

How to Cite:

Lynda, B. (2024). Empowerment as mediating between organizational learning and performance excellence at the Metijah Industrial Mill. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 18(1). Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.org/index.php/journal/article/view/559>

Empowerment as mediating between organizational learning and performance excellence at the Metijah Industrial Mill

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Abstract---This study aimed to investigate the role of empowerment as a mediating variable in the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence at the Metijah Industrial Mill. To achieve this, a questionnaire was developed as a data collection tool for the study variables (independent variable: organizational learning, dependent variable: performance excellence, mediating variable: empowerment). The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The study found that the levels of both organizational learning and performance excellence in the researched institution were high, while the level of empowerment was moderate. The results also indicated a statistically significant relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence, with empowerment playing a mediating role entirely in their relationship. The study recommended enhancing empowerment mechanisms at the Metijah Industrial Mill.

Keywords---organizational learning, empowerment, performance excellence.

JEL Classification: P17, O15, D83.

Introduction

The transition to the knowledge economy has led to the emergence of numerous administrative concepts that have grown and evolved to revolve around the importance of knowledge in confronting environmental challenges. Among the most important of these is learning, which lies at the core of any organization's

ability to adapt to its environment by seizing opportunities and exploiting them before its competitors. This is achieved by adjusting its orientations in light of what it has learned from its own experiences and the experiences of others. In order for the organization to play its role in confronting its environment, it must increase the pace of continuous learning by being open to and accepting new ideas and concepts, and by encouraging employees to take initiative and be creative in their work (Al-Kassabah, 2016, p. 37). These forces need to develop their capabilities and knowledge, empower themselves, and grant themselves the strength and ability to maximize the benefit of their efforts and ideas to achieve excellence, which has become a necessity rather than an option.

Theoretical Study

Problem Statement

The industrial mill of Metidja is a branch of the SIM complex, which was founded on November 4, 1990, specializing in the milling of both hard and soft wheat. As the first private company operating in this sector in Algeria, the company has experienced active and continuous growth since its early years to become one of the most important institutions in the food industries sector, contributing significantly to the advancement of the national economy.

The institution under study operates in a sector characterized by intense competition. Its survival and growth depend on its ability to excel by seeking new approaches that ensure the best response to its environmental challenges. Among the modern concepts that numerous studies have recognized for their effectiveness in achieving unprecedented performance levels is the concept of organizational learning. This concept highlights its importance as a strategic force that propels organizations towards uniqueness in a fast-paced and complex environment by motivating and empowering the human resources, charging their energy, and encouraging them to leverage their latent skills, knowledge, ideas, and capabilities through the philosophy of empowerment, which is an integral part of the learning program in any organization in general and the organization under study in particular.

Therefore, the problem statement of our study can be articulated around the following question: Does managerial empowerment play an intermediary role in the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence at the industrial mill of Metidja, "SIM"?

A set of questions can be hence proposed

1. What is the extent of organizational learning practices in the researched institution?
2. What is the extent of empowerment practices in the researched institution?

3. What is the current status of performance excellence in the researched institution?
4. Does organizational learning impact achieving performance excellence in the researched institution in the presence of empowerment as a mediating variable?

Importance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its focus on examining three variables, all of which have garnered researchers' interest, especially when linked to an institution within the local environment. This current study represents an addition to the existing body of knowledge, particularly in studying the mediating relationship between the three variables.

Study Objectives

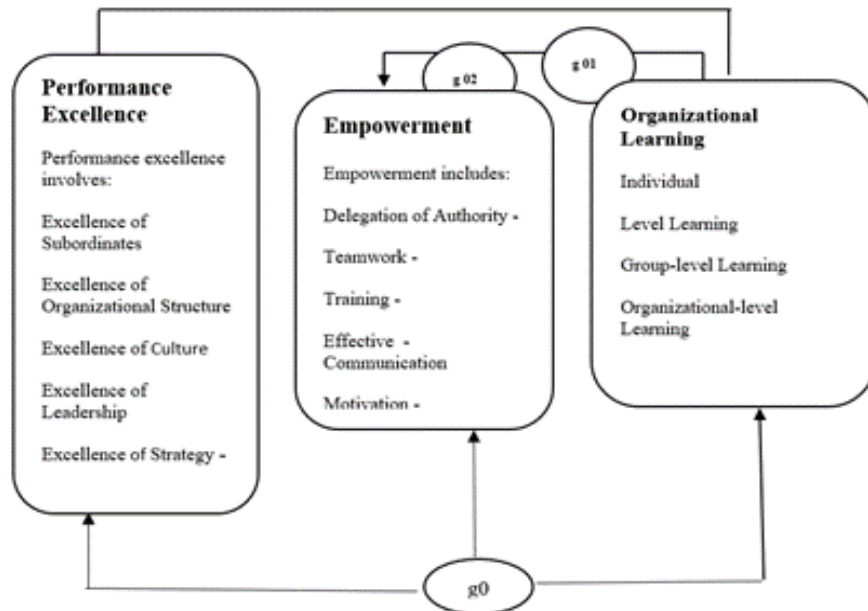
The study aims to achieve a set of objectives, which include:

- A. Identifying the level of organizational learning practices in the researched institution.
- B. Identifying the level of performance excellence in the researched institution.
- C. Understanding the degree of adoption of the empowerment concept in the researched institution.
- D. Determining the nature of the relationship between empowerment, organizational learning, and performance excellence in the institution under study.

Study Model

Based on a review of previous studies and in alignment with the study's objectives, questions, community, and sample, the model illustrated in Figure (01) has been formulated to provide a conceptual framework reflecting the relationships of correlation and influence between the study variables.

Figure No. (01) Study Model



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the study's literature.

Study Hypotheses

In pursuit of achieving the study's objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- **Main Hypothesis H0:** There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level less than or equal to 0.05 between organizational learning and performance excellence in the researched institution in the presence of empowerment as a mediating variable, leading to the following two derived hypotheses:
- **First Hypothesis H01:** There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level less than or equal to 0.05 between organizational learning and empowerment in the researched institution.
- **Second Hypothesis H02:** There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level less than or equal to 0.05 between organizational learning and performance excellence in the researched institution.

Literature Review

First, Organizational Learning

The term "organizational learning" emerged in 1974 through the works of Schon and Argyris. Chris Argyris defined it as "the process of detecting and correcting errors in organizations" where individuals act as change agents within organizations, either facilitating or hindering excellence through their interactions

with the environmental systems that consist of multiple environmental elements known as the organizational learning system (Argyris, 1992, p. 8). Senge, on the other hand, perceives it as a shift in thinking from viewing ourselves as separate from the world to recognizing our interconnectedness with it, and from attributing problems to the actions of others or external circumstances to seeing them as stemming from our own behaviors. For him, learning is the means through which individuals in the organization continuously discover how they shape the reality in which they operate and how they have the power to change that reality (Belali, 2014, p. 172).

Furthermore, organizational learning is not only a growth of ideas aimed at improving organizational issues but also a successful review and examination by individuals that have implications for organizational factors and outcomes. It is the dynamic cycle that enables the creation or production of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that help the organization quickly adapt to change (Amini, 2014, p. 218). Understanding its environment, adapting to changes, and increasing its capacity for understanding as a result of experience, analysis, experimentation, and observation (Yeldrim, 2018, p. 20). It is a continuous process of testing and reviewing experiences, transforming them into organizational knowledge, and making them closely related to its main purposes. It is a state where knowledge is developed through individuals seeking to enhance their understanding of the relationships that link behavior to outcomes, understanding the impact of environmental factors on these relationships, and the ongoing process stemming from the organization members' vision. This process aims to capitalize on experiences and experiments, capturing the resulting information in the organization's memory for periodic review to benefit from it in problem-solving within a framework of support and competition from the organization's leadership specifically and the organizational culture in general (Al-Arabi, 2019, p. 67). The concept of organizational learning is crystallized through interaction at three levels.

Individual Learning

Individual learning is the foundational block of organizational learning, defined as a constant change in behavior resulting from experience and expertise. This means that as individuals gain experience, it leads to changes in their behavior and actions (Abdulbaqi, 2001, p. 27). It also signifies enhancing knowledge through experience, empowering the learner to effectively deal with various behavioral situations. Senge emphasized that this level of learning is connected to the individual's self-directed learning capacity and their ability to self-develop. This enables individuals to employ learning skills effectively, contributing to their behavioral, cognitive, and emotional development, increasing their ability to take responsibility for their learning and become independent learners. Equipping

them with methods of thinking and building positive attitudes towards mental independence. It is evident that the most critical skills individuals acquire are self-directed learning competence, indicating a distinguished ability that enables them to learn effectively (Najm, 2008, p. 276).

Group Learning

At the group (team) level, individuals learn how to learn together. This level of learning occurs as a result of the interactive relationships among team members, leading to the acquisition and exchange of knowledge (Amini, 2014, p. 99). It expands the team's capacity to achieve the desired and expected results, opening up thinking and encouraging individual participation in creating a common field among them. Madelon defined it as the process of developing skills and knowledge that contribute to the formation of collective competencies through work teams that promote dialogue among members, exchange of ideas and knowledge, and stimulate the collective ability to generate new innovative ideas to deal with problems.

Organizational Learning

At the organizational level, relationships become structured, imparting an organizational character to individual learning and the shared knowledge developed among team members. Learning is not confined to individuals but extends to the group (teams) when individuals interact and organize within specific frameworks to form organizational learning that grows and evolves within the learning organization. It can be said that the organization learns when individuals learn and their learning wheel turns optimally and smoothly when knowledge and skills are continuously exchanged, renewed, and solidified within application groups. At that point, the organization learns, becomes capable of competing, and gains a competitive advantage. Through learning, employees not only acquire new information but also enhance their ability to achieve goals (Al-Arabi, Qashlan, 2009, p. 97). Organizational scholars agree that organizational learning is unique to each organization and is attributed to differences in its characteristics such as culture, size, age, and individual differences among its members.

Second: Empowerment

Empowerment refers to an individual having the ability to perform tasks, embodying a process of awareness and capacity building that leads to greater participation, decision-making ability, and the power to effect change. It includes the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of relationships, with the individual being an active agent possessing independence in work performance,

experience, the ability to influence, and goal achievement (Ibrahim, Mohamed, 2020, p. 80).

Granting employees freedom, independence, and authority allows them to enhance their capabilities for decision-making and contribute to their fullest potential in continuous improvement efforts (Diab, 2017, p. 823). Providing them with power and boosting their confidence helps them overcome their weaknesses, tap into their internal motivations, and incentivize them, which reflects on their performance (Paynevandy, 2016, p. 10).

By offering all necessary resources and a suitable work environment for their professional and behavioral development, instilling absolute trust in them breaks the rigidity of administrative, organizational, and internal constraints (Mussuad, Zhuo, 2017, p. 28). It liberates individuals from restrictions, encourages and motivates them, and rewards them to exercise creativity and initiative (Malham, 2006, p. 28).

Empowerment involves the voluntary transfer of ownership of tasks, situations, or circumstances to a group or individuals who have the ability to handle the situations and possess the authority, responsibility, skills, understanding of work requirements, motivation, commitment, trust, and sincere management in an environment that fosters the release of their latent potentials and creativity (Ibrahim, Mohamed, 2020, p. 81).

Empowerment can be expressed through the following dimensions (Al-Mutairi, 2019, p. 2):

A. Delegation of Authority:

Delegation of authority entails a manager assigning a portion of their job responsibilities to their subordinates, granting the delegate the ability to work on the delegated tasks without needing approval from the superior. Through delegation, employees have the power to influence decisions related to their job performance, which necessitates a shift from control to trust and empowerment.

B. Teamwork:

Empowerment requires employees to work collectively to solve work-related problems, with team members possessing diverse skills and committing to a common vision and shared responsibility. Developing teamwork in an organization relies on having a competent leader who can provide guidance, encouragement, and support to team members to overcome the challenges they may face.

C. Training:

Training is a planned scientific activity aimed at developing individuals' capabilities, skills, and changing their behaviors, equipping them with the

necessary information to enable them to perform effectively and productively, leading to the achievement of their personal goals and the organization's objectives with the highest possible efficiency (Al-Qahtani, 2008, p. 134). Training provides employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their work proficiently.

D. Effective Communication:

Effective communication is the purposeful transfer of information from one person to another with the aim of creating a mutual understanding between them regarding ideas and information, expressing opinions, and sharing proposals. Communication is a crucial factor in an empowerment program as it signifies the availability of freedom to access sensitive information.

E. Motivation:

Motivation encompasses the factors that drive employees to exert greater effort to achieve optimal results and inspire them, increasing their enthusiasm for work. It also influences their loyalty and commitment to the organization (Al-Mutairi, 2019, p. 33). Empowerment cannot achieve its objectives in isolation from a comprehensive system of incentives and rewards.

Third, Excellence in Performance:

Excellence entails uniqueness, superiority, and possessing more positive qualities than others in the same field. It involves two dimensions: firstly, excellence signifies achieving unprecedented results where one surpasses all competitors through a logic of learning. Secondly, all management outcomes, including actions, decisions, systems, and activities, should be characterized by excellence, leaving no room for deviation or error (Al-Sulaimi, 2002, p. 12). Excellence is defined as "the ability to reconcile and coordinate the organization's elements and operate them in integration and correlation to achieve the highest levels of efficiency, reaching the output level that fulfills the desires, benefits, and expectations of stakeholders associated with the organization" (Al-Maligi, 2012, p. 10). It also involves "the uniqueness and superiority of the organization over others by offering the best practices in performing its tasks and operations to exceed the future expectations of its customers through the development of policies and strategies that focus on employees, stakeholders, and the entire community in a balanced manner."

Excellence in performance is also "a qualitative process of practices that involves self-assessment to enhance the organization's effectiveness, its competitive position, and operational flexibility, engaging all employees in all departments of the organization to work together by understanding all activities to eliminate errors and improve processes towards achieving excellence" (Abu Jam'a, 2016, p. 34). Excellence is linked to individuals' ability to accomplish tasks with

superiority due to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors they possess in their specialized field within their organization, where they outperform others, making the institution innovative and distinguished from other organizations (Shanavi, 2015, p. 139). Excellence in performance is achieved through the interaction of a set of dimensions:

A. Excellence of Subordinates:

The excellence of subordinates is the ability of individuals to achieve unprecedented results, surpassing others by attempting to avoid errors or deviations (Shanavi, 2015, p. 139). It comprises a set of behaviors, abilities, and high intellectual and cognitive skills possessed by employees in organizations who have the capacity to deploy them in their work and specialization, enabling them to accomplish tasks that exceed the organization's standards and outperform what others offer in terms of quality and quantity. Consequently, they present ideas and products characterized by innovation, authenticity, creativity, and excellence, thereby enhancing the achievement of high-level objectives (Youssef, 2005, p. 49).

B. Excellence of Organizational Structure:

The excellence of the organizational structure is translated through its flexibility, which serves as a motivating factor for the excellence of new ideas by enhancing collaboration and harmony among all subordinates, facilitating interaction between them by providing a degree of independence and opportunities for growth and development to achieve individual aspirations. It also facilitates work methods and approaches to ensure the utilization of the potential energies and capabilities inherent in all subordinates in the organization to serve the interests of both the organization and the individual together (O'kane, 2003, page 16).

C. Excellence of Organizational Culture:

Excellence of the culture refers to the values and beliefs that unite leaders and employees, stemming from their shared vision to which they are committed. These values and beliefs are reflected in the organization's policies and practices, guiding their behavior towards excellent practices that differentiate the organization from others. It includes elements such as openness, collaboration, trust, authenticity, independence, and problem-solving, characterized by relative continuity and exerting a significant influence on individuals' behavior and the effectiveness of practices in the organization.

D. Excellence of Leadership:

Leadership excellence plays a pivotal role in organizations operating in dynamic environments. Leadership has a pioneering impact on achieving excellence because it views crises as opportunities and a means for positive change (Abdullah, 2005, p. 233). Excellence is contingent upon the availability of skills

and capabilities at a high level among leaders who have the ability to innovate, leverage organizational opportunities, provide developmental opportunities, confront crises and challenging tasks in a manner that enables them to achieve superiority and excellence. Leadership directly influences achieving excellence by developing individuals' capabilities, encouraging them towards excellence, fostering motivation, leadership skills, effective work relationships, innovative thinking, promoting competition among individuals to reach new ideas, adopting an open-door strategy, supporting direct communication that allows for the exchange of information, and the ability to discuss and innovate new solutions to problems.

E. Excellence of Strategy:

Strategic excellence refers to the degree of distinctiveness in the steps taken by an organization to achieve its vision and mission, interacting as a unified, comprehensive, and integrated plan that connects the organization's advantages with its strategic ability to confront environmental challenges. It focuses on stakeholders, supported by relevant policies, plans, goals, and processes that are developed and implemented to achieve this strategy.

Forth, The Relationship Between Learning, Empowerment, and Excellence

The importance of empowerment increases as organizations seek to enhance their efficiency and adaptability to the environments in which they operate by promoting the participation of a larger number of their human resources and facilitating opportunities for each member to contribute as much as possible to achieving their goals. Organizations are in dire need of their information, experiences, skills, collective effort, and extracting their maximum potential and intellectual resources related to organizational performance (Abdullah, 2005, p. 112). Leveraging the intellectual wealth present in their minds to provide the best intellectual resources related to organizational performance (Payvandy, 2016, page 10) also has a positive impact on individuals and their behavior, achieving job satisfaction, reducing tension, pressure, and ambiguity in work. It is a force that drives individuals to contribute to decision-making and work independence, creating a sense of responsibility for the organization's success and their role in achieving it.

For organizations to assume their new role and transform into distinguished entities, they must engage in learning and capitalize on internal and external experiences, forming knowledge hubs to achieve excellence in performance (Saqr, 2003, p. 124). Organizational learning is one of the most important characteristics of successful organizations in the long term, as an organization's ability to change is linked to its ability to learn (Rahimian, 2014, page 550), creating opportunities for the organization to be able to replicate past successes and obtain sustainable competitive advantage. Studies emphasize that an

organization's failure to learn will lead to premature demise (Mehrabi, 2013, page 117), and the organization's survival, continuity, and distinction depend on its speed in learning, considering the sudden changes in its environment that it must learn at least at the same speed and even faster than its competitors, being proactive and initiative-oriented (Ratna, 2014, page 22).

Therefore, for an organization to learn, it must ensure that its employees are learning and engaging to their fullest potential, which cannot be achieved in isolation from empowerment. Empowerment provides the organization with sufficient flexibility, enabling it to learn for adaptation, achieve uniqueness, and excellence.

Methodology and Tools

Research Methodology:

The descriptive analytical approach was used as the appropriate method for studying the case.

Study Tool:

A questionnaire was designed as the primary data collection tool following Likert's five-point scale model. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. The first section was dedicated to personal information. The second section focused on the three variables of the study. The paragraphs from (01-25) were allocated to measure organizational learning as an independent variable. Paragraphs (26-46) were allocated to measure the level of empowerment, which represented the mediating variable, and finally, paragraphs (47-70) were allocated to measure the level of excellence in performance (the dependent variable).

Study Population and Sample:

The study population comprised all executives and administrators working at the Metijah Industrial Mill, totaling 60 individuals who were distributed the questionnaire. Forty questionnaires were collected, with only 37 deemed valid for analysis, representing a percentage of 61.66%, which is statistically acceptable.

Statistical Analysis Methods:

- Statistical processing was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The following statistical methods were employed:
- Utilization of frequencies and percentages to describe the demographic characteristics of the research community.
- Use of the quartile deviation to determine the extent of organizational learning, managerial empowerment adoption, and the level of performance excellence as follows:

- To analyze and interpret the questionnaire axes, the mean values are calculated. When using a Likert five-point scale, the analysis scale is extracted following these steps:
- Calculate the range, which equals $5-1=4$.
- Calculate the class interval by dividing the range by the number of categories (options), resulting in $5/4=0.80$.
- The first category for the mean values ranges from 1 to $1+0.80$, and so on for the rest of the mean values. The results interpretation table according to the scale is illustrated in the table below.

Table (01) Axis Analysis Scale

[4.20-5]	[3.40-4.20]	[2.60 -3.40]	[1.80-2.60]	[1-1.80]	Arithmetic mean value
Very high	High	medium	low	Very low	Scale

- Calculating the arithmetic means and standard deviations to determine the current status of organizational learning practices, the degree of managerial empowerment application, and the level of excellence in the researched institution.
- Using simple regression equations to assess the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and the impact of the independent variable on the mediating variable.
- Employing multiple regression equations to determine the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of the mediating variable using the model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

Results and Discussion

Study Tool Reliability:

The reliability of the study tool was confirmed by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the internal consistency of the items of all variables, as shown in Table 02. The values ranged between (0.788-0.945). The reliability coefficient for all questionnaire items was 0.938, which is greater than 0.70. This indicates a high degree of reliability, making it acceptable and reliable for scientific research purposes and suitable for application in field studies.

Table (02) Value of Cronbach alpha stability coefficients for study variables

Cronbach alpha coefficient	Variable name	Variable
0.788	Organizational Learning	Independent
0.945	Administrative Empowerment	Broker
0.83	Organizational Excellence	minion
0.938	The value of the consistency of all questionnaire statements	

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS.26 outputs.

Description of the Demographic Characteristics of the Research Sample:

Table 03 displays the distribution of research sample individuals whose responses were analyzed based on their personal characteristics. It is evident that the male participants represent 94.60%, a significantly higher percentage than females at 5.40%, reflecting a lower participation of females in the workforce at the Metijah Industrial Mill compared to males. The majority of the participants were in the youth category, with ages not exceeding 45 years, accounting for 78.40%, compared to 21.60%. This aligns with the societal composition of the Algerian community, where the youth constitute the largest portion. Regarding educational qualifications, executives represented 37.80% of the total administrators. Concerning years of experience, the proportion of those with less than 10 years of experience was 29.70%, while those with over 10 years of experience accounted for 70.20% of the workforce.

Table (03) Distribution of Study Sample Members According to Personal Data

Percentage	Iteration	Level	Personal data
94.60%	35	male	genre
05.40%	02	female	
0	0	Less than 25 years old	lifetime
21.60%	08	26-35 years	
56.80%	21	36-45 years	
21.60%	08	More than 45 years	
56.80%	21	secondary	Qualification
29.70%	11	academic	
08.10%	03	Graduate	
05.40%	02	Other	
08.10%	03	Less than 05 years	Years of Experience
21.60%	08	06-10 years	
21.60%	08	11-15 years	

24.30%	09	16-20 years	
24.30%	09	More than 20 years	

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS.26 outputs.

Answering the Study Questions: It is essential to answer the study questions to test the study hypotheses. These questions include:

What is the current status of organizational learning practices in the researched institution?

The answer to this question was determined by calculating the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the sample's responses. Table 04 reveals that the degree of organizational learning practices was very high, with a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.5460. This indicates that the respondents' responses in this area were not significantly varied and clustered around the mean, being less than 1. The highest mean value was 3.96, attributed to the first dimension (individual-level learning), followed by the second dimension (team-level learning) with a mean of 3.87, and finally the third dimension (organizational-level learning) with a mean of 3.58.

What is the current status of managerial empowerment practices in the researched institution?

The assessment of managerial empowerment adoption revealed a moderate level, with an arithmetic mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.737. This indicates that the respondents' responses were not significantly varied, as they were all less than 1.

What is the current status of performance excellence in the researched institution?

Upon reviewing the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample's responses, as shown in Table 04, it is evident that the degree of performance excellence was high. The arithmetic mean was 3.43, with a standard deviation of 0.767, indicating that the respondents' responses in this area were clustered around the mean and not significantly varied. The highest mean was for the strategic excellence dimension (3.70), followed by the excellence of supervisors (3.46), then the excellence of culture with a mean of 3.39, and finally the organizational structure excellence and leadership excellence dimensions with arithmetic means of 3.30 and 3.28, respectively.

Table (04) Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of the Organizational Learning Variable

Domain	Grade	Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean
Individual-level learning	Very high	0.517	3.96
Group-level learning	Very high	0.680	3.87
Organization-wide learning	Very high	0.853	3.58
Total Degree of Organizational Learning	Very high	0.546	3.80
Administrative Empowerment	medium	0.737	3.21
Performance Excellence	High	0.767	3.43

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of SPSS.26

Hypothesis Testing: In order to test the main hypothesis of the study, the validity of the sub-hypotheses is examined.

Testing Sub-Hypothesis 1: There is statistically significant relationship at a significance level of less than or equal to 0.05 between organizational learning and empowerment. Simple linear regression was used to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 05 indicate that the coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated as 0.556. This means that organizational learning explains approximately 55% of the variance in empowerment. In other words, 55% of the changes in empowerment can be attributed to organizational learning, while the remaining percentage is attributed to factors other than learning, including random errors. The correlation coefficient (R) was calculated as 0.746, indicating a statistically significant relationship between organizational learning and empowerment. The table also shows high model significance according to the F-test, with a value of 43.84 and a significant value of 0.0000. Moreover, as indicated by the t-test, the significance level for organizational learning was estimated at 0.0000, with a positive regression coefficient (B) value of 1.007. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 1 is accepted as valid based on these findings.

Table No. (05) Results of the First Hypothesis Test (Simple Regression)						
Récapitulatif des modèles						
Model	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	The Standard Error of the Estimate		
1	0.746 ^a	0.556	0.543	0.49835		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Learning						
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	of ddl	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.888	1	10.888	43.842	.000 ^b
	de Student	8.692	35	0.248		
	Total	19.581	36			
a. Variable dépendante : Empowerment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Learning						
Coefficients						
Model		Coefficients standardisés	non Erreur standard	Coefficients standardisés	t	Sig.
1	(Constante)	-0.614-	0.584		-1.050-	.301
	Organisational learning	1.007	0.152	0.746	6.621	.000
a. Dependante Variable: Empowerment						

Source: SPSS.26 outputs.

Testing Sub-Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship at a significance level of less than or equal to 0.05 between organizational learning and performance excellence. Utilizing simple linear regression to test this hypothesis, the results displayed in Table 06 indicate that the coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated as 0.347. This means that organizational learning explains approximately 35% of the variance in performance excellence. The correlation coefficient (R) was found to be positive at 0.589, indicating a positive relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence. The F-test with a value of 18.58 demonstrates high model significance at a significant level of 0.0000. The significance level for organizational learning according to the t-test was estimated at 0.0000. The regression coefficient (B) was

positive at 0.828, signifying that an increase in organizational learning by one unit leads to an 82.8% increase in performance excellence. Therefore, Sub-Hypothesis 2 is accepted as valid based on these results.

Table No. (06) Results of the Second Hypothesis Test (Simple Regression)

Summary of Models.						
Model	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Standard Error of the Estimate		
1	0.589 ^a	0.347	0.328	0.62934		
a. Prédicteurs : (Constante), organizational_learning						
ANOVA^a						
Modèle		Somme des carrés	ddl	Carré moyen	F	Sig.
1	Régression	7.361	1	7.361	18.58	0.000 ^b
	de Student	13.863	35	0.396	5	
	Total	21.223	36			
Dependent Variable: Performance Excellence						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Learning						
Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients.		Standardized Coefficients.	T	Sig.
		B	Standard Error	Beta		
1	(Constante)	0.282	0.738		0.382	0.704
	Organizational Learning	0.828	0.192	0.589	4.311	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Performance Excellence						

Source: SPSS.26 outputs.

Testing the Main Hypothesis: The study examines the mediating role of empowerment in the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence in the researched institution. To investigate the impact of the mediating variable on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) was utilized. This model asserts that the influence of the mediating variable on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables will only be realized if there is

a substantial effect of the independent variable on the mediating variable, followed by a significant effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Finally, when the mediating variable is entered into the regression model, the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable either completely disappears or approaches zero, rendering the correlation statistically non-significant, which is termed full mediation. Alternatively, the correlation may decrease but remain statistically significant, indicating partial mediation (Abdulsalam Hamadoush, 2019). Upon applying the aforementioned model, the following findings were observed:

Equation 1: Measurement of the Effect of the Independent Variable on the Mediating Variable

The results from Table 05 demonstrate the impact of the independent variable (organizational learning) on the mediating variable (empowerment). The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated as 0.556, indicating that organizational learning explains approximately 55.6% of the variance in empowerment. The correlation coefficient (R) was found to be 0.746, which is statistically significant, signifying a relationship between organizational learning and empowerment. The model exhibited high significance according to the F-test, with a value of 43.84 at a significance level of 0.0000. Additionally, the regression coefficient (B) was positive at 1.007, meeting the first condition of the Baron and Kenny (1986) model.

Equation 2: Measurement of the Effect of the Independent Variable on the Dependent Variable

The results from Table 06 illustrate the impact of the independent variable (organizational learning) on the dependent variable (performance excellence) using the total effect path equation. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated as 0.347, indicating that organizational learning explains approximately 34.7% of the variance in performance excellence. The correlation coefficient (R) was found to be 0.589, which is statistically significant, suggesting a relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence. The model exhibited high significance based on the F-test, with a value of 18.58 at a significance level of 0.0000. Additionally, the regression coefficient (B) was positive at 0.828.

Equation 3: Measurement of the Effect of the Independent Variable on the Dependent Variable with the Mediating Variable

The results from Table 07 elucidate the impact of the independent variable (organizational learning) on the dependent variable (performance excellence) in the presence of the mediating variable (empowerment) using multiple regression to measure the direct effect. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated as 0.547, indicating that organizational learning explains approximately 54.7% of the variance in performance excellence when considering the mediating variable. The correlation coefficient (R) was found to be 0.740, which is statistically

significant, indicating a relationship between organizational learning, empowerment, and performance excellence. The F-value was 20.53, with a statistically significant significance level (Sig=0.000).

The regression coefficient for the impact of empowerment (the mediating variable) on performance excellence (the dependent variable) was calculated as $B=0.699$, demonstrating a statistically significant relationship between these variables. On the other hand, the regression coefficient for the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of the mediating variable was $B=0.124$, which was not statistically significant (Sig=0.614). After satisfying the three conditions of the Baron and Kenny (1986) model, the primary hypothesis is accepted, indicating that empowerment mediates the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence in the industrial mill setting.

Table No. (07) Results of the Main Hypothesis Test (Multiple Regression)

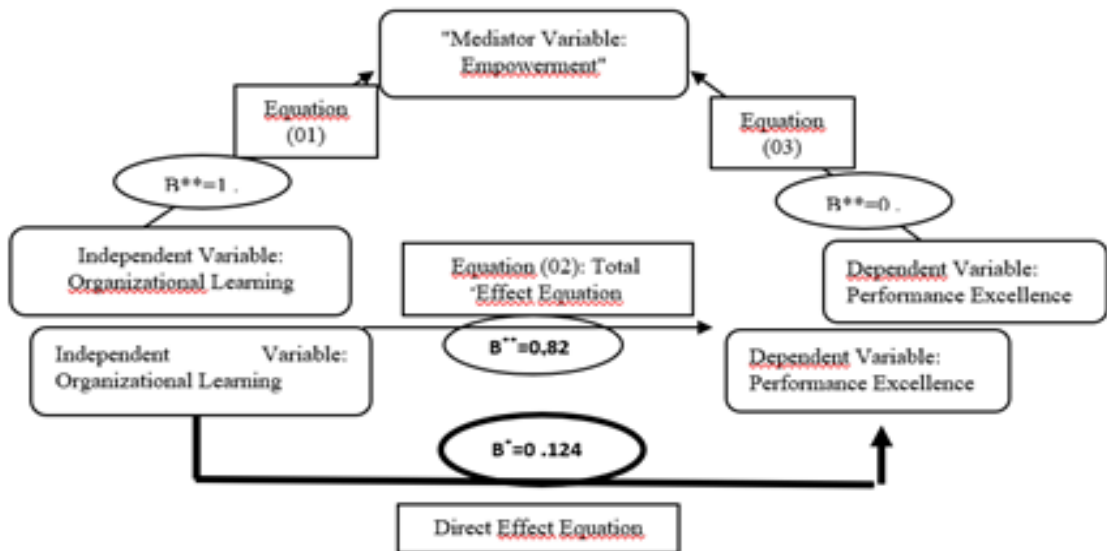
Summary of Models.						
Model	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Standard Error of the Estimate		
1	0.740 ^a	0.547	0.520	0.53174		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Learning, Empowerment						
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of the squares	ddl	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.610	2	5.805	20.530	0.000 ^b
	of Student	9.614	34	0.283		
	Total	21.223	36			
a. dependent_variable: in_performance_excellence						
b. Predictors: (Constante), organizational learning, _empowerment						
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Standard error	Bêta		
1	(Constante)	0.711	0.633		1.123	0.269
	Empowerment	0.699	0.180	0.672	3.877	0.000
	Organisational learning	0.124	0.243	0.088	0.509	0.614
a. Dependent Variable: Performance Excellence						

Source: SPSS.26 outputs.

After confirming the mediating role of empowerment in the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence in the study institution, according to the Baron and Kenny model (1986), mediation is considered complete when the value of the direct effect in the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, in the presence of the mediating variable, is closer to zero in the total effect equation (the equation of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable) and is not statistically significant. On the other hand, mediation is partial when the value of the direct effect in the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, in the presence of the mediating variable, is closer to zero in

the total effect equation (the equation of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable), but it is statistically significant.

Analyzing the results presented in Table 07 and summarized below, it is observed that the value of the direct effect in the relationship between the independent variable (organizational learning) and the dependent variable (performance excellence) with the mediating variable (empowerment) is estimated at $B=0.124$, which is closer to zero compared to the total effect equation ($B=0.828$). However, this value is not statistically significant, as it reached 0.614 ($\text{Sig}=\text{.}$). Consequently, empowerment fully mediates the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence in the industrial mill setting as indicated by the findings. Figure No. (02): Type of Mediation.



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs

Study Results

Through our study, we examined the role of organizational learning in achieving performance excellence with empowerment as a mediator in the industrial mill setting in Metidja, which is one of the most important establishments in the food industries sector in Algeria. Our findings indicate that the level of organizational learning practice is very high in the researched institution. Individual-level learning was notably high, signifying that individuals possess the desire and ability to learn. However, group-level learning was average, despite the collaboration and transparency among team members and their learning from each other's practices, the organization does not respond adequately to the team's suggestions. Regarding organizational-level learning, it was high, as revealed by

the sample respondents, showing that the organization benefits from its experiences and experiences of other organizations, especially competitive ones. The level of empowerment in the researched organization was found to be average across all dimensions, including delegation of authority, teamwork, continuous training, and effective communication, with motivation scoring the lowest average. In terms of performance excellence, it was high, especially in strategic excellence, excellence of supervisors, and cultural excellence, except for organizational structure excellence and leadership excellence, which were rated at a moderate level.

Through the study, we also found a significant correlation between organizational learning and performance excellence, where the regression coefficient value reached 0.828 (B). Additionally, there was a statistically significant relationship between organizational learning and empowerment, with the regression coefficient value at 1.007 (B). Statistical equations following the Baron and Kenny model confirmed that empowerment mediates the relationship between organizational learning and performance excellence as a complete mediator in the industrial mill setting in Metidja.

Most Important Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations can be put forth:

- It is essential to grant employees more freedom and authority in their work without managerial interference during delegation periods. By empowering individuals to solve work-related issues and make decisions, organizations instill the confidence and flexibility necessary for them to apply their acquired knowledge. Addressing work challenges enables individuals to make more significant mistakes, facilitating enhanced learning and the expression of existing knowledge. Conversely, withholding delegation inhibits problem-solving capabilities, leading to stagnation of knowledge and hindering growth. Avoiding errors results in the repetition of mistakes, impeding the learning process.
- Providing sufficient flexibility and independence to employees motivates them to propose more innovative ideas and develop creative solutions by showcasing their abilities and unleashing their potential. Conversely, lack of encouragement can lead to frustration, making employees feel disconnected from problem-solving and hindering their learning process.
- Developing reward and promotion mechanisms that align with employees' capabilities, skills, and needs is crucial. Proposing awards for outstanding individuals, acknowledging their efforts, and incentivizing excellence fosters a spirit of innovation among employees.
- Emphasizing teamwork methodologies due to their positive impact on generating innovative solutions through diverse opinions. This approach

enhances learning levels among individuals through knowledge exchange, enabling the attainment of high performance standards.

- Organizing continuous periodic meetings and seminars with all stakeholders to discuss work-related issues and foster collaboration.
- Broadening the scope of interest towards modern organizational structures that lean more towards horizontal arrangements than hierarchical ones, considering them more suitable for learning organizations.

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