



*The 6<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Conference*  
**“DEFENSE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
IN THE 21st CENTURY”**  
Braşov, December 02-03, 2011



**ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS  
UNDERLYING ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR.  
A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW**

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**Abstract:**

*This paper presents a research framework established and used in the investigation of the concept of organisational behaviour from the perspective of the organizational communication patterns underlying it from a contrast and comparison perspective. As a result, its aims are as follows. First of all, it sets out the guidelines for a scientific approach to the differences and similarities between organizations that act in the same field of expertise but account for different results and outcomes in their yearly reports. Second, it lays the ground for a common framework of analysis and interpretation of the data that may be gathered through instruments designed and customized in accordance with the investigation target, namely organizational behaviour as revealed by the communication patterns describing it. In this respect, the paper provides a concept breakdown into defining dimensions and variables, as well as the questions that could be asked and integrated into the investigation instruments.*

**Key words:** *organizational behaviour, organizational communication patterns, research data, research design*

## **1. Introduction**

The nominal definition of the concept of organisational behaviour established as a result of a literature review conducted prior to establishing the research framework presented in this paper runs as follows: “*Organisational behaviour is individuals’ behaviour among themselves and within groups, groups’ behaviour between and among them and organisation’s behaviour towards individuals and groups within it, as well as its behaviour within its environment*” [1].

Moreover, the same endeavour resulted in the identification of five dimensions describing the concept of organizational communication, namely vertical, horizontal, informal, formal and organizational outward communication. Thus, as already pointed out, the first part of this chapter accounts for how the research questions and hypotheses were formulated and then on the way the breaking down of the basic concept this paper is built upon was done into defining dimensions, variables and categories in order to establish the guiding lines in the design of the instruments to measure them.

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## **2. Research design**

### **2.1. Research questions and hypotheses**

With a view to the aspects related to the concept of organisational behaviour the research framework addresses ten questions and sets out fifteen alternative hypotheses [2]. In this section I make a brief presentation of the reasons for asking the questions and for establishing the ensuing hypotheses. Thus, the research questions (RQ) and the hypotheses (H) are listed below.

#### **RQ1: What is organisational behaviour?**

*H1.0. There is an inner life of organisations that can be accounted for*

#### **RQ2: How can organisational behaviour be accounted for?**

*H2.0. Organisational behaviour can be accounted for through individual and group behaviour*

#### **RQ3: What is the relationship between individual behaviour, group behaviour and organisational behaviour?**

*H3.0. There are differences between individual behaviour, group behaviour and organisational behaviour.*

*H3.1. There are similarities between individual behaviour group behaviour and organisational behaviour.*

#### **RQ4: What paradigm best suits the investigation of organisational behaviour?**

*H4.0. Organisational behaviour can be investigated from the perspective of the organisational communication patterns underlying it.*

#### **RQ5: How can a socio-linguistic paradigm be employed in the investigation of organisational behaviour?**

*H5.0. There is a contribution to be made by a socio-linguistic paradigm to organisational behaviour.*

*H5.1. There are socio-linguistic indicators that define organisational behaviour*

#### **RQ6: What are the differences and similarities in terms of organisational behaviour between the organizations under investigation?**

*H6.0. There are differences between the organisations investigated.*

*H6.1. There are similarities between the organisations investigated.*

#### **RQ7: What are the underlying causes of these differences and similarities?**

*H7.0. There are underlying causes that can account for the differences between the organisations investigated.*

*H7.1. There are underlying causes that can account for the similarities between the organisations investigated.*

#### **RQ 8: Is the organisational behaviour identified through this research of any importance to the organizations investigated?**

*H8.0. The findings of this research can be used to the benefit of the organizations under investigation.*

*H8.1. The findings of this research can bring insight into the theoretical background on organisational behaviour*

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**RQ 9: What are the implications of the findings of this investigation for organisations at large?**

*H9.0. The findings of this research can be used to the benefit of organizations at large.*

**RQ 10: What is the way ahead from this research?**

*H 10.1 There are other aspects related to organizational behaviour that can be investigated.*

The overarching question which guides this framework is **What is organisational behaviour?**. Even though it may be argued that it cannot be viewed as much as a research question as a literature review question, the arguments in favour of including it in the list of research questions are the following.

Firstly, the concept of organisational behaviour (at least in Romanian research endeavours) is under development. Consequently, the question referring to its meanings needs to be continuously addressed in order to take as much as possible a thorough view at it. Related to this there are the aims of this research that reinforce it. Thus, in order to describe, explain and explore a concept, a continuous interrogation very close to the philosophical interrogation needs to be carried out. In this respect, the hypothesis underlying the question strengthens the above idea.

Secondly, the other research questions emerge from the partial, unsatisfactory answers provided by the question “What is organisational behaviour?” and that are summed up by the nominal definition provided in the introduction of this paper. Thus, the second and third questions: **How can organisational behaviour are accounted for? What is the relationship between individual behaviour group behaviour and organisational behaviour?** Are based on the overall definition of the concept of organisational behaviour highlighting the three dimensions it is built upon. In this way, through these questions the research is trying to find the right mirror and the right angle of placing it in order to bring into the limelight all the aspects under scrutiny. Consequently, out of the three dimensions encompassed by the concept of organisational behaviour, individual behaviour and more specifically individual attitudes seem to be the most appropriate angle in which the mirror of the investigation to be positioned.

As a result, in order to avoid the impreciseness of the verb “to seem” previously used, the research framework is to aim at investigating the ensuing hypotheses of the second and third research question:

- *H2.0. Organisational behaviour can be accounted for through individual behaviour;*
- *H3.0. There are differences between individual behaviour and organisational behaviour;*
- *H3.1. There are similarities between individual behaviour and organisational behaviour.*

Thus, even though the paradigm established places individual behaviour as the landmark to be used within this research when investigating the concept of organisational behaviour, the hypotheses triggered by asking the second research question focuses on how individuals’ micro perspective (namely perceptions, cognitions, beliefs, attitudes) informs

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on the macro perspective (*i.e.* organisational behaviour), is influenced by the latter or contributes to it.

However, even after having positioned the mirror in the angle of individual attitudes by which the micro dimension of group behaviour and the macro dimension of organisational behaviour to be reflected, a unifying perspective is needed in order to keep focus on the relevant issues and not to get distracted. Thus, a fourth question has to be addressed and that is: **What paradigm best suits the investigation of organizational behaviour?** And its ensuing hypothesis claims that *Organisational behaviour can be investigated from the perspective of the organisational communication patterns underlying it.*

Related to the above considerations and more specifically to the exploratory aspects of this study, the research aims at introducing elements of a discipline that so far have not been employed in the investigation of organisational behaviour from the perspective of organisational communication patterns underlying organisational behaviour. This subject matter is socio-linguistics and it contributes to the research through the connections it establishes between individual- group/community through language used as a code. Consequently, the fifth research question: **How can a socio-linguistic paradigm be employed in the investigation of organisational behaviour?** focuses on this new possible approach and on the insights it may bring to the partial answers provided by the first research question. The hypotheses it is grounded in are:

- *H5.0. There is a contribution to be made by socio-linguistics to organisational behaviour;*
- *H5.1. There are socio-linguistic indicators that define organisational behaviour through individual behaviour.*

Since no theoretical background is a valid one unless checked through reality or emerging from it, the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth research questions

- **RQ 6: What are the differences and similarities in terms of organisational behaviour between the organizations under investigation?**
- **RQ7: What are the underlying causes of these differences and similarities?**
- **RQ8: Is the organisational behaviour identified through this research of any importance to the organizations investigated?**
- **RQ9: What are the implications of the findings of this investigation for organisations at large?**

focus on the practical support needed by theory in order to resist any criticism. Moreover, the contrastive analysis of organisational behaviour within two organisations selected in accordance with the criteria to be established and explained by any researcher in a **Sample description** sub-chapter subsequent to this paper is to be carried out in accordance with the paradigm established in the second research question, the investigation guidelines established in the third research question and the novelty to be fed into by the general paradigm to be employed, as well as by the novel perspective to be attempted.

The inherent hypotheses break down the above research questions into analyzable issues that are to be further held under scrutiny. Thus, by employing them, the research is to deal not only with the observable differences and similarities analysed through the variables and categories explained in the chapter to follow, but also with the visible causes

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and the foreseeable paths of investigation towards amending them and making a small contribution to the theory on and practice in organisational behaviour. As a result, the hypotheses established are as follows:

*H6.0. There are differences between the organisations investigated;*

*H6.1. There are similarities between the organisations investigated;*

*H7.0. There are underlying causes that can account for the differences between the organisations investigated;*

*H7.1. There are underlying causes that can account for the similarities between the organisations investigated.*

*H8.0. The findings of this research can be used to the benefit of the organizations under investigation;*

*H8.1. The findings of this research can bring insight into the theoretical background on organisational behaviour*

*H9.0. The findings of this research can be used to the benefit of organizations at large.*

Last but not least, as a consequence of the idea expressed above, the final question addresses the problem of how the answers to the first question could be further improved through the insights contributed to the field of organisational behaviour by the undertakings of the this research. Thus, the question and its underlying hypothesis are formulated as: **What is the way ahead from this research?**, *There are other aspects related to organizational behaviour that can be investigated.*

In conclusion, the formulation of the research questions and the hypotheses related to them are formulated in a loop manner. It starts with a deductive approach, it moves then to an inductive one in order to reach and enrich the former deductive attempts. In this way, the research proper can claim if not originality of approach, at least thoroughness.

## **2.2. Concepts, variables and categories**

In what follows, based on the research questions and their hypotheses the basic concepts of the research framework are to be described in terms of their dimensions and broken down into their defining variables and categories.

### **2.2.1. Concepts and their dimensions**

As the hypotheses triggered by the first four research questions make it obvious, there are **two concepts (i.e. organisational behaviour and individual behaviour)** that are to be analysed as set out in the research questions and the ensuing hypotheses..

Thus, the variables and categories within the **concept of organisational behaviour** are established in accordance with its three **dimensions: individual behaviour, group behaviour, organizational behaviour** as identified and described in chapters two and three. Whereas the concept of individual behaviour is viewed from the perspective of the

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previous one and thus encompassing **two overlapping dimensions: work behaviour and social behaviour.**

Since, in accordance with research question two (i.e. *What paradigm is to be established to investigate organisational behaviour?*), the paradigm of analysis for the concept of organisational behaviour is individual behaviour, the operationalization of the second concept starts from a two-fold perspective. First, the theoretical delineations and terminology outlined and established through a literature review must be considered when discussing the concept's overlapping dimensions. Second, the perspective taken by this research according to which individual behaviour can be analysed from a socio-linguistic point of view has to be also remembered when breaking down the concept of individual behaviour into variables and categories.

### **2.2.2. Individual linguistic behaviour within organisational community**

Consequently, based on the resulting research question: *How can socio-linguistics be employed in the investigation of organisational behaviour?* and its second hypothesis claiming that there are socio linguistic indicators of individual behaviour characteristic of overall organizational behaviour, the **“linguistic behaviour” dimension** issues. Its **variables** are **levels of formality** and **level of work linguistic specialization**. The indicators for levels of formality are **inward projection of organizational relationships** and **outward projection of organizational relationships**. The former can be further broken down into the following categories:

- *greetings,*
- *linguistic means of showing respect to superiors,*
- *the extent to which linguistic means show close relationships*
- *power-relationships in conversations,*

whereas the latter is measured by the category of *means of acknowledging colleagues to customers.*

As for the second variable, that of **work linguistic specialization**, *communication in terms of department-specific vocabulary* defines it in terms of how specialized terminology may impede or not upon organisational communication in general.

### **2.2.3. Organisational behaviour dimensions, variables and categories**

As far as organisational behaviour viewed through individual behaviour is concerned, the latter can be analysed from the point of view of the attitudes held by individuals towards issues directly affecting their well-being within the organisation on the one hand, and cognitions and beliefs about issues characterizing the other levels of an organisation such as group behaviour, organisation processes and organisation design on the other hand. Thus, from the point of view of the **attitudes held by employees**

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and which represent major behaviour drivers at an individual level within any organisation, I identified *two variables*: **job satisfaction** on one hand defined through the categories of

- *satisfaction with job itself;*
- *satisfaction with promotional opportunities;*
- *relationship with co-workers(1)*

and **organisation commitment** on the other hand measured through

- *employees' short-term plans to work with the company,*
- *reasons underlying employees' decisions to leave the company and*
- *employees' trust in the company.*

As for the cognitions and beliefs held at an individual level about the other two dimensions of the concept of organisational behaviour, the following variables and categories were identified.

In terms of **group behaviour**, two dimensions establish the grounds for further analysis: **formal group behaviour**, and more exactly departments', work groups' or work teams' behaviour as ensuing from organization design and organization necessities at a given point in time and **informal group behaviour**. The variables indicative of **formal group behaviour** are

- **communication and**
- **group work**

described through the *categories* of

- inter-department communication;
- intra-department communication;
- peer to peer communication;
- team work;
- responsibilities and
- equity.

As far as **informal group behaviour** is concerned, the variables describing it are **communication** and, more specifically, **informal channels of communication, and power relationships** defined by the following categories:

- *informal leaders;*
- *hidden agendas;*
- *discrimination and last but not least*
- *“rites of passage” for new-comers.*

The macro-dimension of the concept of organisational behaviour, namely **organisation's behaviour** towards employees, be them individuals or work groups, as well as **organisation's behaviour in accordance with its external environment** defines three major dimensions: **organization processes, organization design and organization within external environment.**

As a result, the variables pertaining to the first one are **communication** defined through the categories of

- *formal communication;*
- *informal communication;*
- *formal channels of communication and*
- *lessons learned;*

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**work environment** described through

- *work conditions,*
- *flexibility,*
- *respect,*
- *freedom of speech,*
- *equal opportunities,*
- *relationships,*
- *resources availability,*
- *stress;*

**leadership** accounted for through *management style, job policies and procedures* measured through the categories of

- *performance assessment,*
- *job procedures,*
- *job security,*
- *incentives,*
- *decision making,*
- *responsibilities/ tasks,*
- *job description,*
- *job expectations.*

Another variable that could be viewed as a category of job policies and procedures but which I prefer to analyze it as a two-category variable is that of **career** measured through *employee training and other skills development and career opportunities.*

Apart from the already mentioned variables, there are also the one-category variable of **power and politics** measured through *discrimination* and the variable of **conflict** described through the categories of

- *conflict sources;*
- *conflict approach;*
- *conflict consequences on individual performance.*

In terms of the last two dimensions of organisational behaviour, the variable of **organization design** is measured through the structure of the organization in terms of *organisational hierarchical structure and organisational span of control,* whereas *organization visibility; customer satisfaction; organisational reaction to environmental changes* are all measures of an **organisation's behaviour within its environment.**

As the above breakdown of mutually exclusive, exhaustive categories makes it obvious, the variables established for the investigation of organisational behaviour are all categorical variables, more precisely nominal ones [2]. Consequently, percentages are to be employed in analysing these variables and both nominal and ordinal measurement is to be carried out in this respect.

## **2.2.4. Variables and categories: levels of measurement**

As a result of employing nominal variables, the categories measuring them do not have a specific order [2]. Moreover, even though in most cases the categories are mutually exclusive, there are some questions (for example the ones on discrimination, incentives,

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greetings, stress factors, motivational factors) where respondents may choose more than one category or may point out other categories.

However, as it is to become obvious from the next sub-chapter dealing with types of questions addressed within the questionnaires, in order to ensure a better coverage of the overall concept of organisational behaviour, besides nominal measurement **ordinal measures** are employed as well. As a result, even though the categories under each variable do not have a set order, attitudinal and frequency items provide the respondents three mutually exclusive answer alternatives: *yes, no, don't know* or *always, sometimes, never*.

In the sub-chapter to follow, these levels of measurement are to be discussed alongside with the instrument description, namely with the types of questions asked in order to measure the variables and categories previously listed.

### **2.3. Instrument description**

Starting from the concepts, variables and categories described above two questionnaires were designed as a means of measuring them. In the paragraphs to follow these instruments will be described in terms of the category they fall in as well as in terms of the kind of questions they include.

#### **2.3.1. Type of instrument**

The instruments suggested for this research framework consist of two questionnaires. The latter are numbered in the order they were administered and from now on I will be referring to them as *questionnaire one*, the *attitudes-related questionnaire* or the *organisational behaviour questionnaire* and *questionnaire two* or the *linguistic behaviour questionnaire*.

Questionnaire one is related to the attitudes held by employees concerning the variables and categories within the concept of organisational behaviour, as the latter were identified in the previous sub-chapter. The number of questions totals eighty two and all the questions are closed-ended ones.

For a better understanding of the relationship between the variables and their categories on one hand and the questions measuring them on the other hand, **Table 1** lists the variables/categories- questions correspondences.

#### **2.3.2. Types of questions**

As I already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, three major types of questions are used within the two questionnaires: **closed-ended questions, contingency questions and open-ended questions.**

Considering the overall number of the questions included in questionnaire one (i.e. eighty two out of which some are presented in Table 1) and the ensuing likelihood that respondents could have got tired or bored answering all of them, I formulated them in the **closed-ended question format**. Thus, for questions from one to twelve, fourteen to seventeen, twenty two to fifty seven, fifty nine to seventy one; seventy three to eighty two

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three mutually exclusive alternatives were listed: *yes*, *no*, *don't know*. The rest of the questions (i.e. questions 13, 18, 19, 20, 58, 72, 82) are multiple choice questions listing several alternatives, the *others* category included, and allowing for multiple answers.

Within the second questionnaire focused on the linguistic variables of organizational behaviour (which for paper length purposes is not fully presented here) all three types of questions mentioned before were employed.

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Organisational behaviour	Individual behaviour	Job-satisfaction	Satisfaction with job training	<b>Question 47</b> Overall, I am satisfied with the courses provided so far by the company and aimed at training me for the position I fill in.
			Satisfaction with promotional opportunities	<b>Question 48</b> Overall, I am satisfied with my career development.
			Relationship with co-workers	<b>Question 43:</b> Overall, I am satisfied with the team-work within the company. <b>Question 81:</b> I like to apply the principle “My colleagues are my co-workers not my friends”.
		Organisation commitment	Staff short-term employment plans with the company	<b>Question 14:</b> I believe that I will be working for this company a year from now.
			Reasons underlying employees decisions to leave the company	<p><b>Question19:</b> Why did you get employed with this company?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unemployed</li> <li>• other benefits</li> <li>• company reputation</li> <li>• career opportunity</li> <li>• better salary</li> <li>• others</li> </ul> <p><b>Question 20:</b> If I were to leave the company, I would do it for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a higher salary</li> <li>2. other benefits besides salary</li> <li>3. no commuting</li> <li>4. personal or family problems</li> <li>5. career opportunities</li> <li>6. lack of job security</li> <li>7. conflict with colleagues</li> <li>8. conflict with superiors</li> <li>9. others</li> </ol>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Organisation trust	<p><b>Question 15:</b> <i>If I had a choice, I would choose to work for the same company.</i></p> <p><b>Question 16:</b> <i>I would recommend this company to my friends as well.</i></p>
		Individual linguistic behaviour	Relationship with co-workers	<p><b>Formal greetings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>am onoarea (I'm honoured)</i></li> <li>2. <i>să trăiți (Sir/Madam)</i></li> <li>3. <i>buna dimineața (good morning)</i></li> <li>4. <i>buna ziua (Good afternoon)</i></li> <li>5. <i>la revedere (good bye)</i></li> <li>6. <i>others</i></li> </ol>
				<p><b>Informal greetings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>salut</i></li> <li>2. <i>servus</i></li> <li>3. <i>bună</i></li> <li>4. <i>hi</i></li> <li>5. <i>hello</i></li> <li>6. <i>'neața</i></li> <li>7. <i>pa</i></li> <li>8. <i>bye</i></li> </ol> <p><i>others</i></p>
				<p><b>Question 3:</b> <i>Linguistic means of showing respect to colleagues of same age with the respondent.</i></p>
				<p><b>Question 4:</b> <i>Linguistic means of showing respect to colleagues in a similar position to the respondent's.</i></p>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS	
				<p><b>Question 5:</b> Employment of ‘d-voastra’ when addressing co-workers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. department chief</li> <li>2. team chief</li> <li>3. CEO</li> <li>4. older colleague</li> <li>5. all colleagues</li> </ol> <p>colleagues who did not allow me to address them by ‘tu’</p>	
	Formal and informal group behaviour	Individual attitudes towards formal group behaviour	Communication	Inter-department communication	<p><b>Question 29:</b> Communication between my team and the other department/offices within the company is good.</p> <p><b>Question 35:</b> Communication among the organization’s departments is good.</p>
Intra-department communication				<b>Question 38:</b> Communication within my work group is good.	
Peer to peer communication				<b>Question 6:</b> Company’s employees cooperate to solve work-related tasks.	
Group work			Relationships	<b>Question 69:</b> Relationships between colleagues are based on mutual trust.	
			Team work	<b>Question 39:</b> The department I work in encourages teamwork.	
			Responsibilities	<b>Question 40:</b> Responsibility for the decisions made within a team lies with its members.	
		Equity	<p><b>Question 41:</b> Equity is used to distribute work tasks within my team.</p> <p><b>Question 51:</b> All employees carry out their work-related tasks.</p>		
attitudes towards informal group		Communication relation	of	Informal channels of communication	<b>Question 58:</b> What communication channels are there employed to inform employees on general issues related to the company (i.e. objectives, strategy, events, courses, visits)? (rumours)
attitudes towards informal group				Informal leaders	<b>Question 80:</b> There are colleagues within my company that I admire and support because of their personality.

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS	
			Hidden agendas	<b>Question 61:</b> <i>I believe that some of the employees have hidden agendas affecting organisational results.</i>	
			Rites of passage for new comers	<b>Question 77:</b> <i>Within the company new comers have to go through a trial period before they are accepted by their colleagues.</i>	
	Organizational behaviour	Organization processes	Communication	Formal communication	<b>Question 22:</b> <i>I believe that the employees should have the opportunity to interact more at an informal level.</i> <b>Question 30:</b> <i>Within the company the employees are kept informed on the changes and decisions that are of concern for them</i> <b>Question 32:</b> <i>My superiors keep me well informed on the organisation's objectives and strategy.</i> <b>Question 37:</b> <i>I can avail myself of the opportunity to present my ideas to the managing director.</i>
				Informal communication	<b>Question 23:</b> <i>I believe the employees should have more opportunities to interact with one another at an informal level (e.g. birthdays, get togethers, etc.)</i> <b>Question 24:</b> <i>I believe the employees have enough opportunities to interact with one another at an informal level.</i> <b>Question 31:</b> <i>We usually find out about important changes within the company from rumours and not directly from our superiors</i>
				Formal channels of communication	<b>Question 58:</b> <i>What means of communication are there employed to provide the employees the general information (i.e. objectives, strategy, events, courses, visits) related to their organisation?</i>
				Lessons learned	<b>Question 34:</b> <i>Within the company, the conclusions drawn at the end of a project are passed on to those who are tackling or are to deal with similar activities.</i> <b>Question 67:</b> <i>When the situation within the company is troublesome the lessons learned in the past are resorted to in order to work out the problems.</i>
			en	Work conditions	<b>Question 8 :</b> <i>The work environment within the company is a relaxed one.</i>
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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Flexibility	<b>Question 33:</b> <i>Superiors show flexibility when the employees need to solve their personal problems.</i>
			Respect	<b>Question 11 :</b> <i>I am respected by my superiors and colleagues.</i> <b>Question 60:</b> <i>On overall, within the organisation, people feel appreciated.</i>
			Freedom of speech	<b>Question 28:</b> <i>I can freely express my opinions, disagreements and dissatisfactions at my workplace.</i>
			Equal opportunities	<b>Question 50:</b> <i>All the employees benefit from equal opportunities within the organisation..</i>
			Resources availability	<b>Question 56:</b> <i>I have all the resources necessary to carry out my work related tasks.</i> <b>Question 9:</b> <i>I have immediate access to the information I need to appropriately carry out my work related tasks.</i>
			Stress	<b>Question 12:</b> <i>I am under a lot of stress because of my job.</i> <b>Question 13:</b> <i>Stress at work is triggered by :</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Management style</i></li> <li>• <i>Colleague relationships</i></li> <li>• <i>Workload</i></li> <li>• <i>Job responsibilities</i></li> <li>• <i>Work environment</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal problems</i></li> <li>• <i>Others</i></li> </ul>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Job policies and procedures	<p>Performance assessment</p> <p><b>Question 3:</b> <i>My work performance assessment involves solutions to remedy the problem, solutions provided by my direct superior.</i></p> <p><b>Question 7:</b> <i>The yearly/quarterly assessmewnt is nothing but a formality within the organisation I work for.</i></p> <p><b>Question 5:</b> <i>I know the criteria employedd to assess my performance..</i></p>
				<p>Job procedures</p> <p><b>Question 53:</b> <i>I believe my work results would be better if I did not have so much paperwork to do</i></p>
				<p>Security</p> <p><b>Question 17:</b> <i>Within this organisation job security is ensured.</i></p>
				<p>Incentives</p> <p><b>Question 59:</b> <i>Usually, the company rewards employees' efforts.</i></p> <p><b>Question 82:</b> <i>The means of showing the organisation's appreciation of employees' efforts consist of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>direct superior's personal thanks</i></li> <li>b. <i>managing director's thanks in front of the other colleagues</i></li> <li>c. <i>thank you letter</i></li> <li>d. <i>rewards (salary raise, days off, etc.)</i></li> <li>e. <i>others .....</i></li> <li>f. <i>no means of showing the organisation's appreciation of employees' efforts are employed</i></li> </ul>
				<p>Decision-making</p> <p><b>Question 25:</b> <i>With my current job I have enough freedom to make my own decisions when necessary</i></p> <p><b>Question 26:</b> <i>With my current job I have enough freedom to make my own decisions when it comes to meeting customers' requests.</i></p>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Responsibilities/tasks assignment	<p><b>Question 10:</b> <i>My superiors know my skills and competences and delegate tasks accordingly.</i></p> <p><b>Question 40:</b> <i>Responsibility for the decisions made within a team lies with its members.</i></p> <p><b>Question 74:</b> <i>I am often asked to carry out activities that are not included in the job description.</i></p>
			Job description	<b>Question 4:</b> <i>I know the tasks and responsibilities incurred by the position I fill in.</i>
			Job expectations	<b>Question 1 :</b> <i>The efforts I make to carry out my job related tasks are greater than my superiors' expectations.</i>
		Career	Employee training and other skills development	<p><b>Question 44:</b> <i>Within the organisation I have the possibility to develop skills and competences other than those required by the position I fill in.</i></p> <p><b>Question 45:</b> <i>The organisation gives me the opportunity to attend training courses.</i></p> <p><b>Question 46:</b> <i>I have no difficulties in putting into practice the knowledge gained during the training courses attended.</i></p>
			Career opportunities	<p><b>Question 27:</b> <i>The current position allows me to move up the career ladder within the organisation.</i></p> <p><b>Question 55:</b> <i>I believe that my current position contributes to my professional accomplishment.</i></p>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE		CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Power and politics	Types of discrimination witnessed or experienced within the company	<p><b>Question 18:</b> <i>Within the company I noticed or I was subjected to the following types of discrimination:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Position</li> <li>• Others</li> <li>• No discrimination</li> </ul>
			Conflict	Conflict sources	<p><b>Question 72:</b> <i>The causes of conflicts within the company are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited resources</li> <li>• number of departments</li> <li>• nature of activities</li> <li>• responsibilities overload</li> <li>• job description</li> <li>• informal leaders</li> </ul>
				Conflict approach	<p><b>Question 65:</b> <i>In general, when misunderstandings about how work related tasks are to be carried out appear, they are not solved and thus impede upon work environment.</i></p>
				Conflict consequences on individual performance	<p><b>Question 66:</b> <i>Even if I am in conflict with some of my colleagues, I believe that does not impede upon my work results.</i></p>
		Organisation design		Organisational hierarchical structure	<p><b>Question 80:</b> <i>I believe the current organisational structure (i.e number of departments, levels of subordination) should be reviewed in order to improve the organisation's output.</i></p>

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CONCEPT	DIMENSIONS	VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
			Organisational span of control	<p><b>Question 76:</b> <i>I know exactly the chain of command I have to go through when I report on the individual results or the problems I am confronted with.</i></p> <p><b>Question 12:</b> <i>What are the diminutives or nicknames you use most when you address the colleagues you are closer to?</i></p> <p><b>Question 11:</b> <i>When you address colleagues with whom you are on a first name basis you sometimes use diminutives or nicknames.</i></p>
		Organization's behaviour within its environment	Organisation visibility	<p><b>Question 21:</b> <i>I got employed with this company through:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;"><i>a. recommendation on behalf of a friend</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;"><i>b. the publishing of the position as vacant in the newspaper</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>others</i></p>
			Customer satisfaction	<b>Question 45:</b> <i>Customers are satisfied with the services provided by the company/institution.</i>
			Reaction to change	<b>Question 73:</b> <i>I believe that the organization I am part of adapts easily to market requirements.</i>

**Table 1. Variables/Categories- Questions Correspondences**

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### **3. Data analysis**

This section aims at providing the framework by which the data interpretation can be carried out by taking a look at the dependent and independent variable of the research framework.

#### **3.1. The dependent variable and its independent variables**

The **dependent variable** of the research framework presented in this paper is **organisational behaviour**, whereas **the independent variables** informing on the former are grouped under the generic heading of '**organisational communication patterns**'.

However, in order to facilitate the interpretation of the data obtained from the units of analysis (i.e. the individuals working with the organisations identified as best fitting the research purposes of the research framework) to be sampled in accordance with the methodology suggested for this framework (namely the contrast and comparison one) and to answer the research questions addressed by it, a clear breakdown of the independent variables needs to be done. Consequently, in what follows, **two broad interrelated categories**, namely **inter-organisational communication** and **organisational outward communication** are introduced.

#### **3.2. Independent variables description**

The first one, **inter-organisational communication (2)** is defined through the traditionally acknowledged variables (3) of

- V1 (4)** Formal communication
- V2** Informal communication
- V3** Vertical communication (i.e. upward communication)
- V4** Horizontal communication

In their turn, these variables are measured through the variables and categories underpinning the concept of organisational behaviour proper. Thus, the interpretation of the data obtained from the respondents is bound to take into account the following concept-defining variables:

##### **V1 Formal communication**

- V 1.0. Communication in terms of organisation processes
- V 1.1. Organisation design
- V 1.2. Job policies and procedures
- V 1.3. Career

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V 1.4. Leadership

V 1.5. Work environment

V 1.6. Conflict (measured through the categories of ‘conflict sources’ and ‘conflict approach’)

**V2 Informal communication**

V 2.0. Communication at informal group level (5)

V 2.1. Power relationships

**V3 Vertical communication (i.e. upward communication)**

V 3.0. Inward projection of organisational relationships in terms of linguistic means of showing respect to superiors

**V4 Horizontal communication**

V 4.0. Communication at formal group level

V 4.1. Conflict ( measured through the category of ‘conflict sources’)

V 4.2. Power and politics

As for the **category of organisational outward communication**, the focus is a two-fold one. Thus, even if when tackling this issue specialized literature speaks only of organisational behaviour in relationship with environmental factors (see for example Steers and Black, 1994: 358-394) , the current research framework maintains the assumption that if the concept of organisational behaviour is to be discussed from the perspective of the patterns of communication underlying it, then the individual behaviour has to be held once more under scrutiny. As a result, besides taking into account how individual linguistic behaviour may provide an insight into organisational behaviour to outsiders, individual attitudes towards the organisation in terms of job satisfaction, organisation commitment and organisation trust can inform both on the current and future status of the organisations under scrutiny. Moreover, the latter variables are not only shaped by the variables listed under the category of inter-organisational behaviour, but they also have an important saying in delineating and analysing the latter. Thus, for a better understanding of the variables measuring the category of organisational outward communication, the former are listed below:

**V 5 Organisational outward communication**

V 5.0. Organisation’s behaviour within its environment

V 5.1. Outward linguistic projection of organisational relationships

V5.2. Individual attitudes towards job satisfaction, organisation commitment, organisation trust

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Work experience with various organisations contributes not only to increased expertise in the field of work. Beyond this surface there is a plethora of empirical observations about people’s character, motivations, expectations, assumptions concerning the drivers behind individual and/or group behaviour towards formal groups or formal leaders, new comers, informal groups, top-down changes, or hypotheses about how

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organisational design (i.e. number of departments, span of control) or communication channels contribute to overall organisational efficiency.

In this respect, work experience with more than one organisation triggers, even unconsciously, comparisons and contrasts with previous employment places. Thus, any layperson may turn into an empirical scientist 'able' to point out similarities, differences or discrepancies between or among various organisations. However, the question that arises is how reliable such observations are, their empiricism and likely limited scope considered.

Consequently, the problem that appears is if all these observations point out to a reality that can be perceived, experienced only from within an organisation or any objective researcher can frame it from the outside. Hence, the basic assumption underlying this paper is that regardless of the background of an empirical observer with various organisations, the latter's observations can only yield partial insights into organisational life which may be biased, inconclusive or narrowed to personal or group perceptions and likely to turn into mere clichés. As a result, the task of objectively studying and building up an overall picture out of the insights into organisational life through employment of an overarching concept and of a paradigm through which the latter to be better accounted for starting from a an investigation into the already existing literature in the field of investigation lies with the researcher.

Thus, as it emerges from the above observations, **the focus of this research framework is the investigation of organisational life** and, more specifically, the concept **of organisational behaviour**. In addition, taking into account the complexity of such a concept, **the paradigm** by which the latter can be tackled is that of **organisational communication patterns** underlying the concept proper and the **method** considered as best fitting both the paradigm and the concept is the **comparison and contrast** one.

In conclusion, the aim of the research framework suggested by this paper is to throw some light on the issue of how organisational communication patterns can account for organisational behaviour and on what makes organisations so different and yet so similar in this respect. Moreover, the researcher can only express the hope that those reading or leafing through the pages of this papaer will hopefully find some of their thoughts or empirical observations reflected, if not agree to the necessity to try and take an ever fresh look at any organisation (the one they work for included) from the broader perspective suggested by this framewotk, namely organisational communication patterns underlying organisational behaviour.

## **ENDNOTES**

(1) Even though payment should have been another category of the job satisfaction variable, I did not include it because I started from the assumption that people would not be willing to have it mentioned, even in a questionnaire. However, I did take a look at the issue of incentives offered by each of the organizations where the questionnaire was administered by questions measuring the category of incentives by providing the respondents multiple choice questions listing several likely means of motivating the employees.

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- (2) This independent variable is the most complex of the two, considering the research questions addressed in sub-chapter 4.1.1. and its defining variables and categories identified and measured by the two questionnaires
- (3) These variables ensue from a thorough critical literature review, as well as from the research questions and hypotheses on which this framework is based
- (4) Where capital V stands for ‘variable’ and the figure (1, 2, 3, etc.) for each particular variable
- (5) Even though in the instrument description sub-chapter the variable of ‘*inward projection of organisational relationships*’ in terms of linguistic behaviour was discussed separately from the variables of ‘*communication at formal group level*’ and ‘*communication at informal group level*’, this sub-chapter includes it under the previously mentioned variables in order to facilitate a multi-layered and at the same time simplified approach towards answering the research questions.

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