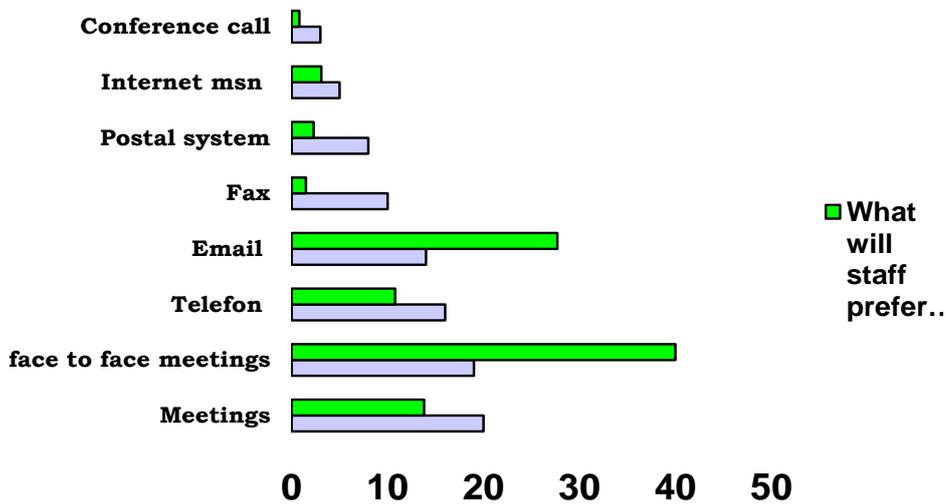


Fig. 2: Tools actually used and what will be preferred to use by staff

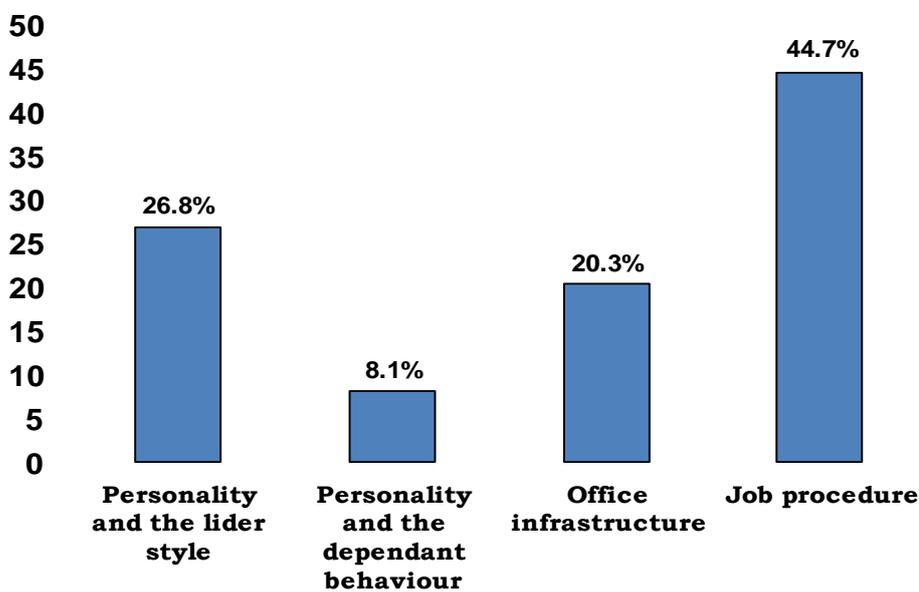


Fig. 3: Determinants of communication tools used by company

the profitable private sector expressed very often the view that authoritarian leader doesn't allow time for communication. Low and very low job satisfaction is expressed by employees using reports and postal mail as forms of communication. Staff using other forms of communication as meetings, face to face communication, email, telephone, conference call expresses higher job satisfaction.

High and very high job satisfaction is expressed more by employees that have a good effective means of communication with their leader and the rest of the staff. Low or no job satisfaction is expressed more by staff with ineffective means of communication with their leader and other staff. The highest job satisfaction is expressed by staff working in the non profitable private sector, while

low or no job satisfaction is mentioned not very often in this sector. However, there is little difference observed between job satisfaction and the type of sector (public or private). Job satisfaction is not linked to number of times the staff meets with the leader. The number of staff that expresses high job satisfaction after meeting with the leader regularly during the month is very small to be taken into consideration. But there is a slightly increase of job satisfaction with regular daily communication compare to weekly communication.

It seems that in Albanian organisations there is a liberal style of decision making used by leaders, where the decision is taken together with the staff (Fig. 4). It's interesting to see how the style of decision taking is related to job satisfaction. It seems that it's not important if the leader is

authoritarian or liberal because the job satisfaction it's still high. But if the leader doesn't

take part in the decision making, the job satisfaction is low or very low (Fig. 5).

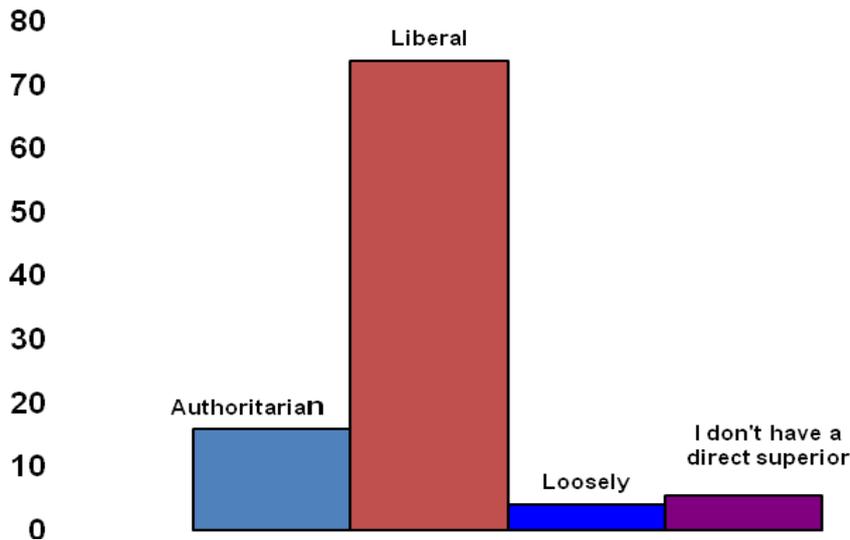


Fig. 4: Decision making style in Albanian companies

More than half of the respondents accept that the organisation where they work has a strong hierarchy top to bottom. A majority of 88% accept

that they are able to raise any issues with the leader and that is good working atmosphere and trust within the organisation. Most of the survey subjects think that leader-staff communication is effective.

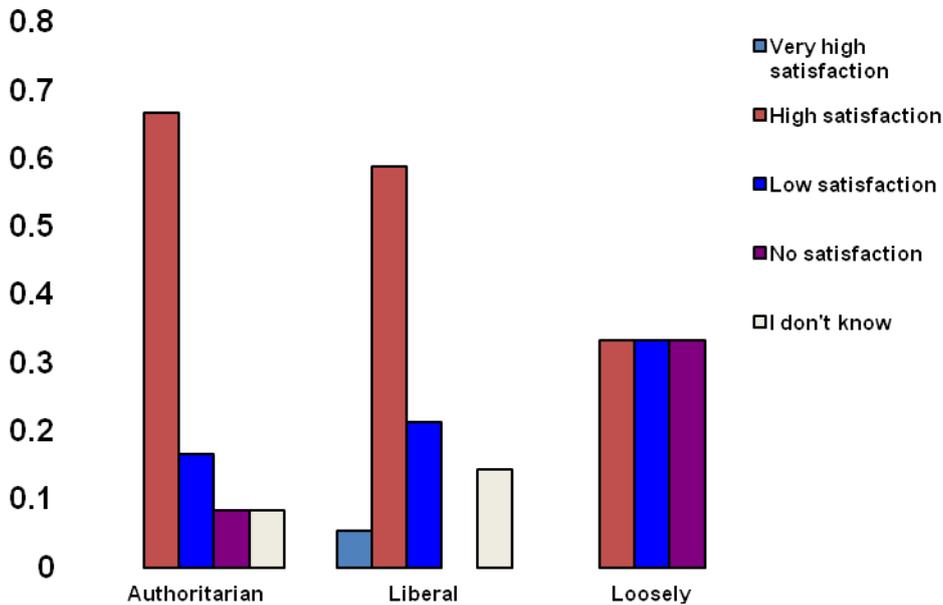


Fig.5: Decision making style and job satisfaction in Albanian companies

About 74% of the respondents think that information is delivered properly at all levels within the organisation, 33% think that staff meeting is time wasting. More than 40% agree that in their organisation some forms of communication are missing e.g. internet or email. 83% say that their organisation has an ethical code of conduct which is known and adhered to by

everyone. Only 10% express that their direct leader has an authoritarian style which doesn't allow room for communication. The majority accepts that the leader passes on his messages directly to them. It seems that in the organisations with hierarchy structure forms of communications such as reports, email, telephone are used more than in those organisations with a flat structure (Fig. 6).

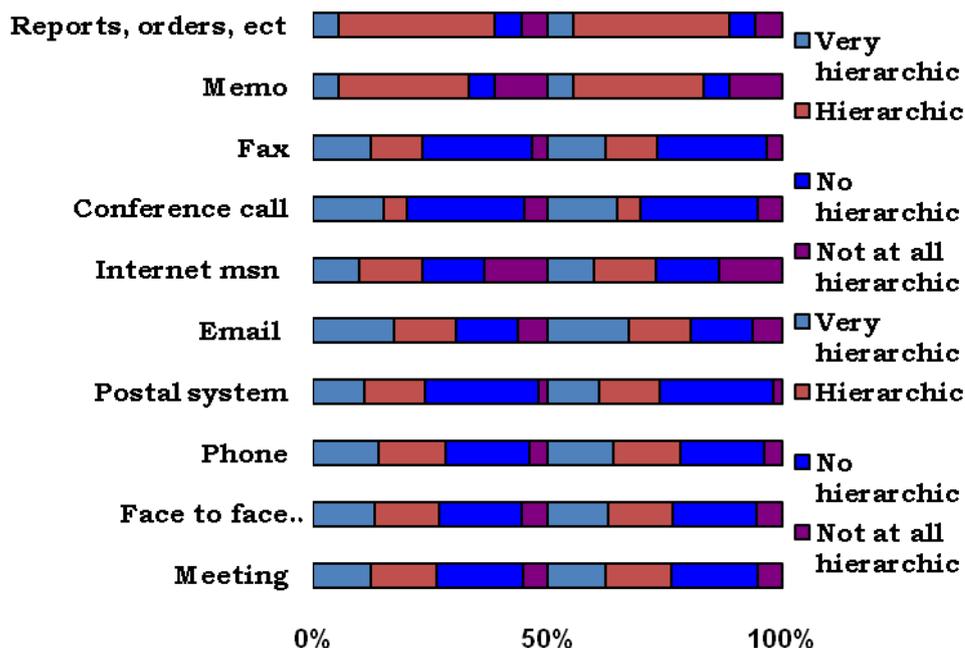


Fig. 6: Company hierarchy and communication tools

There is no meaningful difference between the tools used and the fact that the information is passed on easy or not in every level. However, the fact that the information is not passed on easily happens more in organisations that use memo and reports. The survey discovered a positive correlation between different communication factors in the organisation. This means that the stronger and frequent one factor is stronger and frequent the other factor will be. It is seen the positive significant correlation between:

- Job satisfaction and the existence of an ethical code of conduct known and adhered by employees in company
- Job satisfaction and effective leader – staff communication
- Job satisfaction and the environment of trust and confidence
- Job satisfaction and ability to raise an issue with the leader
- Job satisfaction and direct communication from the superior

When the respondents were asked what they would change in the forms of communication in their organisation, staff in profitable private sector more than in other sectors said that they would like more frequent communication. Meanwhile clear communication is wanted in regional public sector compare to other sectors, and more direct communication in the central public sector. Concentrated communication is more wanted in the non profitable private sector [1-10].

Conclusions

In general, in Albanian organisations the most used forms of communications are meetings, face to face conversations, and telephone. Email is a form mostly used by non profitable private sector and central public sector. Memo, reports and order forms are used mostly in organisations with hierarchy structure top to bottom in public sector. Albanian employees think that there are work procedures that command tools of communication; however they would like to use more email and face to face conversation. The fact that they have too much work to do and no time to communicate is one of the communication problems. Written forms of communication such as memo, reports, fax, and postal mail are connected with low job satisfaction. Interactive forms of communication such as meetings, face to face conversations, conference calls, and internet are connected with high job satisfaction.

Effective communication is connected with job satisfaction, more effective communication the higher the job satisfaction. The respondents from central public sector would like a direct communication with the superior, while in regional public sector they would like a clear communication. The non profitable private sector sees as more effective a concentrated one and the profitable private sector would like a frequent leader- staff communication.

This survey sheds some light in communication issues in organisations and offers information over the relations that exist between

communication and other factors. Mostly, this survey serves to raise new ideas and hypothesis

for new studies in this field that would be used to improve the quality of communication in organisations.

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