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THE MINTZBERG MODEL OF ORGANISATIONAL CONFIGURATIONS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the Mintzberg model of organisational configurations, which is considered one of the key tools for understanding the structure of organisations. The article reviews the theoretical foundations of the model and identifies seven primary organisational configurations. It also discusses the key points raised by the Mintzberg model within the organisational analysis framework and its criticisms. Furthermore, the article presents suggestions for the development of the model and its adaptation to changing work environments. The article also recommends improving the Mintzberg model to align it with modern organisations' current challenges.

KEYWORDS

Mintzberg Model, Organisational Structures, Organisation, Organisational Flexibility, Adaptation

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Introduction.

The Mintzberg model is a fundamental tool for understanding organisational structures, providing precise classifications of organisational configurations on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of organisational mechanisms within institutions. The model focuses on five types of organisational structures that adapt to the needs of different organisations, aiding in the distribution of responsibilities and the effective organisation of processes. Despite its significant influence on understanding organisations, applying this model in contemporary institutions faces specific challenges, especially in light of the rapid and accelerating changes in work environments. This article presents an analysis of the Mintzberg model, discussing its criticisms in practical application, along with suggestions for its development to align with the evolving needs of organisations in the present age.

The analytical approach was used to study the theoretical foundations of the Mintzberg model, analysing the organisational configurations it identifies and highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. Previous studies were also consulted to support the discussion of the model's application in modern institutions, particularly in light of environmental challenges and changes.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Mintzberg model, highlighting its common criticisms and how it can be adapted to meet the needs of organisations in dynamic and complex work environments.

1. Development of Mintzberg's Organizational Model: Intellectual Roots and Influence

The Mintzberg model, also known as the five configurations of organisational structure, was developed by researcher Henry Mintzberg, one of the leading management theorists, during the 1970s and 1980s. This model was influenced by Mintzberg's approach, which combines empirical observations, diverse case studies, and conceptual analyses. The researcher began to challenge traditional assumptions regarding management

theories and organisational structures, noting that organisations are, in reality, more complex and diverse than what was suggested by these theories.

This phase marked the beginning of his research on how organisations function within the context of actual organisation. Mintzberg conducted extensive empirical studies on organisations of varying sizes and industrial types, observing how they were structured in practice and how they operated in reality. These observations led him to identify the different organisational configurations that formed the core of his model.

In 1983, Mintzberg published his book *Structure in Five: Designing Effective Organisations*, in which he explained his model of organisational configurations. This book marked a pivotal moment in developing and disseminating the model. Mintzberg continued refining his ideas and researching organisational structures throughout the 1980s and beyond. Owing to his significant contributions, this model became an academic reference in management and organisation, widely adopted by experts for evaluating and designing organisational structures and adapting them according to environmental changes and institutional needs.

Mintzberg developed his model on the basis of the work of many researchers and previous studies, reflecting the rich knowledge base that shaped it. Through their in-depth studies on the impact of the environment and technology on organisations, researchers such as Woodward, Perrow, and Chandler provided essential insights that significantly influenced the development of Mintzberg's concept of organisational structure.

Joan Woodward (1916--1971) began studying the impact of technology on organisational structure through her research conducted between 1953 and 1957 on more than one hundred English industrial companies, categorised according to the type of technology used. She demonstrated that technology plays a crucial role in organisational structure choices. She explained that the structural differences between companies can be attributed primarily to the diversity in the technologies employed. Woodward distinguished three types of production organisations: unit production or small batches (such as prototype manufacturing or construction), large-scale production (such as automobile manufacturing), and continuous production (such as gas and chemical industries).

In the context of the impact of the technical system on structure, Charles B. Perrow, building on this understanding, added an analysis of how the technical system influences organisational structure. He showed that the nature of the technical system results from two key factors: the degree of repetition in production processes (i.e., the frequency of exceptions in processes) and the availability of knowledge necessary to perform these processes (the existence of specific methods and procedures for execution). Perrow classified systems on the basis of these two factors. While manual crafts rely on a low repetition of processes and limited available knowledge, advanced industries such as aviation depend on a high repetition of processes and extensive organised knowledge (Mintzberg, 1979).

Then, Alfred D. Chandler, who significantly contributed to the study of the relationship between strategy and organisational structure, came. He highlighted how the development of modern capitalism between 1850 and 1920 led to a new type of organisation characterised by multiple operational units managed independently. These organisational structures contrast with the traditional model of organisations in which their owners are directly managed on the basis of their skills. In his book *Strategy and Structure* (1962), Chandler demonstrated that strategic changes precede changes in organisational structure (Chandler, 1962). Therefore, organisational structure cannot be separated from strategy; it is an essential part of it. In this context, Chandler introduced a classification of organisational forms, distinguishing between the decentralised multidivisional structure, referred to as the "M-shaped" structure, and the centralised functional structure, which he called the "U-shaped" structure.

The U-shaped structure characterises traditional organisations that focus on a single product with few administrative levels. These organisations resist change and often blur the line between operational and strategic decisions. In contrast, the M-shaped structure refers to modern organisations with a diverse range of products, where each unit is managed independently, with coordination between departments and a clear distinction between operational and strategic decisions.

In his work, Chandler emphasises that an organisation's organisational structure must align with its strategy, asserting that "structure follows strategy" is fundamental to understanding organisational relationships.

Finally, Paul Roger Lawrence and Jay William Lorsch, social researchers, studied the impact of the environment on organisational structure starting in 1963. Their research showed that an organisation's structure depends on external factors and that an organisation selects its organisational form on the basis of the stability of its environment. They distinguished between two types of organisations and structures: mechanistic organisations, which are suited to stable environments, and organic organisations, which are suited to unstable environments. Mechanistic organisations are characterised by standardised and specialised tasks, formal

procedures, strict adherence to directives, and decision-making at the top of the organisational hierarchy, with significant importance placed on position within the hierarchy. On the other hand, organic organisations are more flexible, characterised by less defined and more ambiguous tasks, lateral communication, recognition of expertise, decentralised authority, and valuing individuals on the basis of their contributions. According to T. Burns and G. Stalker, no organisational type is superior to the other; organisations are rarely entirely mechanistic or organic. They typically adopt characteristics from both models according to the requirements of their environment (Aim, 2014--20215).

Paul Roger Lawrence and Jay William Lorsch, specialists in organisational structure and design, studied the impact of the environment on an organisation in 1967 and 1972 on the basis of the concepts of differentiation and integration. They demonstrated that an organisation divides into subsystems according to the stability of the surrounding environment. Organisational differentiation increases as the environment becomes more volatile, leading to the division of work into independent units. They also emphasised the need for coordination and integration between these units as differentiation increases. In a stable environment, units are less differentiated. In contrast, in an unstable environment, units differentiate into independent departments, and the organisation needs integrative mechanisms to coordinate these units and ensure their coherence. Thus, their study highlights that an organisation's structure is heavily influenced by both internal and external variables, which aligns with the findings of T. Burns and G. Stalker (Aim, 2014--20215).

Building on the concepts introduced by these researchers, Mintzberg developed a comprehensive model that reflects the impact of environmental and technological factors on the organisational structure of institutions. He expanded the idea that the type of technology an organisation uses determines its organisational form, incorporating differentiation between the internal units of the organisation on the basis of the complexity and specificity of the processes it executes. He also introduced the concept of the interaction between strategy and organisational structure, emphasising that the structure must align with the organisation's long-term objectives. Through this, the researcher presented a holistic view of organisational structure that adapts to environmental changes, where it is determined not only by the organisation's internal needs but also in response to the environment in which it operates.

2. The Mintzberg Model: Organisational Structure through Differentiation and Integration

Mintzberg challenges the traditional concept of classical theories, focusing on optimal ways to manage organisations. In contrast, he presents a multidimensional approach, arguing that management style and organisational structure are influenced by multiple and complex factors, thereby rejecting the idea of a single ideal model. Consequently, he defines an organisation as a collective entity striving to achieve a common goal, with its structure encompassing all the mechanisms used to divide and coordinate tasks (Mintzberg, 1983). In this context, the manager's role is summarised as coordinating and dividing tasks while everyone contributes to achieving the organisation's objectives. The model relies on a comprehensive and detailed study of the components of the organisational structure, including operational systems, support, information flow, and ideology (Mintzberg, 1989). This analytical approach allows for examining each element individually and understanding its role within the overall organisational framework, in addition to determining how these elements interact to form a comprehensive picture of the organisational structure.

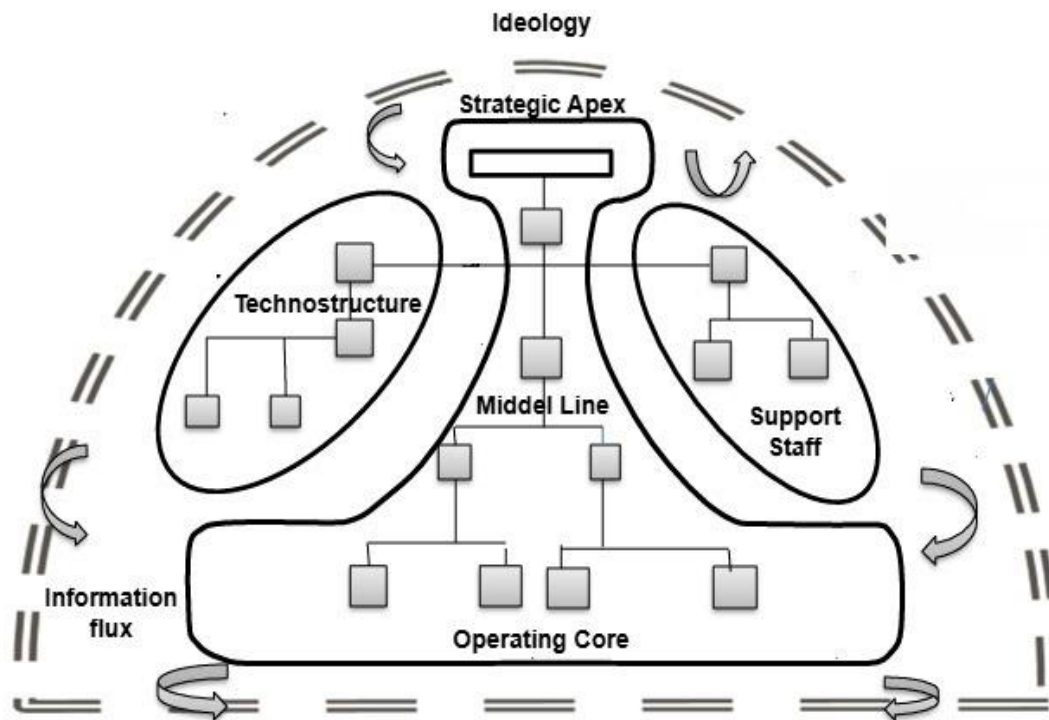


Fig. 1. Living Systems in an Organisation According to the Mintzberg Model

Source: Mintzberg, H. (1989). Mintzberg on management: Inside our strange world of organisations. Free Press. p. 186.

• **Hierarchical structure:** Based on the Mintzberg model, which outlines the living

systems within an organisation, it becomes clear that the organisational structure consists of hierarchical levels that are dynamically interconnected. In this context, the hierarchy within the organisation determines the order of authority and responsibility within the organisational structure, creating a pyramid-like structure where higher levels make broad strategic decisions. In comparison, lower levels are responsible for operational execution. The hierarchy typically includes four levels: the strategic apex (top management), which sets the organisation's vision, mission, and strategic goals and makes long-term decisions such as resource allocation and strategic partnerships. The second level is middle management, which implements the strategies set by top management at the operational level, making decisions regarding resource management within departments and developing execution plans to achieve the goals. Operational management pertains to team leaders and supervisors who oversee daily operations and make decisions to resolve issues and ensure the achievement of objectives. In contrast, frontline employees make daily decisions related to their specific responsibilities. Importantly, the distribution of decision-making roles varies depending on the organisational culture, size, and complexity of operations. In decentralised organisations, lower levels may have more decision-making authority, whereas in more hierarchical structures, authority is typically concentrated at higher levels (Robbins, S. P. & Coulter, M., 2018).

In the Mintzberg model, support systems are vital to the organisation's core operations. They encompass a range of functions and services that enable the organisation to operate effectively and efficiently.

• **Support Staff:** Support Staff functions refer to the organisation's various specialised units supporting its core operations. These functions are responsible for various support tasks that are essential for maintaining the operation of core processes. While not directly involved in producing goods or services, they ensure that these core activities run smoothly (Azevedo, Carvalho, & Sousa, 2022). These specialised units may include departments such as human resources, accounting, supply chain management, information technology, legal affairs, quality management, and project management. Each department performs a specific function that supports the organisation's core operations.

Support Staff functions provide services that contribute to the efficiency and quality of core operations. For example, the human resources department is responsible for recruiting and training employees, the accounting department manages the financial affairs of the organisation, supply chain management ensures the

timely availability of raw materials, and information technology supports the necessary computer systems. These functional areas also aim to improve processes within their respective fields. They develop policies, procedures, and management practices to ensure the efficient use of resources, meet quality standards, and manage risks appropriately (Cunha, Lopes, & Fernandes, 2021). Support Staff functions must often work closely with other departments to ensure the coordination of activities. For example, supply chain management should coordinate with production to ensure that raw materials are available in time. Although these functional groups are not directly involved in strategic decision-making, they contribute to executing the organisation's overall strategy (Dutra, de Sousa, & de Oliveira, 2020).

- **Technostructure:** According to the Mintzberg model, the Technostructure includes analysts and other employees who support the organisation by assisting others. This component is often separated from the direct operational workflow (Mintzberg, 1982). Analysts within the Technostructure have specific responsibilities for managing and improving the organisation's processes. Their role involves taking an in-depth look at the organisation's operations, gathering and analysing data, identifying trends and opportunities, and providing recommendations for improving organisational performance. Analysts do not directly execute the organisation's operational work but serve as consultants and facilitators. They can intervene in work by providing guidelines, strategies, and tools to enhance processes. Their goal is to improve the efficiency, productivity, and quality of the work performed by operational employees (Laudon & Laudon, 2021). Analysts are often involved in designing and planning organisational activities, where their expertise is critical for organising work and achieving goals effectively. In addition to design and planning, analysts may provide training and ongoing support for operators and staff. This may involve developing training programs, disseminating knowledge, and troubleshooting issues that arise in the processes (O'Brien & Marakas, 2022).

The Technostructure in Mintzberg's model is considered a crucial element in the organisation, providing specialised expertise to improve processes. It acts as a bridge between management and operations, thus contributing to overall efficiency. Using the principles of the key components of the organisation and coordination mechanisms alone is insufficient to understand how the organisation operates. In Mintzberg's model, the flow of information is a fundamental element in managing information within the organisation. These flows describe how information is exchanged and utilised within the organisation, significantly impacting its efficiency, coordination, and decision-making capabilities.

Mintzberg also studied the impact of ideology in determining organisational configurations. He noted that organisational ideology are central to organising and operating work.

- **Ideology:** Mintzberg studied the various dimensions of organisational culture (Mintzberg, 2009), paying particular attention to visible aspects such as symbols, customs, and ideology. He placed significant importance on externally visible signs as indicators of organisational culture. These can take different forms, such as the organisation's logo, uniforms, designated workspaces, or meeting habits. They play a key role in communicating with and transmitting the organisational culture. For example, an organisation's logo can convey its values and identity, while repeatedly meeting customs can reinforce behavioral norms and expectations.

These external signs serve as valuable clues for understanding the underlying values, beliefs, and norms that influence the behaviour of organisational members (Mintzberg, 2003). Mintzberg relied on various researchers to enrich his understanding of ideology in organisations. Among these researchers was Edgar Schein, who developed the concept of cultural levels, explaining how organisational culture manifests through multiple layers, including visible culture, ideology and beliefs, and basic assumptions that influence organisational behaviour. Schein also introduced the concept of organisational socialisation, which explains how individuals adapt to organisational culture through a learning process (Schein, 2004). Charles Handy contributed to the understanding of organisational culture through conceptual models, including the power culture model, which identifies four types of power within organisations: role power, task power, personal power, and positional power, highlighting the influence of authority on organisational behaviours and norms (Handy, 1999). Additionally, Deal et al. contributed significantly by highlighting the different cultural dimensions and noting their impact on organisational behaviours, attitudes, and practices.

Mintzberg made a significant contribution by pointing out that organisational culture is a complex and dynamic evolving element. He warned that culture is deeply rooted within an organisation and can be difficult to change once it is established (Mintzberg, 2009). This awareness is essential for understanding how culture can influence organisational structure. When culture becomes ingrained into an organisation, it affects its members' attitudes, behaviours, and values. Work practices, communication patterns, reward and recognition systems, and accepted behaviour codes can shape the organisational structure, determining how members interact and collaborate. However, cultural stability can also challenge the flexibility and adaptation of

organisational structure. When culture is deeply entrenched, it can resist change and hinder efforts to introduce new practices, innovations, or adaptations to a rapidly changing environment. This can limit an organisation's ability to seize new opportunities or respond effectively to market challenges. Therefore, Mintzberg emphasises the importance of considering organisational culture when designing or modifying structure. He suggested that leaders and managers should be aware of the impact of the current culture on the organisational structure and be prepared to initiate cultural change processes when necessary. This may involve challenging existing norms, promoting new values, and fostering an environment that encourages flexibility and the ability to adapt.

3. Organisational practices in the Mintzberg model

This model is based on organisational practices that help determine how responsibilities and authority are distributed across different organisational levels. Mintzberg focuses his analysis on various organisational configurations, emphasising the importance of coordination between different departments to achieve organisational goals. We explore the organisational practices presented in the model, focusing on how they are applied in different institutions to suit various work environments.

- **Coordination Mechanisms:** Work coordination is one of the fundamental elements in the organisational structure of an organisation, as it defines how managers interact with their subordinates across hierarchical levels to ensure effective coordination of work while considering the evolving coordination mechanisms that gradually change according to the complexity of work within the organisation (Mintzberg, 1989). Mutual adjustment achieves work coordination through simple, informal communication, where work remains under the control of employees due to its simplicity. Mutual adjustment is naturally used in simple organisations and those dependent on technology (Faraj & Xiao, 2006). As the organisation grows, it transitions to another coordination mechanism, direct supervision, where one person is responsible for directing others and monitoring their activities (Day & O'Connor, 2016). Additionally, other mechanisms can be employed, such as standardisation or patterning between parts of the organisation, to reduce the need for continuous communication by establishing fixed procedures and rules, which help guide individuals' behaviour in completing their assigned tasks. This is achieved through standardising work processes or outcomes by setting objectives and performance at various organisational levels. In other cases, when processes or outcomes cannot be standardised, the organisation must standardise individuals' skills through pretraining (Mintzberg, 1989). This helps ensure effective employee coordination without requiring direct supervision or process standardisation.

Coordination mechanisms are interconnected in a hierarchical sequence on the basis of the complexity of work within the organisation. As work becomes more complex, the coordination mechanisms shift from mutual adjustment to direct supervision, standardisation, and mutual adjustment in more complex cases. When individuals work independently or in small groups, they can informally adjust with one another via mutual adjustment as the primary coordination mechanism (Khandekar & Gupta, 2022). However, as the group expands or the work is divided, coordination becomes more complex, and direct supervision becomes necessary. As the complexity of the work increases, standardisation becomes the optimal solution, where processes are standardised in simple, routine tasks, and outcomes are standardised in complex tasks. If standardising outcomes is not feasible, the focus shifts to standardising skills (Puranam & Vanneste, 2022). In the most complex cases, the process returns to mutual adjustment, where decision-makers must communicate directly and informally.

On the basis of these mechanisms, most organisations prefer multiple coordination mechanisms at varying levels. While some organisations focus on standardisation, they do not neglect the need for direct supervision and mutual adjustment, as no organisation can function effectively without leadership or informal communication.

- **Decision-making system design (centralisation and decentralisation):** in the organisation: The degree of centralisation or decentralisation is one of the key factors that significantly impacts the organisational structure of an organisation, as it determines how decision-making authority is distributed across different levels in the hierarchy. In a centralised structure, authority is concentrated at the top levels of management, contributing to more consistent decisions aligned with the overall strategic vision and allowing for tight control over organisational processes. However, this type of structure can lead to delays in decision-making due to excessive bureaucracy and limit the organisation's flexibility in adapting quickly to environmental changes. On the other hand, a decentralised structure provides greater decision-making power at lower levels, enabling faster responses and enhancing organisational accountability, improving effectiveness in addressing daily challenges. However, this can lead to a lack of coordination between units and a loss of centralised control

over operations (Souissi, 2015). Therefore, the choice between centralisation and decentralisation does not pertain to an ideal model but rather depends on the organisation's configuration, size, and work.

• **Task Specialization:** Task specialisation is a key concept in Mintzberg's model regarding how organisational roles and responsibilities are distributed. This dimension focuses on the degree to which organisation members specialise in specific tasks on the basis of their skills and areas of expertise. While high specialisation enhances efficiency in specialised tasks and increases performance accuracy, it may weaken communication between individuals and lead to monotony and a narrow perspective of the overall process (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2019). On the other hand, low specialisation provides greater flexibility in task distribution. It enhances the overall understanding of the organisation, but it may result in reduced efficiency in tasks requiring specialised expertise (Zhang, Tucker, & Zhang, 2022). Here, the conflict arises between vertical specialisation, which focuses on distributing tasks across hierarchical levels and provides the organisation with clear responsibilities (Morgeson & Campion, 2017), and horizontal specialisation, which promotes coordination between units at the same hierarchical level but may hinder effective communication between departments (Bélanger & Lapointe, 2021). Through this complex distribution of responsibilities, Mintzberg presents a balanced perspective, where the effectiveness of the organisational structure remains linked to the ability to reconcile these various dimensions of specialisation on the basis of the nature of the activities and the organisation's needs.

• **The Organisation as a System for Information Flow:** Decisions are made at different levels of the organisational hierarchy. Some decision-makers are at the top of the pyramid, whereas others are at lower levels. Communication between hierarchical levels is a key element in the effective management of an organisation. This refers to how information flows within the organisational structure, from top management to lower levels and vice versa. In addition, decentralised decision-making at certain levels is needed to enable an adequate response to challenges and opportunities.

We see communication between hierarchical levels from top to bottom, which relates to disseminating information, directives, and decisions from management or higher levels to lower levels in the organisation. Employees must understand the organisation's strategic goals, priorities, policies, and procedures. This can be accomplished through various channels, such as meetings, written documents, and emails. Clear and transparent communication promotes the alignment of activities with the overall strategy. Additionally, there is upwards communication from the bottom of the organisation to management or higher levels. It allows employees to report information, suggestions, concerns, and feedback. Upwards communication is critical for making appropriate decisions, improving processes, and quickly solving problems. Upwards communication channels may include team meetings, internal surveys, suggestion boxes, individual interviews, etc.

It facilitates communication between employees working at the same hierarchical level or in different departments. This is important because it enhances collaboration, the sharing of relevant information, and collective problem solving. This can be achieved through interdepartmental meetings, online collaboration tools, and workgroups (Miller & Barbour, 2014).

The effectiveness of communication between hierarchical levels significantly impacts an organisation's functioning. Clear communication from top to bottom helps employees understand the organisation's vision and objectives, whereas bottom-up communication helps identify problems to be solved and opportunities to be seized. Horizontal communication enhances cohesion and coordination between departments. Therefore, effective communication enhances the organisation's processes, aligning them with strategic goals.

Information flow also includes transferring essential information for the organisation's operations. This can include financial data, performance reports, market information, and daily updates on ongoing projects. This information enables employees to make informed decisions and contribute to the organisation's objectives (Lecocq, Mignonac, & Laroche, 2021). The following figure illustrates the complexity of interactions between formal and informal authority flows, communication, and decision-making processes.

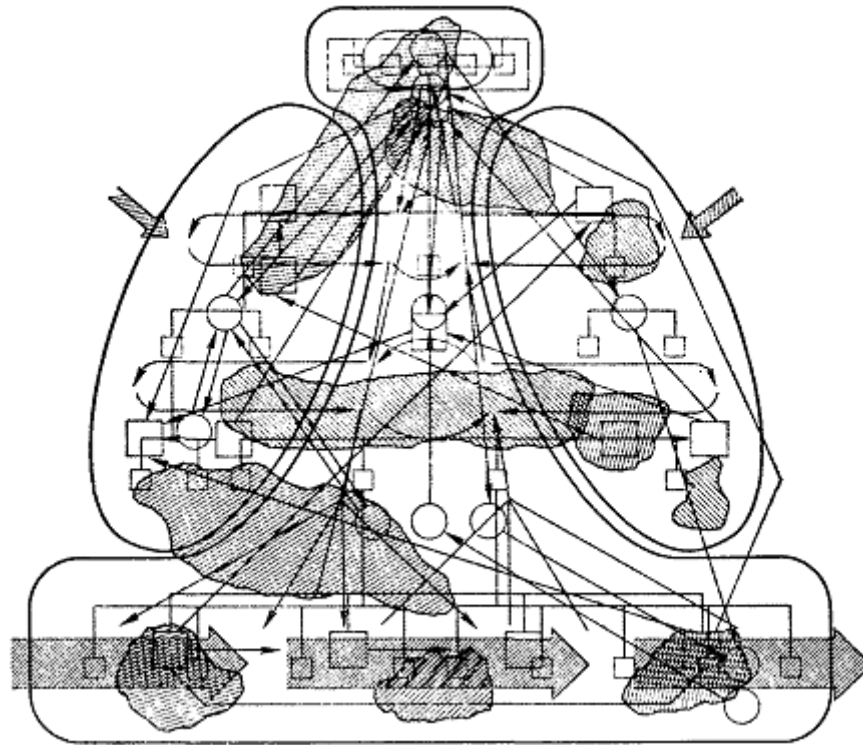


Fig.2. *Interactions between Formal and Informal Flows of Authority, Communication Processes, and Decision-Making*

Source: Mintzberg, H. (1986). *Structure et dynamique des organisations* (P. Romelaer, Trans.). Les Éditions d'Organisation. (Original work published in 1983), p. 81.

The figure illustrates how different types of information flow and interact. For example, formal authority flows can influence informal authority flows. Similarly, communication processes can impact decision-making processes (Mintzberg, 1982). For example, a manager can use formal authority to request that an employee provide information. In return, employees may use their informal social network to obtain information that is unavailable through official channels. A formal meeting can be used for decision-making, but informal discussions before and after the meeting can also influence the decision.

4. Organisational Configurations in the Mintzberg Model

Mintzberg identified seven organisational configurations in his model. These configurations are typical patterns that describe an organisation's structure on the basis of its size, purpose, environment, and strategy. Below is an overview of these configurations:

- **Entrepreneurial Configuration:** In this configuration, decision-making is centred around the founder or the manager responsible for the organisation. This model is prevalent in startups and small and medium-sized enterprises, where decision-making authority remains concentrated in a few individuals responsible for strategic and operational directions (Coeurderoy & Lwango, 2014). The organisational structures in this model are typically simple, with a limited division of responsibilities and tasks, contributing to a faster decision-making process. The prevailing culture in these organisations is highly focused on innovation and exploiting new opportunities, enabling the organisation to adapt quickly to environmental changes and evolving needs. In this context, the strategic apex dominates decision-making and guides the organisation's activities. Senior managers are responsible for setting strategic goals and visions, making them the key drivers of innovation and opportunity creation. This concentration at the top may close off channels for lower-level direct contributions, potentially limiting diversity in decision-making and the organisation's ability to leverage new ideas from within (Minguzzi & Passaro, 2012).

- **Machine Bureaucracy:** This configuration relies on the organisation's comprehensive formalisation of processes and procedures (Mintzberg, 1979). Tasks and roles are defined precisely in this configuration, where each employee has specialised responsibilities. Operations are organised through a strict chain of

commands that ensures close supervision and control of workflows. This model is commonly associated with industrial organisations, where precision and efficiency are key factors for operational success. The mechanistic configuration is characterised by the dominance of the technical aspect in organising work, which improves consistency and effectiveness in executing processes. The importance of this configuration lies in its ability to ensure that operations run in an organised and consistent manner, helping to achieve optimal performance in environments that require high precision and repetitive task execution (Thompson, 1967). Clearly defined processes help reduce errors and ensure high-quality production. However, it is important to note that this level of organisation may lead to a certain rigidity that can limit its ability to adapt to external changes. In a dynamic and changing environment, excessive formalisation of processes may hinder innovation and the ability to respond quickly to new challenges (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2016).

- **Divisionalized Form:** This complex organisational model is particularly evident in organisations operating across multiple sectors or industries. Unlike organisations specialising in a single industry, these organisations face the challenge of managing a diverse range of products, markets, and competitive challenges. Adopting an organisational structure capable of supporting the multiplicity and variety of activities becomes necessary to address this diversity.

The main characteristic of this configuration is decentralisation, where authority and decision-making are more widely distributed at the departmental or unit level. This allows each department to operate somewhat independently and make decisions that align with the needs of its specific sector or market. Through this decentralisation, the organisation can more effectively meet the needs of each market or industry, as strategies and processes are tailored to each area of activity.

A prominent example of this configuration is conglomerates, which own subsidiaries in diverse industrial sectors. For instance, a conglomerate may have subsidiary companies operating in the automotive, information technology, and food production industries. Each of these subsidiaries operates relatively independently, adapting their strategies and processes to meet each sector's specific requirements and enhancing the organisation's flexibility in responding to multiple market challenges.

- **Professional Bureaucracy:** This organisational model is characterised by distinct professions or trades. Unlike other configurations, where roles and tasks are more standardised, professionals, such as lawyers or doctors, enjoy considerable autonomy in their responsibilities. In this model, the environment is stable but often complex, and the organisational structure is typically decentralised (Mintzberg, 1979). Each professional or group may have a high degree of independence in managing their affairs or patients (Mintzberg, 1980). This decentralisation is often necessary because professionals possess specific skills and deep expertise in their field of work, ensuring a certain level of control over their tasks. The strategic apex provides broad lines of work and control from the operations centre. To ensure coordination among members of the operating core, a high degree of support function is developed (Blau, 1970).

- **Adhocracy:** This configuration is characterised by a strong focus on creativity and innovation. Organisations in this category actively strive to develop new ideas, experiment with new methods, and remain at the forefront of innovation in their field. This pattern is often observed in technology companies, startups, and organisations operating in rapidly changing industries.

This model has several key features. First, it promotes a flexible and decentralised organisational structure. Employees are encouraged to take initiative and actively contribute to generating innovative ideas, with Support Staff functions playing a key role. Decision-making processes tend to be less formal, allowing for greater flexibility and responsiveness to opportunities. The significance of the innovative configuration lies in its ability to maintain relevance and competitiveness in a constantly changing environment. However, it can also present challenges in managing change and coordinating innovative activities.

- **Missionary Structure:** As envisioned by Mintzberg, the Missionary Structure embodies an unconventional organisational model. The organisational structure is notably informal, primarily relying on shared beliefs, culture, and ideology among its members. This model is characterised by a strong commitment to a specific mission, and unlike other configurations, Mintzberg did not specify organisations that operate exclusively according to this model. The role of ideology in this configuration appears to be more of a subtle difference, which may be present to some extent in other forms of organisation. The significance of this configuration lies in its emphasis on an ideological mission. Importantly, this configuration remains a rare model in practice, but it significantly reflects the role of values and commitment within the organisation.

- **Political Structure:** As described by Mintzberg, the political configuration presents an unusual and chaotic organisational model. In this model, there is no defined hierarchy, and members of the organisation strive to impose their views on the basis of their power. This configuration is characterised by intense political

dynamics, where members may sometimes oppose each other strongly while at other times coexisting in an unstable manner. Decisions within this configuration do not result from planning or rational processes; instead, they emerge from complex political games where actors struggle to assert their interests and opinions.

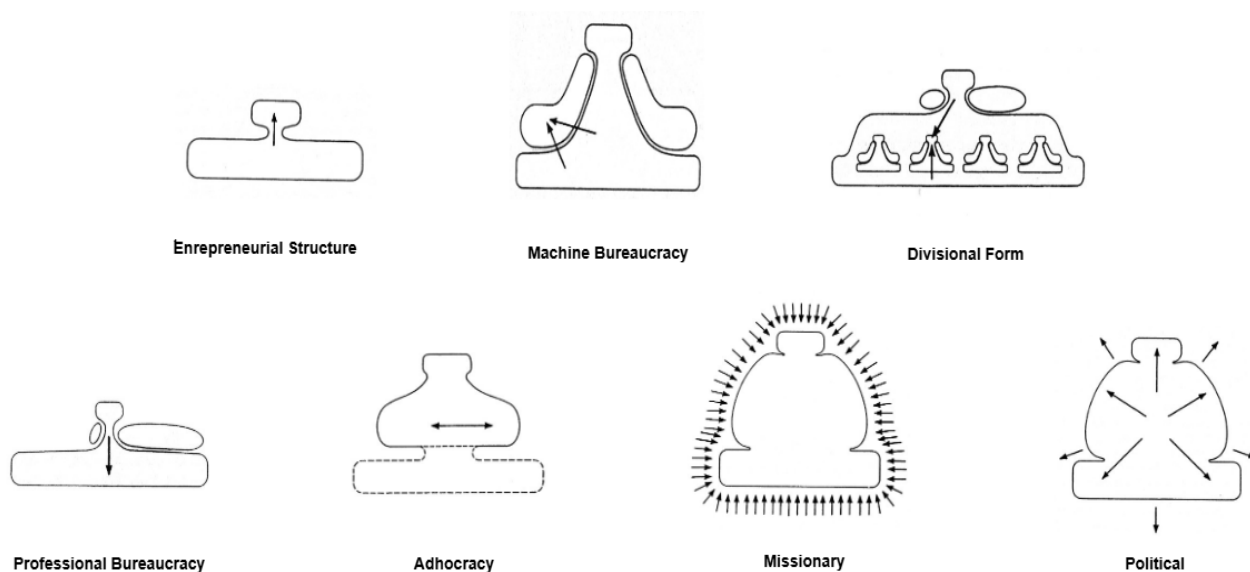


Fig. 3. The Seven Organizational Structures of Mintzberg

Source: Mintzberg, H. (2009). *Le management : Voyage au centre des organisations*. Éditions d'Organisation, pp208-211.

The **organisational configurations**, as developed by Mintzberg, represent theoretical models designed to describe the organisational structures and prevailing cultures in various institutions. The configurations identified by Mintzberg include the **entrepreneurial configuration**, **mechanistic configuration**, **professional configuration**, **divisional configuration**, **innovative configuration**, **political configuration**, and **task configuration**. These configurations are vital for various organisational stakeholders, such as researchers, managers, and beneficiaries. They provide an analytical framework that helps explore and compare organisations in multiple contexts, offering valuable insights into organisational culture and coordination mechanisms, thus contributing to improved business management.

These configurations also allow for evaluating organisational practices, facilitating the necessary adjustments to increase efficiency, enhancing creativity, improving employee participation, or strengthening political influence, depending on the most suitable configuration for the organisation. Applying these configurations benefits organisations seeking to adapt to their environment. For example, an organisation operating in a complex political environment might benefit from the political configuration to positively influence regulations and procedures. Similarly, an innovative and emerging organisation might rely on an innovative configuration to foster creativity and experimentation within its environment.

5. Mintzberg's Model in Changing Work Environments: Application Constraints and Adaptation Challenges

The Mintzberg model is an essential analytical tool for understanding institutional organisational structures. It has several advantages that make it useful in various organisational contexts. Its ability to classify organisational configurations on the basis of the environment, strategy, and size of the organisation allows institutions to understand how internal and external factors impact their organisational structure and how to coordinate work across different parts.

Additionally, the model highlights the diversity in the configurations that organisations can rely on, enabling them to adapt to various environmental conditions. It considers how coordination among diverse departments within an organisation can be achieved through various effective mechanisms, such as mutual adjustment, direct supervision, and standardisation. This diversity and flexibility in application make the Mintzberg model suitable for a wide range of organisations operating in changing and complex environments.

Despite this, the Mintzberg model is often criticised for its static nature, as it does not fully reflect the dynamic and evolving environments in which modern organisations operate. The model's focus on pure types may oversimplify the complexity of real-world organisational structures, which are often hybrid or constantly changing. For example, research has shown that organisations exhibit characteristics from multiple configurations, challenging the idea of strictly separating organisational types (Moreira et al., 2019). Additionally, the model has been criticised for a lack of empirical support for its effectiveness in predicting organisational performance. Studies have shown that Mintzberg's configurations do not consistently demonstrate organisational performance compared with other theories, such as the strategic types of Miles and Snow, raising questions about its practical utility in guiding organisational design (Doty et al., 1993).

Another criticism directed at the model relates to its limited flexibility, as the rigid classifications of organisational structures may not align with the needs of modern organisations, which require rapid adaptation and flexibility to succeed in dynamic and changing environments. For example, **ambidexterity**, an organisation's ability to balance exploration and exploitation, has been proposed as a more comprehensive framework for achieving organisational effectiveness (Parikh, 2016). Furthermore, the model's failure to account for external factors such as market conditions and competitive pressures, which play a vital role in shaping organisational structures, is another point of critique. Research has shown that the model's focus on internal coordination mechanisms may overlook the impact of environmental dynamics on organisational design (Varoğlu, 2021).

The Mintzberg model has been applied to analyse organisational structures in educational institutions, but its practical effectiveness has been questioned. A study conducted at a federal university revealed that the institution's hybrid structure, which combines elements of both mechanistic bureaucracy and professionalism, created more challenges than benefits, hindering the achievement of organisational goals (Moreira et al., 2019). This highlights the potential gap between the pure types in the model and the complex reality of educational institutions. Additionally, the focus on centralised decision-making structures may not align with the decentralised nature of many educational institutions, where decision-making authority is distributed among various departments and multiple stakeholders. This disparity can lead to inefficiencies and misalignments in organisational objectives (Makhloufi et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Mintzberg's concept of the **adhocracy** structure has also been criticised. While this structure focuses on innovation and flexibility, it faces limitations in contemporary organisations. Although the creative structure may be suitable for small and innovative organisations, it may not provide stability and structure for larger and more complex institutions. Research suggests that **ambidexterity**, which combines exploration and exploitation, may be a more effective framework for achieving organisational goals in dynamic work environments (Parikh, 2016). Moreover, the reliance of the creative structure on informal coordination mechanisms may lead to power struggles and communication breakdowns, especially in organisations with diverse stakeholders and competing interests. This underscores the need for a more nuanced approach to organisational structure design that considers the dynamic relationships between authority and stakeholders.

Adapting Mintzberg's model, which consists of five configurations, to the contemporary environment requires a deep understanding of organisational dynamics and the evolving nature of business. Although the model traditionally focuses on static organisational structures, it can be enhanced by integrating flexibility, emerging strategies, and continuous training and development as core elements. Organisations should adopt creative structures (adhocracies) that allow rapid responses to market changes and foster innovation. Additionally, decentralisation in decision-making should be strengthened to empower teams at lower levels of the hierarchy to interact quickly and effectively in dynamic work environments. Furthermore, continuous training should be embedded within the organisation's culture to reflect its vital role in adapting to changes and developing employees' skills to address modern challenges.

With respect to strategies, organisations should recognise the necessity of organic growth and adaptation rather than rigidly adhering to predetermined plans, which enhances their ability to respond to rapid changes. Feedback mechanisms can also contribute to ensuring that strategies evolve in real time to meet market needs and changing conditions.

While these adjustments enhance the flexibility of the Mintzberg model, some organisations may still require traditional hierarchical structures, especially in industries that demand stability and predictability. Thus, combining flexible and traditional structures may provide a balanced organisational framework capable of responding to the demands of the modern era.

Conclusions

The Mintzberg model of organisational configurations remains one of the key tools for understanding the organisational structures of institutions. Through analysing the theoretical foundations upon which the model is based and identifying the five organisational configurations he proposed, despite its success in providing insights into organisational structures, several criticisms have been raised regarding its limitations in adapting to dynamic environments and rapid changes in the contemporary business landscape. In this context, suggestions for developing the model have been presented, such as incorporating hybrid structures and focusing on flexibility in line with technological advancements and fast-changing market conditions. Continuous training and emerging strategies have also been discussed to ensure that institutions can adapt quickly to modern challenges.

Despite these challenges, the model remains highly valuable in understanding organisational design, emphasising the importance of adapting it to meet the needs of contemporary institutions, whether large or small. On the basis of these insights, it can be concluded that developing the Mintzberg model to align with the changing environment will equip organisations with the necessary tools to tackle future challenges effectively.

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