

## Structure, Strategy and Organizational Design in Albanian Context

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### Abstract

*This research paper will try to understand and explain how much and how is understood the nature, the importance and factors that affect the business organizational structure and design in Albanian Organizations, compared with theoretical factors researched from the literature. How a business does structure in our country, knowing how important are the theoretical factors in business organization performance and therefore how much and how the principles of organizational design are applied in Albanian Organizations. Why structure, strategy and organizational design? Organizational design and organizational restructuring remains one of the most important issues that management of organizations, in the global era and information technology, must deal with, for the fact that businesses today face some unprecedented challenges: increased competition, globalization, growing of social responsibility, technological changes, changes in taste and consumer's exigency, new strategic thinking, etc. Referring the literature and contemporary researchers, a constant topic during these recent years has been the one of how globalization and economic crisis have obliged the organizations to review their strategies and to change the way they operate, trying often therefore to structure for surviving and achieving success. These challenges should be carefully managed in order to build and hold a high performance organization, to deal with tough competition and endless problem that this era we live does bear. It is also important to understand correctly that organizational structure and design, by dictating roles connection in an organization and consequently how people function, may often be the main cause of the problems, but also one more reason of success. The way that organizations structure or the specific model of business, may constitute their competitive advantage, or special strategic skills, so it can make a business organization unique and competitive in the market. For many researchers the prevailing conclusion is that the organizations either neglect the importance of organizational design, or they just do not know what to do about it and therefore they evolve in an indirectly, spontaneous or intuitive way. From what the paper identifies, most of organizational structuring in Albania are made in a hasty way, without seeing or paying attention to full frame or circumstances. This may result in some partial and fragmentary initiatives instead of aiming in organizational designing and general structuring. This is not surprising as the subject is complex, often poorly explained and not rightly understood even though the academics and the consultants have made a great work to address the organizational design topic. However the paper shows that entrepreneurs and managers still lack a practical and systematic framework in order to guide their choices of organizational structure. To find a practical approach for the organizational design, can be difficult, even though some business schools have tried to simplify the things. The study will try to achieve this task, through careful research, in order to diagnose the organizational design process and restructuring situation in Albania, highlighting the effect of the current challenges which have an impact on this difficult process, mainly based on a survey of 200 organizational businesses in Albania.*

**Keywords:** organizational design, organizational structure, strategy.

### Introduction

This paper is part of a broader study, which relates to the discovery and then the analysis of the main factors of which are driven Albanian organizations during the organizational design process.

Consequently, the paper, this time will focus only on the analysis of the factors of context, aiming discovering the main factor, and further trying to discover if this factor in Albanian organizations is the strategy or not.

To identify the main factors of which are theoretically driven organizations in organizational design process, the analysis is based on the literature review of some known researchers of the organizations domain as Burton and Obel (2004), Daft and Armstrong (2012), Burton, Eriksen, Håkansson and Snow (2006), etc.

Although it is almost impossible to define all the possible factors that directly affect modern business practice indirectly the various trends in organizational and work level, it is necessary to mention those most important. The literature review identifies some key context factors that condition organizational design which are: Size, organizational technology, environment, goals & strategy, culture.

## The methodology

The methodology consists of a combination of primary data with the secondary ones. The data from studies made by the Vlores District institutions such as Municipality, Prefecture, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc. is used. Private firms in Albanian cities such as Vlore, Fier, Lushnje, Saranda, Durres and Tirana are used to study the structure model. A questionnaire was drawn up to complete the findings and comparison. The questionnaire was designed to be addressed to the general managers of private firms, those of functions, or of the line ones, as well as to some experts. Questionnaires are standardized and uniform for all subjects included in the study. Questionnaires were distributed to 300 firms during the second half of 2011 and during 2012, 2013. Distribution of the questionnaire was made by personally interviewing individuals in each firm or via e-mail. The questionnaires took into consideration variables such as firm size, the year of their creation, knowledge about the structure and the organization's overall strategy, linking strategy organization for structuring future challenges.

A Factor analysis (principal factor) was used to give answer to the research question about the main factor that has an impact on the choice of organizational structure.

Research Question: Is the strategy the main factor that leads the choice of organizational design or an organizational structure?

The hypothesis H0:

The strategy is the main factor or the main dimension of context, which affects decision-making of business organizations in Albania for selecting and changing their organizational structure.

Hypothesis H1:

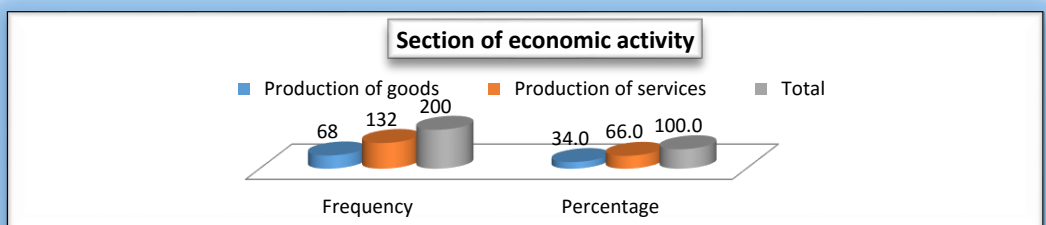
The main factor influencing the decision-making of business organizations in Albania for selecting and changing the structure is not the strategy, but other factors dictated by the challenges currently faced by business organizations in Albania.

## 2.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 2.1. Descriptive analyses

The statistical data: 200 (returned) questionnaires (from 300 distributed) have been analyzed, with a distribution of business activity as follows:

Fig.1. Businesses by the Section of Economic Activity.



Source: Authors' research.

Question no 14: How much is based the establishing organizational structure (labour division) to;

- the financial ability

- the other firms experiences (imitation)
- the spontaneous need shifted to experience/routine
- the casualty

According to the respondents' opinion, the main factor and /or other ones which have more impact on the Albanian organizational business structuring process and design are as follow:

Question no 14 : Respondents' Perception about Organizational Structure Factors

Alternatives	Frequency	Percent
1 Financial ability	72	36.0
2 Casualty	25	12.5
3 Imitation	65	32.5
4 Shift of the spontaneous need to exp. / routine	30	15.0
5 No response	8	4.0

**Tab. 1. Respondents' Perception about Organizational Structure Factors**

Source: Authors' research.

*To the Question no 23: How much do you know about business organizational structure?*

The answer "I have average knowledge "is given of the 38% respondents only. (See the table no 2).

Nr	Alternatives	Frequency	Percent
1	Nothing	10	5.0
2	Very little	30	15.0
3	A little	31	15.5
4	On the average	76	38.0
5	Most	40	20.0
6	Everything	13	6.5
	Total	200	100.0

**Tab. 2 Respondents' opinion about awareness of management class in terms of organizational structure**

Source: Authors' research.

Based on the data we can say so that there is little awareness of the Albanian managers' class on the importance of the structure.

*To the Question no 24: How much do you know about business organizational strategy?*

We have even a worse situation as the structures case. The answer "I have average knowledge "is given of the 27.5 % respondents only. (See the table no 3).

Nr	Alternatives	Frequency	Percent
1	Nothing	7	3.5
2	Very little	38	19.0
3	A little	49	24.5
4	On the average	55	27.5
5	Most	38	19.0
6	Everything	13	6.5
	Total	200	100.0

**Tab. 3 Respondents' opinion about awareness of management class in terms of organizational strategy**

Source: Authors' research.

**2.2. Analysis of Context Factors that guide the choice of the organizational structure at the Albanian business firms.**

Factor analysis estimates a priori the hypothesis, in analogy with the theory. The table, which shows the correlation matrix (comparing pairs of variables). It is used, as it is closely related to two important issues, first, variables can correlate with each other, but the values of these correlations are too low, caused them difficulty in determining the factor. So, in other words, depending on the coefficients correlation between pairs of variables, we could find out which of them has a significant value, serving as a factor in the analysis of factors.

The analyze by the Paired-Samples t Test will help comparing the averages of the perception assesment about impact of factors listed by the interviewers responding to the question 19 of the questioner (Q\_19\_1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 ): *Question no 19 : Which context factors have had impact on the new or changed structure in your company ?*

Once we obtain the correlation matrix, (using SPSS 20 -software) we should define the method of the analysis; Factor Analysis or Principal Component Analysis. In our survey we used the method of Principal Component Analysis with assumptions, that total variance of variables to consider, depends on the variances of each component (factor) and the variance of the error is zero Thompson, (2004).

From the matrix of correlations (Table no. 4), it seems that no one of variables has a significant impact on others, so we should have to analyze the importance of each of the factors. For this, first we build striped graph averages and confidence intervals, 95% and see which of them is more important.

**Table no. 4 Correlations**      The Perception of The Contextual  
Factors Impact on structure

The Perception of The Contextual Factors Impact on Structure/Organizational Design	Q_19_1 Perception about Strategy impact	Q_19_2 Perception about Technology impact	Q_19_3 Perception about Digitalization impact	Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment impact	Q_19_5 Perception of the Globalization impact	Q_19_6 Perception of the Competition impact	Q_19_7 Perception of the Business Model impact	Q_19_8 Perception of the consumer's change impact
Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy impact	1	.080	-.255**	.342**	.163*	-.091	.215**	-.304**
Pearson Correlation								
Sig. (2-tailed)		.263	.000	.000	.021	.198	.002	.000
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_2 Perception of the Technology impact	.080	1	-.303**	.002	.176*	-.044	.575**	-.265**
Pearson Correlation								
Sig. (2-tailed)	.263		.000	.980	.012	.532	.000	.000
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_3 Perception of the Digitalization impact (Computer /internet)	-.255**	-.303**	1	-.170*	-.061	-.061	-.284**	.114
Pearson Correlation								
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.016	.393	.392	.000	.108
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment impact	.342**	.002	-.170*	1	.145*	-.187**	.076	-.142*
Pearson Correlation								
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.980	.016		.041	.008	.282	.045
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_5 Perception of the Globalization impact	.163*	.176*	-.061	.145*	1	.047	.154*	-.122
Pearson Correlation								
Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	.012	.393	.041		.508	.030	.084
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200

Q_19_6 Perception of the Competition impact	Pearson Correlation	-.091	-.044	-.061	-.187**	.047	1	.136	-.254**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.198	.532	.392	.008	.508		.055	.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_7 Perception of the Business Model impact	Pearson Correlation	.215**	.575**	-.284**	.076	.154*	.136	1	-.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.282	.030	.055		.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Q_19_8 Perception of the consumer consumers change impact	Pearson Correlation	-.304**	-.265**	.114	-.142*	-.122	-.254**	-.308**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.108	.045	.084	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table no.5 Paired Samples Statistics- Competition/ Strategy impact**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_6 Perception of the Competition impact	8.70	200	1.611	.114
Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy impact	8.21	200	1.542	.109

**Table no.5 /2 Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Q_19_6 Perception of the Competition impact & Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy impact	200	-.091	.198

Table no.5 /3 Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q_19_6 Perception of the Competition impact & Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy impact	.485	2.330	.165	.160	.810	2.944	199	.004

Table no.6 /Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact	8.21	200	1.542	.109
Q_19_7 Perception of the business Model Impact	8.00	200	1.888	.133

Table no.6 /2Paired Samples Correlations

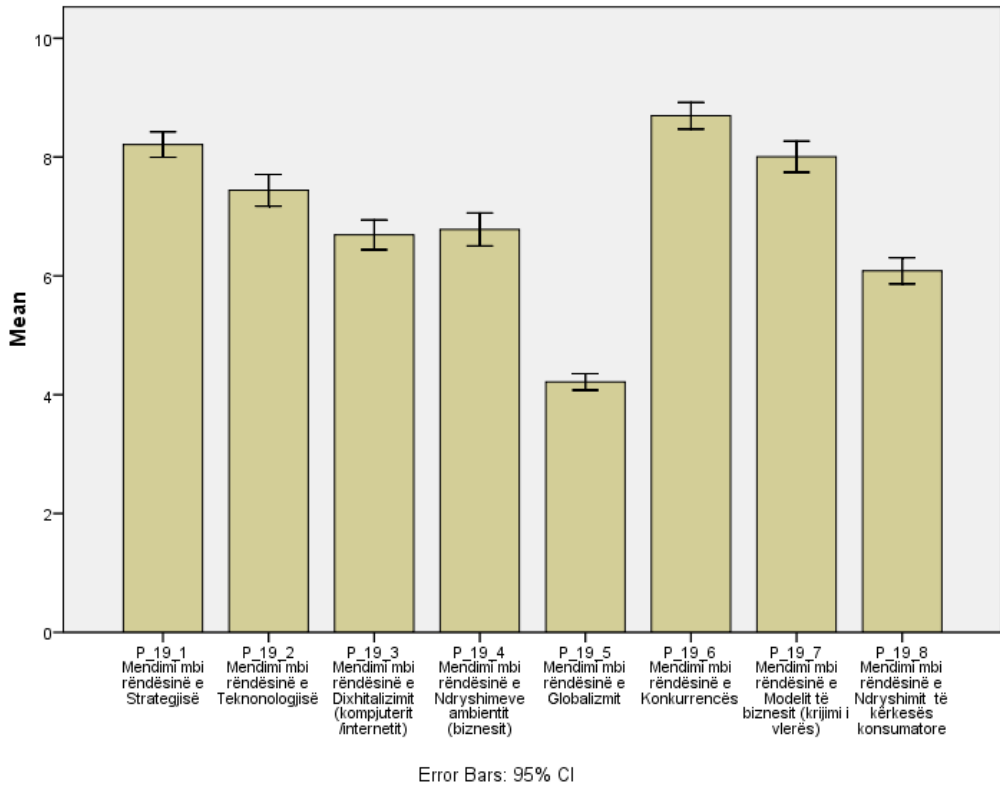
	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact & Q_19_7 Perception of the business Model Impact	200	.215	.002

Table no.6 /3Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact & Q_19_7 Perception of the business Model Impact	-.205	2.165	.153	-.097	.507	1.339	199	.182

It seems from the chart below (Figure no.2) that the perception on the impact of the variables that significantly affect more than others the structure are; Competition (Q\_19\_6), then the Business Model(Q\_19\_7), Strategy (Q\_19\_1), and Technology(Q\_19\_2). That means it is requiring a more detailed analysis of them.

Figure no.2 -The graph with Error Bars



For this we do compare their averages by paired Samples t-Test. By comparing the averages of the perception assessment about impact of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1) and the *Competition* (Q\_19\_6) on structure we note from the first table; that the averages are respectively 8.70 and 8.21 and standard deviation respectively 1.611 and 1.542 with the standard error average respectively 0.114 and 0.109 ( Table no.5 ).

From the second table, we note that they have a correlation of 0.198 and the significance 0.09 which means they are not related (correlated) ( Table no.5/2 ).

In the third table, we note that the Average / Mean = 0485,  $t = 2,944$  and  $p = 0.004 < 0.005$ . The mutual Probability of *Competition* assessment (Q\_19\_6) is very low ( $p = .027$ ) and in fact shows us that there is only a 0.4% chance that the value "t" can be great if the null hypothesis is true, therefore, this "t" is important because it is less than .05. ) ( Table no.5/3 ).

The fact that the value t is a positive number indicates that the first context factor (perception on the impact of the Competition (Q\_19\_6) has the average more than the second one (perception on the impact of the Strategy (Q\_19\_1) and so this context factor -the *Competition* (Q\_19\_6), convinces us for an assessment higher than the other one the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1). Therefore, we can conclude that the question of the importance of the *Competition* (Q\_19\_6) provides an estimate with a greater significance than that of the importance of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1),  $t = 2,944$  and  $p = 0.004 < 0.005$ . This result was predicted by the graph with error bars. (Fig.no.1).



By the Paired-Samples t Test comparing the averages of the perception assesment about impact of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1) and the *Business Model* (Q\_19\_7) on structure we note from the first table that the averages are respectively 8.21 and 8.00 and standard deviation respectively 1.542 and 1.888 and the average standard error respectively 0.109 and 0.133. ) (Table no.6 ).

From the second table, (Table no.6/2 ).we note that they have correlation 0.215 and significance 0.002 which means they are not related (correlated).

In the third table, (Table no.6 /3,we note that the Average / Mean = 0.205,  $t = 1.339$  and  $p = 0.182 > 0.005$ .

Mutual probability of Strategy assessment (Q\_19\_1) was high ( $p = .182$ ) and in fact it shows us that there is only a 18.2% chance that the value "t" can be great if the null hypothesis is true, therefore, this "t" is not important because it is greater than .05.

The fact that the value "t" is a positive number indicates that the first factor Strategy (the perception of the importance of the Strategy Q\_19\_1) is greater than the average of second- factor technology (perception of the *Business Model* (Q\_19\_7) however, the first factor strategy (Q\_19\_1) not convince us to a higher rating than the *Business Model* (Q\_19\_7).

Therefore, we can conclude that both questions about the importance of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1) and the *Business Model* (Q\_19\_7) provide us an assessment of the same significance,  $t = 1.339$  and  $p = 0.182 > 0.005$ .

This result was predicted by the graph with error bars.(fig.no.1)

By the Paired-Samples t Test comparing the averages of the perception assesment about impact of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1) and the *Technology* (Q\_19\_2) on structure we note from the first table (Table no.7) that the averages are respectively 8.21 and 7.44 and standard deviation respectively 1.542 and 1.906 and the standard error Mean respectively 0.109 and 0.135.

From the second table, we note that they have correlation 0.080 and significance 0.263 which means they are not related (correlated) (Table no.7/2 ).

In the third table, (Table no.7/3 )we note that the Average / Mean = 0.770,  $t = 4.624$  and  $p = 0.0 > 0.005$ .

Mutual probability of Strategy assessment (Q\_19\_1) was high ( $p = .0$ ) and in fact it shows us that there is only a 0% chance that the value "t" can be great if the null hypothesis is true, therefore, this "t" is not important because it is greater than .05.

The fact that the value "t" is a positive number indicates that the first factor Strategy (the perception of the importance of the Strategy Q\_19\_1) is greater than the average of second- factor technology (perception of the technology impact Q\_19\_2), however, the first factor strategy (Q\_19\_1) not convince us to a higher rating than technology one (Q\_19\_2.)

Therefore, we can conclude that both questions about the importance of the *Strategy* (Q\_19\_1) and *Technology* (Q\_19\_2) provide us an assessment of the same significance,  $t = 1.339$  and  $p = 0.0 > 0.005$ .This result was predicted by the graph with error bars.(fig.no.1)

**Table no7.Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact &	8.21	200	1.542	.109
Q_19_2 Perception of the Teknology Impact	7.44	200	1.906	.135

**Table no7/2.Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	sig
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact & Q_19_2 Perception of the Teknology Impact	200	.080	.263

**Table no.7/3 Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q_19_1 Perception of the Strategy Impact & Q_19_2 Perception of the Teknology Impact	.770	2.355	.167	.442	1.098	4.624	199	.000

The analyze go further by the Paired-Samples t Test comparing the averages of the perception assesment about impact of all other factors (see the Annex ) listed by the interviewers responding to the question 19 of the questioner : *Question no 19 : Which context factors have had impact on the new or changed structure in your company ?* And doing that we find out that strategy is not the main factor that drive the Albanian businesses during the organizational design process.

### Conclusion

The principal factor analysis did answer our question research regarding the most important factor by which the Albanian business firms are driven during the organizational design process or when they make their choices regarding the organizational structure.

Findings showed us that the strategy is not the main factor that drive the Albanian businesses during the organizational design process, or when they make choices about structural change.

As a result this analysis helped us highlighting that although the strategy is listed as one of the factors that drive organizational design process and change of structure in organizations in business in Albania (section of the descriptive analysis which is not part of this paper) here we did evidence that the strategy as a mentioned theoretically important dimension of context leads slightly or moderately the Albanian business organizations in decision process about organizational design.

The analysis highlights the "competition", as a more important factor, which leads organizational structuring process. This result, for the author of this study is related to the challenges that Albanian organizations business face today, that dictate much more and harder on them than the main factors that theoretically should affect their decision-making, about organizational design process.

Of interest it is the finding of this paper that "business model" which is not evidenced theoretically, and it does not constitute a factor of context such as the strategy, is listed instead by respondents as important context factor in this analysis and it turns out to be the second factor, almost identical to "competition", regarding the importance of it impact on the

organizational design. This lead us in the conclusion that the new trends as well as the challenges facing businesses in Albanian context, are the critical and guide their process of organizational design.

From the study conducted, we found that despite changes which have occurred in recent years in Albania, and in particular in Vlora, Fier, Lushnje, Saranda, Durres and Tirana, we still do have little managers' awareness about the importance of the organizational structure, strategy and design.

### **Recommendations for Researchers**

Of interest would be the research about the structural dimensions that would be more present in organizations with high or low performance, or for organizations in certain sectors of the economy. So we could better understand their impact on organizational performance in the future.

In conclusion, the research reported in this paper has modestly provided few answers, but has generated some new research questions which seem to require further study. He has thrown little light on the controversy over the existence of fundamental universal dimensions of organizational structure, but he has suggested an approach that could be helpful in determining the existence or non-existence of these dimensions. Moreover, he has raised an opportunity for researchers about some relatively successful organizations structures which could be described differently and independently by several dimensions.

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#### ANEXES

##### Paired Samples Statistics Techonology / Business Environment Change Impact

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_2 Perception of the Techonology impact	7.44	200	1.906	.135
Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	6.78	200	1.993	.141

##### Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Q_19_2 Perception of the Techonology impact & Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	200	.002	.980

**Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q_19_2 Perception of the Techonology impact & Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	.660	2.755	.195	.276	1.044	3.387	199	.001

**Paired Samples Statistics** Digitalization /Business Environment Change Impact

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_3 Perception of the Digitalization impact (Computer /internet)	6.69	200	1.789	.126
Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	6.78	200	1.993	.141

**Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Q_19_3 Perception of the Digitalization impact	200	-.170	.016
Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact			

**Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q_19_3 Perception of the Digitalization impact								
Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	-.090	2.895	.205	-.494	.314	-.440	199	.661

**Paired Samples Statistics** Business environment change/ Consumer Request Change Impact

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	6.78	200	1.993	.141
Q_19_8 Perception of the Consumer Request Change Impact	6.08	200	1.584	.112

**Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	200	-.142	.045
Q_19_8 Perception of the Consumer Request Change Impact			

**Paired Samples Test**

**Paired Samples Correlations**

	N	Correlation	Sig.	Paired Differences						
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
				Lower	Upper					
Pair 1 Q_19_4 Perception of the business environment change impact	.695	2.716	.192	.316	1.074	3.618	199	.000		
Q_19_8 Perception of the Consumer Request Change Impact										