



The Internal Work Environment and Job Alienation: The Case of Faculty Members

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the nature of the relationship between the internal work environment including its all-encompassing dimensions (organizational structure, participation in decision-making, incentives) and job alienation in Higher education institutions through focusing on faculty members at Jijel University in Algeria. That being the case, the study aims to fill a research gap by investigating the underexplored relationship between the Internal Work Environment and Job Alienation, hence while there is ample literature on work alienation, studies specifically focusing on work alienation within higher education institutions through the prism of internal work environment are notably scarce. The study utilized a descriptive approach, employing a survey sampling method to collect data from the target population with a specifically designed questionnaire for this purpose. The questionnaire consisting of 60 items was administered to a randomly selected sample of 167 faculty members at Jijel University. The collected data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22. The study's findings illustrate that faculty members perceive their work environment as inadequate for carrying out their activities, coupled with a notably high level of job alienation. Additionally, the research underscores a significant correlation between the internal work environment, encompassing its various dimensions, and the prevalence of job alienation among faculty members at Jijel University.

Keywords:

Internal Work Environment;
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1- Introduction

The university is universally perceived as an institution primarily committed to the pursuit of knowledge, with additional roles in education, entrepreneurship, and policy development. Hamlyn maintains that the university is an institution concerned with producing new specialized knowledge and training the next generation of researchers [1]. It occupies a prominent position within society due to its role in breeding critical thinking, knowledge generation, and individual education, as well as contributing to economic development and social well-being. Given such importance,

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it is imperative to consider the work environment that the university ideally fosters and provides for its human capital, as the university needs to construct a healthy and sound organic-functional relationship with its constituents since such an environment exerts influence over individuals' behaviors, values, and work orientations.

In a sense, the work environment can be viewed as everything surrounding the workplace, a comprehensive concept including physical, psychological, and social aspects that characterize working conditions [2]. It can be understood also as the surrounding conditions under which employees work, comprising a mix of policies and procedures through which employees fulfil their job responsibilities [3]. In a more specific context, the success of educational institutions, especially universities, hinges on achieving excellence and maintaining a harmonious balance between human resources and organized, continuous, and motivating work, which truly embodies what the work environment is [4]. The core of the matter is that the work environment is shaped by employees' perceptions, encompassing their experiences and views on policies, relationships, and rules within the organization [5]. Then it is no exaggeration to say that the work environment has impactful effects on employees' psychology and well-being [6].

From a scholarly point of view, multiple studies demonstrated empirically that work environments exert a significant influence on employees' emotions, impacting their comfort, happiness, and overall job satisfaction, ultimately affecting performance [7]. Work environments with their component then influence individuals' personality formation, relationships, and behavior [8]. Positive work environments contribute to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, while unsuitable conditions can lead to a decline in employee performance [9]. Likewise, a suitable work environment allows individuals to perform their duties optimally, safely, healthily, and comfortably. Conversely, an unhealthy and unsafe work environment harms employees and their health [10, 11].

In a similar vein, toxic work environments often lead to the phenomenon of work alienation [4–6]. Work alienation, as addressed by various researchers, encompasses different perspectives. Al-Zou'Bi (2012) characterizes workplace alienation as the employees' incapacity to fulfill their social needs, creating a disconnect between their objective perceptions of the work situation and their personal values, ideals, and desires, leading to a gap in satisfaction with their work environment [12]. In a similar context, Akar (2018) views work alienation as the manifestation of individual feelings stemming from disappointments in the work setting [13]. This phenomenon arises when there is an insufficient establishment of harmonious relationships between employees and the organization, coupled with negative socialization at both individual and organizational levels. Consequently, it signifies the extent to which employees feel estranged from their work and struggle to meet their social needs and personal expectations in their jobs.

Within the framework of higher education institutions, the academic study of work alienation in universities carries profound significance as it delves into the intricate dynamics shaping the professional lives of faculty members, administrators, and students. However, given their pivotal role as a non-material asset, faculty members play a crucial, active role in realizing the university's objectives and operational methods [14]. Recognizing their significance, creating conducive work environments free of work alienation for faculty members becomes a key factor in ensuring the overall efficiency of the educational system.

In this particular context, we note a visible gap in attention and studies addressing work alienation in Algeria in the context of higher education, despite its profound impact on both employees and universities [15]. This awareness underscores the critical need for scholarly exploration and understanding of work alienation's implications in the Algerian context, especially for faculty members. Addressing this gap is what we intend to do through this study by examining the nature of the relationship between the internal work environment, including its all-encompassing dimensions (organizational structure, participation in decision-making, incentives), and job alienation in higher education institutions through focusing on faculty members at Jijel University in Algeria.

1-1-Research Questions

Drawing from the preceding discussion and informed by previous research on the topic, the present study seeks to address the following central research question:

Is there a significant correlation between the internal work environment and the manifestations of work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?

This question is sub-divided into the following questions:

Q1: Does Jijel University provide a suitable work environment for faculty members to carry out their activities?

Q2: What is the level of work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?

Q3: Is there a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between the internal work environment and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University? The third question is, in turn, divided into the following sub-questions:

- Q3.1:** Is there a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between organizational structure and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?
- Q3.2:** Is there a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between participation in decision-making and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?
- Q3.3:** Is there a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between work systems and procedures and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?
- Q3.4:** Is there a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between the prevailing incentive system and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University?

1-2-Research Objectives

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Determining the extent to which Jijel University provides a suitable work environment for faculty members to perform their tasks and various activities.
- Identifying the level of work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University.
- Investigating if there is a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of 0.05, between the dimensions of the internal work environment (organizational structure, participation in decision-making, work systems and procedures, incentive system) and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University.

2- Literature Review

The phenomenon of work alienation has attracted abundant scholarly attention, propelling empirical investigations in different scientific disciplines including psychology, economy, sociology of work, and management and administrative sciences. Different studies explored, measured, and comprehended the phenomenon of work alienation, concentrating on various variables and aspects, each with its own limitations and overlooking certain perspectives.

To begin with, the study of Darwazah & Al-Qawasimi (2014) [16] investigated the effect of ethical climate, including both its individual and organizational dimensions, on work alienation, framed in light of feelings of pessimism, powerlessness, isolation, and dissatisfaction, within the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Covering a sample of 200 ministry employees, the study employed a descriptive-analytical methodology using a survey method. Key findings indicated a high perception of the presence of an ethical work climate and a moderate level of work alienation among respondents. The study underscored the significant influence of the ethical work climate, particularly its individual dimension, on work alienation. While the individual ethical aspect demonstrated a perceptible effect, no significant influence was identified for the organizational ethical aspect on work alienation. Recommendations of the study included a focus on the work environment concerning the incentive system, individual roles, job security, and the cultivation of an organizational culture embraced willingly by individuals.

Similarly, Abu Samra et al. [17] conducted a study on work alienation among faculty members in two Palestinian universities, namely Al-Quds University and Al-Khalil University. The research aimed to evaluate the extent of work alienation among faculty members in these universities, encompassing the entire faculty community during the academic year 2012-2013, with a total of 449 members as the study population. A stratified random sample of 200 faculty members was selected, and data collection utilized a questionnaire consisting of 33 items. The study unveiled a significantly high level of work alienation among faculty members, indicated by an average score of 3.81 on the total scale. Findings also illustrate no significant differences in the level of job alienation among faculty members based on gender and university affiliation. Nevertheless, variations were observed in relation to other variables such as educational qualification, years of experience, and the number of published research papers.

In parallel, the study of Jassar & Alsaed (2021) [18] sought to explore the influence of work alienation, encompassing powerlessness, meaninglessness, and self-estrangement, on organizational commitment, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. The research was conducted at the Ministry of Labor in Amman, Jordan, surveying 250 employees randomly at various levels. Employing a descriptive-analytical approach and simple and multiple regression analysis, the study revealed a significant impact of work alienation on organizational commitment at the Ministry of Labor. Specifically, it was identified that work alienation significantly affected affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment within the Ministry of Labor. Recommendations include fostering a positive climate through improved manager-employee relationships, active participation in events, embracing an open-door policy, promoting creativity, cultivating a strong teamwork culture, and empowering employees through involvement in decision-making processes to mitigate powerlessness at the Ministry of Labor.

A recent investigation by Abu Saa & Abu Samra (2019) [19] investigated the factors contributing to job alienation among faculty members at Hebron and Al-Quds Universities to identify the causes of job alienation experienced by faculty members in these universities during the second semester of the academic year 2017/2018. The study surveyed faculty members (446 in total), with a sample of 200 faculty members selected through stratified random sampling. The researchers employed a questionnaire with 20 items, focusing on faculty members' perceptions of reasons related to university administration and colleagues. Findings indicated unfair rewards policy by the administration contributed significantly to alienation among faculty members. Additionally, the administration failed to recognize the achievements of faculty members. Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences in the attitudes and positions of respondents attributed to the university.

The study of Günay (2017) [20] parallelly indicates that employees' perceptions of organizational support significantly affect their sense of security, positive attitudes toward the organization, and identification with it. Conversely, a lack of expected support from the work environment and insufficient job satisfaction might lead to emotional behaviors, fatigue, and dissatisfaction, ultimately resulting in alienation. The study focused on examining the relationships between perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and the alienation of academic staff in a state university in Turkey. The analysis included data from 269 academic staff members, revealing statistically significant findings: a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and alienation, and a negative relationship between job satisfaction and alienation.

In a similar study by Liu et al. (2022) [21] explored the association between work area and work alienation among grassroots judicial administrators. A stratified sampling method was used to collect data from 288 grassroots judicial administrators in Guangzhou (Hong kong) to measure the overall status quo and work alienation in this group. Findings point out that the grassroots judicial administrative team has a balanced structure, high professional quality, and rich grassroots work experience, but a high level of work intensity and a lack of autonomy when it comes to decision-making. The study equally indicated that work area is significantly related to work alienation when it comes to specific socio-demographic and work characteristic variables; the closer the work area is to the city center areas, the higher the level of work alienation. Education level also has a significant effect on work alienation: the lower the individual education level is, the stronger the work alienation. The study also denotes the knowledge needs in grassroots judicial administrative work and the importance of the external working environment, and further research implications are proposed.

The study of Ağalday (2022) [22] aimed to investigate the impact of alienation from the academic profession on organizational deviance, with a unique focus on the mediating role of job satisfaction. The study employed a quantitative correlational design that permitted the data collection from 257 academics in Turkey and its analysis using structural equation modelling. The findings revealed that alienation from the academic profession had both a direct and an indirect impact on organizational deviance. The research underscores the significance of alienation from the academic profession in understanding organizational deviance. Moreover, the study highlighted the direct influence of alienation from the academic profession on job satisfaction and the subsequent influence of job satisfaction on organizational deviance. Notably, according to the findings job satisfaction was identified as a mediating factor between alienation from the academic profession and organizational deviance. The implications suggest that efforts to prevent deviant behaviors among academics should include strategies to enhance job satisfaction by addressing perceptions of alienation.

It is worth noting that the studies we cite here in this section and that intersect with our research interest present a tiny part of a scarce portion of studies that focus on the work alienation of university professors since studies on alienation in higher education institutions mainly focalized on students' perceptions.

By and large, previous studies on work alienation regarding both private and public employees have focused only on the macro-level external environment, such as customers, public opinion, economic policies, and government regulations. Less attention has been given to research on the work alienation caused by the internal environment of the organization based on organizational structure, participation in decision-making, and incentives. Additionally, most of the current research on work alienation is oriented towards psychological explanations while ignoring sociological, organizational and regulatory features of the internal work environment.

3- The Empirical Field of Study

In this section, we will outline the empirical design of the study, which aims to test our hypotheses. This encompasses a comprehensive explanation of the procedures involved in both sampling and surveying our respondents. Additionally, we will engage in the analysis and subsequent discussion of the data collected during the course of our study.

A diagram of the research methodology used to achieve the research objectives is shown in Figure 1.

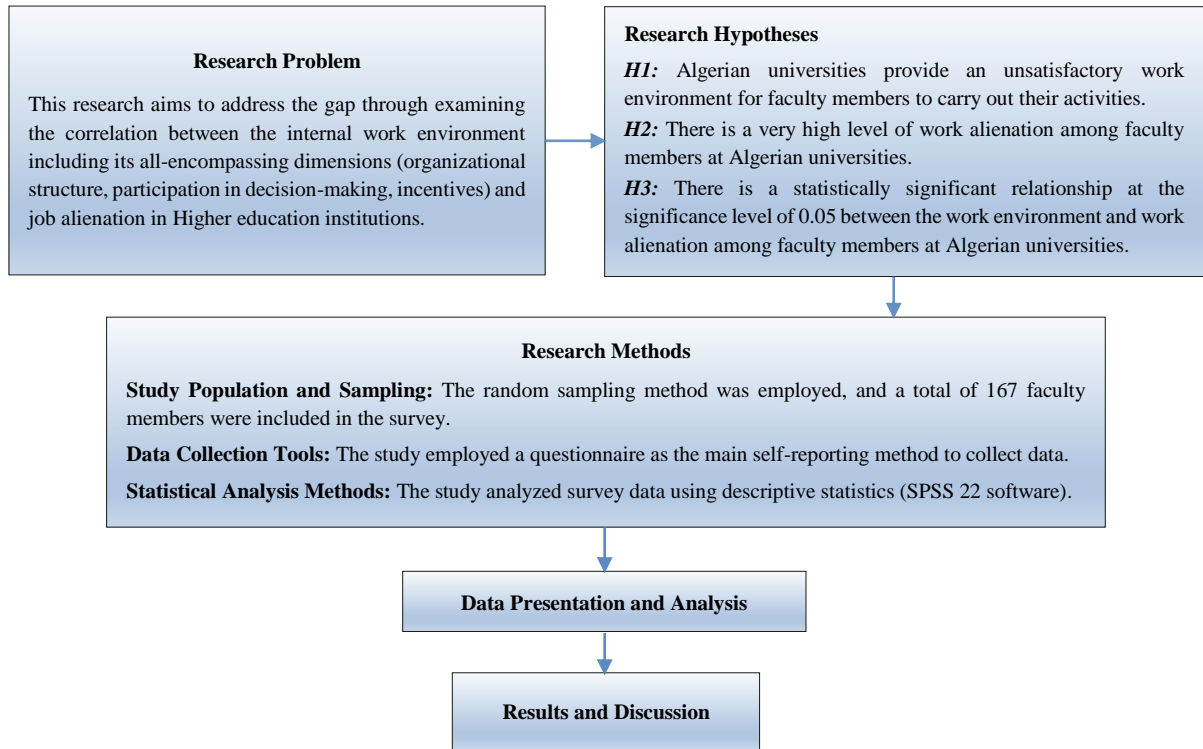


Figure 1. Flowchart of the research methodology

3-1- Research Hypotheses

The current study posits the following hypotheses:

H1: Algerian universities provide an unsatisfactory work environment for faculty members to carry out their activities.

H2: There is a very high level of work alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship at the significance level of 0.05 between the work environment and work alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

H3.1: There is a statistically significant relationship at the significance level of 0.05 between the organizational structure and alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

H3.2: There is a statistically significant relationship at the significance level of 0.05 between participation in decision-making and work alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

H3.3: There is a statistically significant relationship at the significance level of 0.05 between work systems and procedures and work alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

H3.4: There is a statistically significant relationship at the significance level of 0.05 between the incentive system and work alienation among faculty members at Algerian universities.

3-2- Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in the study is a descriptive approach invigorated by a sampling survey since this approach provides a structured and systematic way to gather meaningful insights while addressing practical and ethical considerations. This combination was chosen also due to its suitability for the investigation of representations, perceptions and assessments of work alienation among university professors, in addition to being a more resource-efficient approach to data collection.

3-3- Study Population

The study population consists of faculty members at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University in Jijel, distributed among different academic ranks including assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors.

3-4- Study Sampling

The study sample comprised faculty members across various academic ranks, encompassing assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. The random sampling method was employed, and a total of 167 individuals were included in the survey.

3-5-Data Collection Tools

The study employed a questionnaire as the main self-reporting method to collect statistical data from the population of the study. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 167 valid questionnaires were collected for analysis. The questionnaire comprised personal data and two main axes, totalling 60 items, distributed as follows:

Axis 1: Personal Data, which included (4) items.

Axis 2: Internal work environment, which included (23) items distributed across (4) dimensions as follows: organizational structure (5) items, participation in decision-making (4) items, work systems and procedures (9) items, and incentive system (5) items.

Axis 3: Work alienation, included (33) items, as indicated in the Table 1:

Table 1. Distribution of Items across Questionnaire Axes

Axes	Number of Items
Axis 1: Personal Data	04
Axis 2: Internal work environment	23
Axis 3: Work alienation	33
Total	60

3-6- Statistical Analysis Methods

To analyze the field data and test the hypotheses, various statistical measures were employed through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). These measures encompassed frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, Pearson correlation coefficient, and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient.

Furthermore, the Likert five-point scale was used to determine the nature of the relationship between the internal work environment and work alienation among faculty members at the university. The scale assigned a score of (5) for a "strongly agree" response, (4) for a "agree" response, (3) for a "neutral" response, (2) for a "disagree" response, and (1) for "strongly disagree" response. Thus, the following criterion was employed to determine the participants' attitudes: the range was calculated by subtracting the lowest possible value (1) from the highest possible value (5), resulting in a range of 4.

- If the mean score ranges from (8.0) to (8.1), the agreement is considered very weak.
- If the mean score ranges from (8.1) to (6.2), the agreement is considered weak.
- If the mean score ranges from (6.2) to (4.3), the agreement is considered moderate.
- If the mean score ranges from (4.3) to (2.4), the agreement is considered high.
- If the mean score ranges from (2.4) to (5), the agreement is considered very high.

3-7-Verification of Study Data Quality

To ensure the quality and suitability of the study data for statistical analysis, the following tests were conducted:

3-7-1- Construct Validity Test

This test involved calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between each item in the questionnaire and its corresponding dimension. The results are presented in the Table 2:

Table 2. Construct Validity Test Results

Variable	Item Number	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Organizational Structure	01	**0.925	0.000
	02	**0.765	0.000
	03	**0.885	0.000
	04	**0.810	0.000
	05	**0.676	0.000
Participative decision-making	06	**0.755	0.000
	07	**0.624	0.000
	08	**0.531	0.000
	09	**0.586	0.000

Work Systems and Procedures	10	**0.467	0.000
	11	**0.857	0.000
	12	**0.919	0.000
	13	**0.678	0.000
	14	**0.372	0.000
	15	**0.891	0.000
	16	**0.877	0.000
	17	**0.943	0.000
	18	**0.841	0.000
Incentive System	19	**0.924	0.000
	20	**0.912	0.000
	21	**0.924	0.000
	22	**0.720	0.000
	23	**0.741	0.000
Work Alienation	24	**0.841	0.000
	25	**0.809	0.000
	26	**0.765	0.000
	27	**0.873	0.000
	28	**0.640	0.000
	29	**0.801	0.000
	30	**0.684	0.000
	31	**0.655	0.000
	32	**0.646	0.000
	33	**0.789	0.000
	34	**0.718	0.000
	35	**0.839	0.000
	36	**0.595	0.000
	37	**0.825	0.000
	38	**0.671	0.000
	39	**0.679	0.000
	40	**0.393	0.000
	41	**0.596	0.000
	42	**0.864	0.000
	43	**0.849	0.000
	44	**0.657	0.000
	45	**0.761	0.000
	46	**0.725	0.000
	47	**0.655	0.000
	48	**0.792	0.000
	49	**0.888	0.000
	50	**0.821	0.000
	51	**0.881	0.000
	52	**0.709	0.000
	53	**0.774	0.000
	54	**0.680	0.000
	55	**0.842	0.000
	56	**0.844	0.000

** Statistically Significant at the 0.01 Significance Level.

Based on the statistical results presented in Table 2, it is evident that the tool possesses the ability to achieve the intended objectives of the study. This is indicated by the statistically significant correlation coefficients between each item and its corresponding overall dimension, with significance levels lower than 0.05. Furthermore, the statistical data reveals that all correlation coefficients are greater than 0.35, ranging from 0.372 to 0.943. This reflects a very high construct validity and reliability of the study tool.

3-7-2- Questionnaire Stability

To assess the stability of the study tool, the researchers relied on the *Cronbach's alpha coefficient*. The following table illustrates the stability coefficients for the questionnaire axes and the overall questionnaire stability (Table 3).

Table 3. Stability Coefficients for Questionnaire Axes and Overall Questionnaire Stability

Axes	Study tool Stability Test	Normality Distribution Test	
	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Asymmetry	Kurtosis
Second axis: Work Environment	0.920	0.767	0.304
Third axis: Work alienation	0.832	2.201	4.134
Dimensions	Organizational Structure	0.858	0.873
	Participative decision making	0.828	0.272
	Work Systems and Procedures	0.126	-0.488
	Incentive System	0.939	-0.635
	Overall Questionnaire	0.890	-

Considering the data presented in the table above, it is evident that Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicate the high overall stability of the tool, reflecting its ability to achieve the study's objectives.

3-7-3- Normality Distribution Test

The data provided in Table 3 indicate that the values of the kurtosis coefficient are less than 3 and the values of the skewness coefficient are less than 20. This suggests that the study variables follow a normal distribution.

3-8- Sample Characteristics

One of the important characteristics of the research sample is that it included faculty members from functional departments, including Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Full Professors representing both genders and various age groups. These individuals have diverse experiences and are expected to perform their assigned tasks.

4- Data Presentation, Analysis, and Results Discussion

4-1- Data Presentation and Analysis

- *Presentation, Analysis, and Testing of the Data for the First and Second Main Hypotheses Regarding the Respondents' Responses on the Questionnaire Axes (Internal Work Environment and Work Alienation) of the Study:*

This is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Statistical Description of Study Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level of Agreement	Ranking
Organizational Structure	1.457	0.530	Very Weak	02
Participative decision making	1.402	0.313	Very Weak	01
Work Systems and Procedures	1.678	0.473	Very Weak	04
Incentive System	1.659	0.392	Very Weak	03
Internal Work Environment	1.594	0.427	Very Weak	-
Work alienation	4.841	0.974	Very High	-

The statistical evidence in Table 4 above demonstrates that the standard deviation values are confined within the range of 0.313 to 0.974, which are values lower than one (1). These values indicate the absence of significant dispersion in the research variables concerning the study variables. Furthermore, the mean value of the internal work environment is 1.594, which belongs to the first range of the Likert five-point scale (ranging from 1 to 1.80). This outcome reflects the absence of a suitable work environment within the university institution from the perspective of faculty members carrying out their activities. This is substantiated by the arithmetic means of the dimensions of this axis, which are ranked as follows: participation in decision-making with an arithmetic mean of 1.402, organizational structure with 1.457, incentive system with 1.659, and work systems and procedures with an arithmetic mean of 1.678. Additionally, it is also observed that the arithmetic mean value for the work alienation axis among professors is 4.841, which belongs to the fifth range of the Likert five-point scale (ranging from 4.20 to 5.00). This indicates a very high level of work alienation among faculty members, according to their perspective.

From the above results, we can conclude that the first main hypothesis, which suggests the absence of a suitable work environment for faculty members to carry out their activities from their perspective within the university institution, has been validated. The same applies to the second main hypothesis, which indicates a very high level of work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university.

- ***Presentation and Analysis of General Hypothesis Three, States that There is a Statistically Significant Correlation between the Internal Work Environment and Work Alienation among Faculty Members at the University:***

The correlation relationship was verified by calculating the *Pearson correlation coefficient*, as shown in the following table (Table 5).

Table 5. The relationship between the internal work environment and work alienation

Range	Internal Work Environment	
Work alienation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	-0.628
	Significance Level (sig)	0.000

According to Table 5, the Pearson correlation coefficient value for the relationship between the internal work environment and work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university is ($r = -0.268$). Furthermore, the computed significance value is (0.000), which is lower than the significance level (0.05). This indicates the presence of a negative correlation relationship (correlation coefficient belonging to the range from -1 to 0) between the internal work environment and work alienation among faculty members at the university. Thus, it can be concluded that General Hypothesis Three is validated. This main hypothesis branches out into a set of sub-hypotheses, presented as follows:

- ***Presentation and Analysis of Data for the Sub-Hypotheses Derived from General Hypothesis Three, which States that There is a Statistically Significant Relationship, at a Significance Level Oof 0.05, between the Dimensions of the Internal Work Environment (Organizational Structure, Participative Decision Making, Work Systems And Procedures, Incentive System) and Work Alienation among Faculty Members***

To test the relationship between each dimension of the internal work environment (organizational structure, participative decision-making, work systems and procedures, incentive system) and work alienation among faculty members at the university, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed. The obtained results are presented in the following table (Table 6):

Table 6. The illustration of the relationship between the dimensions of the internal work environment and work alienation among faculty members

Work Alienation	Ranges (Internal Work Environment Dimensions)			
	Organizational Structure	Participative Decision Making	Work Systems and Procedures	Incentive System
Pearson correlation coefficient	-0.335**	-0.412**	-0.416**	-0.286**
Significance Level (Sig.)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Responses number N	167	167	167	167

- There is a correlation relationship between organizational structure and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University. It is evident from Table 6 that the Pearson correlation coefficient value for the relationship between the organizational structure dimension and work alienation is (-0.335**). Furthermore, the computed significance value is (0.000), which is lower than the significance level (0.05). This indicates a statistically significant negative correlation relationship between organizational structure and work alienation among faculty members at the university. Thus, we can conclude that Sub-Hypothesis One is validated.
- There is a correlation relationship between participative decision-making and work alienation among faculty members at Jijel University. It is evident from Table 6 that the Pearson correlation coefficient value for the relationship between participation in the decision-making dimension and work alienation is (-0.412**). Furthermore, the computed significance value is (0.000), which is lower than the significance level (0.05). This indicates a statistically significant negative correlation relationship between participation in decision-making and work alienation among faculty members at the university. Thus, we can conclude that Sub-Hypothesis Two is validated.
- There is a correlation relationship between work systems and procedures and work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university. It is evident from Table 6 that the Pearson correlation coefficient value for the relationship between the work systems and procedures dimension and work alienation is (-0.416**). Furthermore, the computed significance value is (0.000), which is lower than the significance level (0.05). This indicates a

statistically significant negative correlation relationship between work systems and procedures and work alienation among faculty members at the university. Thus, we can conclude that Sub-Hypothesis Three is validated.

- There is a correlation relationship between the incentive system and work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university. It is evident from Table 6 that the Pearson correlation coefficient value for the relationship between the incentive system dimension and work alienation is (-0.286**). Furthermore, the computed significance value is (0.000), which is lower than the significance level (0.05). This indicates a statistically significant negative correlation relationship between the incentive system and work alienation among faculty members at the university. Thus, we can conclude that Sub-Hypothesis Four is validated.

5- Results and Discussion

5-1-Interpretation and Discussion of the First Hypothesis

The Algerian university provides an unsuitable work environment for faculty members to carry out their activities from their perspective. To put it another way, faculty members in Algerian universities perceive the work environment as inadequate for the efficient execution of their activities. A finding that is not uncommon in the context of academic institutions worldwide, since many studies have reached similar findings, is the study of Susan et al. (2021) [23], as well as the study by Nasution et al. (2018) [24], which demonstrate that a positive work environment has a significant impact on employees' motivation, sense of belonging and work satisfaction and vice versa and the absence of sincere and honest work environment does lead to negative outcomes sensed by the university community. Conversely, several studies indicate that a poor work environment has a significant impact on the health of employees and can reduce feelings of excitement, enthusiasm, and progress at work [25]. This is consistent with the study by Abu Samra et al. (2014) [17], where a toxic work environment has a significant detrimental effect on employee motivation and participation. It discourages positive participation and behaviour from employees and poses a great risk to their mental, psychological, and physical health. Negative feelings spread among the workforce, hindering organizations from achieving their goals [26]. As a result, faculty members face real obstacles to reaching their full potential and capabilities.

5-2-Interpretation and Discussion of the Second Hypothesis

There is an extremely high level of work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university from the perspective of our respondents. This perception reflects a negative image of the university and its academic work environment among numerous faculty members. It suggests that the university has deviated from its traditional values, assigned functions, and ethical standards, potentially jeopardizing its standing in society. The erosion of a sense of belonging and loyalty among faculty members is a significant concern, as they are pivotal contributors to the university's components and essential elements responsible for its functions. This poses a threat to the university's identity and existence. These results align with the findings of studies carried out by Abu Samra et al. (2014) [17], Issa et al. (2023) [27], and Susan et al. (2021) [23]. Feelings of despair, loss of meaning in existence, and the widening gap between professors and the university community can only arise from unhealthy and unsound work environments.

Professors aspire to a prestigious position characterized by respect, appreciation, and recognition on both professional and societal levels, which has not been realized within the institution. The university's retreat from disseminating the desired values and standards has hindered dynamic and active interaction with the needs and requirements of faculty members, thereby impacting their personalities. The process has been limited to production and reproduction patterns, as researchers have confirmed that "to improve academic morale and motivation in universities, it is necessary to focus on improving the image of the work environment or climate for academics" [28, 29]. Without that, faculty members lack natural interaction and a healthy connection to the work environment.

5-3-Interpretation and Discussion of the First Sub-hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 significance level between organizational structure and alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university from their perspective. According to Burns & Stalker (1961) [29], the most effective organizational structure aligns with the organization's requirements and needs. The more the organizational structure of the organization tends towards complexity, centralization, and lack of flexibility, the more it opens the door to undesirable bureaucratic practices and creates obstacles to the flow and speed of information [24]. This aligns with the findings of the study conducted by Abu Saa & Abu Samra (2019) [19], where negative routine management increases the manifestations of faculty members' alienation. Similar studies indicate that workers who participate in decision-making face lower levels of alienation, as faculty members are more prone to expressing negative work attitudes when university structures hinder their participation in decision-making processes [30]. New developments in organizational and management theories call for reinforcing democratic management approaches to address task complexity, expanding responsibilities, and the inability to know everything at once and under any circumstances, thus enabling broader participation of various stakeholders. Organizations that strictly enforce rules and procedures exhibit a heightened level of work alienation [31, 32].

5-4- Interpretation and Discussion of the Second Sub-hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 significance level between participative decision-making and alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university from their perspective. Contemporary educational environments should foster a healthy work atmosphere and a culture of teamwork. The more an organization relies on centralization and reduces functional independence in decision-making, the more freedom to propose alternative options, and the higher the level of work alienation [25]. Additionally, Allen (2003) [33] and Follett (1969) [34] argued that workplace alienation can occur in environments where there is a lack of autonomy in task selection and deprivation of participative decision-making, leading employees to experience severe alienation. Similarly, Kanungo (1979) confirmed that organizations that deprive individuals of autonomy and promote job control values are more likely to exhibit alienation [35]. Reduced participative decision-making is cited as one of the causes of work alienation. Since, according to Wagner (2017) [36], participative decision-making is highly expected to allow individuals to share power with those hierarchically above them.

In general, practicing a participatory management style helps maintain a balance between supervisors and subordinates in daily tasks and function activities. Increased levels of participation can positively enhance the mental well-being of employees. Collaboration and mutual reliance are traits that strengthen feelings of enthusiasm and job satisfaction, thereby fostering positivity in the workplace [37]. Consequently, it has become common for leaders and managers to seek the perspectives of others before making decisions. Da'as (2021) [38] highlighted that participative decision-making stimulates activity, enhances motivation, and promotes feelings of satisfaction among stakeholders. As experienced faculty members, they are capable of identifying suitable opportunities for decision-making and finding ways to collaborate and choose feasible work methods. Contemporary organizational thinking encourages the principle of participatory decision-making and aims to expand its scope as much as possible. Administrative leadership should apply the principle of consultation, especially in decisions that affect participants or their work, as participative decision-making provides them with a positive sense of importance [16].

5-5- Interpretation and Discussion of the Third Sub-hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level of 0.05 between work systems and procedures and work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university from their perspective. Attention to the content and procedures of work is considered a key factor in creating harmony and coordination between faculty members and the components of the university family on both material and social levels. The university should develop objective and participatory standards to achieve transparency, symmetry, and unity of purpose instead of duplicity, ambiguity, and individualism. The complexities related to work procedures and bureaucratic constraints, as well as the traditional orientation in setting procedures, the absence of collective work and a collaborative approach to work systems, and the failure to update procedures in line with changes and work requirements, generate many negative feelings among faculty members and increase their sense of alienation. The university administrators should establish serious policies to analyze the content of policies and adopt procedures to identify shortcomings, contradictions, and potential gaps in the implemented procedures.

5-6- Interpretation and Discussion of the Fourth Sub-hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship at a significance level of 0.05 between the incentive system and work alienation among faculty members at the Algerian university from the respondents' perspective, a finding which is consistent with Abu Saa & Abu Samra (2019) [19] study. Numerous studies have equally reported that low wages and salaries received by employees lead to the prevalence of work alienation sensation accompanied by feelings of pessimism, isolation, and dissatisfaction. This significantly affects the overall performance of universities staff and professors [23, 33]. Not very far from this finding, studies by Mohseni Tabriz et al. (2015) [39] have confirmed that the incentive system is one of the most common and causative factors of work alienation. One of the main goals of work engagement is to meet individuals' material and psychological needs. If the income, benefits, and advantages received by individuals do not meet their needs, they will become frustrated in their work. Therefore, compensations and rewards are likely to have a positive and significant impact on work motivation and task execution. The importance of incentives lies in the employee's need for recognition and appreciation of their efforts. It is a crucial factor in satisfying the individual's internal desires. Successful organizations establish an active incentive system that positively influences employees, enabling them to achieve desired goals and overcome many work obstacles.

6- Conclusions and Implications

Based on the analysis of field evidence and subsequent result extraction, it has been concluded that there is a correlative relationship between the internal work environment and the feeling of work alienation among faculty members at the university in Algeria. The organizational structure, participative decision-making, work systems and procedures, as well as the incentive system, are significant factors that negatively influence their personalities, attitudes, values, and social and organizational relationships, thus fostering negative feelings and aspects of work alienation among them.

Drawing inspiration from the study's findings, the researchers propose several recommendations to enhance the work environment for faculty members in Algerian universities. Firstly, there is a suggestion to establish a stimulating work environment that encourages faculty members' engagement in various socio-academic and organizational activities. Additionally, the creation of a fair and effective incentive system, encompassing both material and moral aspects, is recommended to address the personal and social needs of faculty members. Furthermore, providing opportunities for faculty members to express their ideas and involving them in participative decision-making processes is advised. The introduction of a flexible organizational structure aligned with the aspirations of faculty members is also proposed. To foster a dynamic and interactive atmosphere, regular meetings among different stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and employees, are encouraged. These meetings can serve as platforms to address concerns, exchange ideas, and discuss work methods and content.

The study acknowledges certain limitations. Firstly, the data collection was confined to academics from a single university in Algeria. To enhance the generalizability of the research findings, it is recommended that similar studies be replicated at other universities across different regions of Algeria. Another limitation of this research lies in its exclusive focus on the relationship between the internal work environment and work alienation, specifically delving into organizational structure, participation in decision-making, and incentives. Future research endeavors may benefit from adopting novel approaches, considering the potential mediating role of variables like the external work environment. Additionally, it is essential to note that the present research concentrated exclusively on a public university setting. Consequently, the exploration of the correlation between the internal work environment and work alienation in private universities remains unexplored within the scope of this study. Future research endeavors are encouraged to address this gap by specifically investigating the impact of the internal work environment on work alienation in private higher educational institutions. Finally, this study is distinctly quantitative in its scope. To achieve a more holistic understanding of the correlation between work alienation and the internal work environment, researchers are encouraged to complement this quantitative focus with qualitative investigations.

7- Declarations

7-1-Author Contributions

Conceptualization, R.B., S.A., and Y.A.; methodology, A.M., R.B., Z.M., I.E.B., M.M., and M.M.; validation, A.M., S.A., R.B., Z.M., Y.A., M.M., and I.E.B.; formal analysis, Y.A., R.B., and A.M.; investigation, S.A., R.B., and Y.A.; data curation, R.B., Y.A., M.M., and I.E.B.; writing—original draft preparation, R.B., S.A., and M.M.; writing—review and editing, R.B., S.A., Z.M., A.M., I.E.B., and Y.A.; visualization, R.B., M.M., A.M., and I.E.B.; supervision, R.B., Y.A., A.M., I.E.B., Z.M., and M.M.; project administration, R.B., Y.A., and A.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

7-2-Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings and conclusions are available upon request from the author.

7-3-Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

7-4-Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable

7-5-Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

7-6-Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript. In addition, the ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancies have been completely observed by the authors.

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Appendix I: The Questionnaire

I -The First Axis: *Personal and Job Traits*

Gender: Male/ Female

Age:

Educational level: Magister /PhD Holder /Post-doc/Assistant professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor

Number of years of work: less than 5 years/ from 5 to less than 10 years.

From 10 years to less than 15 years/ From 15 to 20 years More than 20 years.

II -The Second Axis: *Work Environment*

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The First Dimension: Organizational Structure						
01	Specialization is taken into account when dividing work among professors.					
02	The rules related to work are clear to university faculty members.					
03	There is a specific written job description for all jobs and tasks					
04	Officials take into account the required qualifications when dividing work and tasks.					
05	The instructions issued by the director are understood and clear among the teaching staff.					
The Second Dimension: Participation in Decision-making						
06	The decisions that are made are made by appropriate relevant people.					
07	The decision is made based on appropriate information provided by the university institution.					
08	The institution delegates decision-making powers to subordinate faculty members.					
09	The director makes decisions in consultation with faculty members.					
The Third Dimension: Work Systems and Procedures						
10	Administrators apply laws fairly to all faculty members.					
11	Administrators show appreciation, respect and interest in the achievements of faculty members.					
12	My administrative supervisor authorizes me to complete my work requirements without obtaining approval on an ongoing basis.					
13	Administrators provide the opportunity for faculty members to make decisions regarding their work.					
14	The university institution is dominated by the spirit of one work team.					
15	Administrators understand unintended errors by faculty members if they occur.					
16	Faculty members express their opinions and suggestions with confidence and transparency.					
17	The institution gives faculty members opportunities to deliver information to senior leadership.					
18	There is freedom for faculty members to communicate with each other freely while working.					
The Fourth Dimension: The Incentive System						
19	The performance of faculty members is evaluated fairly.					
20	Faculty members who are negligent in their work are held accountable and held accountable without favour.					
21	21 The number of benefits I get is proportional to the amount of performance I provide.					
22	Officials provide moral incentives to distinguished employees according to their performance.					
23	Administrators raise the morale of faculty members.					