



RESEARCH PAPER

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Investigation of the effect of Islamic values, beliefs, and traditions on organizational agility in institutional offices of national Iranian South oilfields company

Ghanbar Amirnejad^{1*}, Elham Khosravi²

Department of Management, Shooshtar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shooshtar, Iran

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Abstract

Today, agility is considered as a paradigm which indicates the ability of corporations in implementation of competitive activities, a contest in which instability is the main index. In an agile organization which faces continuous environmental changes, capability and flexibility of labor force plays a significant role. One of the issues under consideration while moving toward organizational agility is how the human source is being managed and motivated. Islamic values, beliefs and traditions develop the competency of human resource in responding to the future needs of internal and external environment of an organization through determining and implementing a set of plans and programs. This research aims to investigate the effect of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions on organizational agility in institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company. The statistical population includes the personnel and managers of the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company (150 individuals), among whom 110 individuals were selected as the sample applying Krejcie and Morgan table. Data was collected through inventory and research variables were evaluated by SPSS.21. The results indicate that Islamic values, beliefs and traditions have a significant positive effect on organizational agility in institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

*Corresponding Author: Ghanbar Amirnejad ✉ g.amirnejad@yahoo.com

Introduction

Right now, organizational agility is considered as a necessary parameter for their maintenance and contests by many organizations as it enables the company to develop a set of different capabilities in order to be responsive to fast and continuous changes and utilize new opportunities (Voinin, 2011).

There is a significant positive relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility among the employees of the institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company. Therefore, the main research hypothesis has been confirmed. There is also a significant positive relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility in promptitude, competence, flexibility and responsiveness among the employees of the institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company. Thus all secondary hypotheses about the relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the variables of organizational agility have been confirmed as well.

In order to develop agility, organizations should identify the characteristics of agile individuals and design the activities of human resource through applying suitable human resource strategies completely and by part. Human resource activities play a significant role in developing and encouraging the characteristics of agile employees through a proper interaction. Along with other leverages that develop agility in the organization, agile employees would promote organizational agility as well (Hamidi *et al*, 2009). Human resource strategies are what the organization is tending to do about the different aspects of the actions and policies for human resource management (Arabi & Izadi, 2002). In line with this, Islamic values, beliefs and traditions have a serious and significant role in organizational agility.

In the competitive modern world in which everything is changing quickly, organizations have to think beyond adapting to these changes and try to utilize

potential opportunities. Agility is one of the paradigms issued in order to increase the flexibility, promptitude and quality. Organizational agility refers to the high compatibility needless to make changes. In fact, the organization is able to build a capacity in its operational structure and methods which make it flexible, changeable and compatible with the changing condition needless to make constant, compulsory and fundamental changes (Khorshid *et al*, 2010). In each organization, agility usually considers several main capabilities:

1. Responsiveness: the ability to recognize the changes, react quickly and utilize them
2. Competence: a wide range of abilities to optimize the activities in line with organizational objectives and purposes
3. Flexibility: the ability to process different products and services and meet various objectives with the same primary facilities
4. Promptitude: the ability to perform duties and operations at the possible time (Sharifi & Zhang, 1999; Tornglin *et al.*, 2005).

Considering their serious duty to train efficient and expert labor force, governmental administrations should also be agile to respond to the changes just like other organizations. They should be able to analyze their present and future situations in order to make in-time and accurate decisions for the ambiguous and unknown future. Agility is considered as a main competitive tool for all organizations in the indeterminate business environment which changes continuously. According to Worley & Lawler, 2010, agility is the ability to design a dynamic organization that can recognize the need to change internal and external resources, make such changes continuously and keep the performance higher than an average level (Worley & Lawler, 2010).

In addition to the market knowledge, agility can also be obtained through the knowledge of human behavior to understand the motivation of financiers, organization members and customers (Crocitto & Youssef, 2003). An agile organization can also develop methods to promote the values of human resource. These methods are applied in order to enable the employees to accept the required autonomy and responsibility, gather the required data volume, and make the necessary decisions for confronting many unpredictable conditions in a quick and effective way (voirin, 2011). Today, considering the studies performed on organizational agility, governmental administrations are not much aware of agile management processes. Having a large number of employees in their geographical district, governmental administrations have special considerations about Islamic values, beliefs and traditions. Therefore, the significant role of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions in legitimacy of agility in different divisions has to be considered in order to realize the objectives in this industry. As we know, an agile organization aims to satisfy the customers and employees (Nikpoor & Salageghe, 2010), and values, beliefs and traditions would pave the way for this satisfaction. Therefore, the main problem of this research is to find if Islamic values, beliefs and traditions affect organizational agility in institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company. The aim of this study is indicate that Islamic values, beliefs and traditions have a significant positive effect on organizational agility in institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Material and methods

Research history

In his research named “Effective Factors on the Agility of Maintenance Systems”, Aghayi (2011) recognizes human, strategic, technological and organizational parameters as the effective factors.

In their paper named “Investigation of the Role of Intra-organizational Parameters in Explaining a Model in

order to Change the Existing Organization into Agile Organizations in Electronic and Telecommunication Industries of Iran”, Jafarzade & Zarei (2005) investigated the role of organizational structure, leadership and culture and application of information technology, labor force quality and having scholar attitude, in organizational agility. They also studied the interaction between the foresaid parameters and the effect of each one other. Finally, they concluded that information technology affects agility indirectly.

In their paper named “Presenting a Structural Expository Model to Achieve Agility in Production Organizations through Information Technology”, Mohammadi & Amiri (2012) showed that the tendency and commitment of senior managers, organizational atmosphere, and coordination of strategic planning with information technology programs are among the parameters that affect agility through information technology.

In order to achieve a set of capabilities related to agility of labor force, Zahedi *et al.* (2013) framed a Five-aspect (sagacity and awareness, multiple competences, knowledge management, empowerment culture and information system) model according to the attitudes of experts and using the studies related to agility in their paper named “Investigation of the Aspects and Indicators of the Agility Capabilities of Labor Force”. Empowerment of human resource with these capabilities not only decreases the risk of organization while facing uncertainties, but also leads them toward agility.

In another paper named “Determination of the Level of Organizational Agility from the Viewpoint if the Staff (Case Study: Organization of Jihad-e-Agriculture, Shahrekord)” Mehrabi *et al.* (2013) concluded that the agility components are in an average level in: Organization of Jihad-e-Agriculture of Shahrekord. Participatory leadership and identity are the most important factors. Powerful strategy and compatible organizational design are the next most effective variables.

Research hypotheses

Main hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

First secondary hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the promptitude of staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Second secondary hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and competence of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

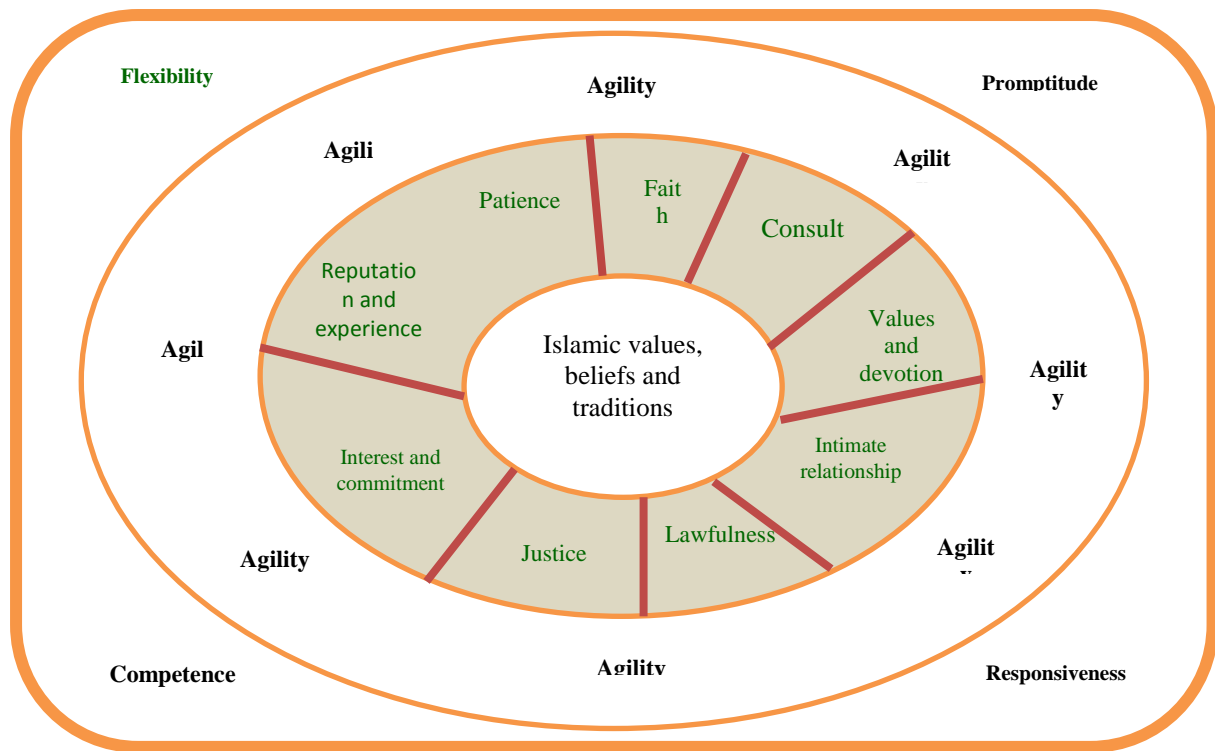
Third secondary hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and flexibility of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Fourth secondary hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and responsiveness of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Research method

In terms of the objective, this is an applied research. As to the data collection method, it applies a descriptive method of correlation type.

Research model



Data collection tool

Data were collected through a desk study, first hand and second hand references including books, papers, theses and web. A questionnaire was applied to collect data through the field study performed through cross sectional sampling. The questions are divided in two parts: general and professional questions. Demographic characteristics of the respondents such as gender, age, work experience, organizational

position, and academic certificate were included in general questions. Professional questions were provided in two questionnaires” Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and, organizational agility. The validity of questionnaire was confirmed through according to the attitudes of university professors and experts. The reliability obtained by Cronbach’s alpha was equal to 0.85 which is desirable.

Statistical population, sample and sampling method
 The statistical population includes 150 employees of institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company. Who has a diploma or higher academic certificate among whom, 110 individuals were selected using Krejcie and Morgan table and stratified random sampling method proportional to the sample size.

Information analysis

Data were analyzed in two descriptive (frequency, mean percentage, standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson correlation test, independent group t test, ANOVA, and LSD post hoc test) statistical level. In order to investigate the condition of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility in institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company, the professional questions of the questionnaire were analyzed through one-sample t-test. Pearson correlation test was applied in order to investigate the relationship between the components of research variables. Side-results were evaluated through t test with two independent samples, one way ANOVA and LSD post hoc test.

Result and discussion

Descriptive statistic

Distribution of employees by gender

Table 1. Distribution of employees by gender.

gender	frequency	percentage
female	32	29.1
male	78	70.9
total	110	100.0

According to the results in table 1, about 29.1% of the employees are female and about 70.9% of them are male.

Distribution of employees by age

Table 2. Distribution of employees by age.

Age (year)	frequency	percentage
26-30	23	30.0
31-35	23	20.9
36-40	23	20.9
41-45	20	18.2
46-50	7	10.0
total	110	100.0

According to the table 2, 26-30 age group has the most frequency among the employees (about 30%) while the least frequency was observed in 46-50 age group (about 10%).

Distribution of employees by academic degree

Table 3. Distribution of employees by academic degree.

Academic degree	frequency	percentage
Diploma	15	13.6
AA	32	29.1
Bachelor degree	47	42.7
Master or higher degrees	16	14.5
total	110	100.0

According to the table 3, employees with bachelor degree have the most frequency (about 42.7%), and the least frequency is at the group with diploma (about 13.6%).

Distribution of employees by the type of employment

Table 4. Distribution of employees by type of employment.

Employment type	frequency	percentage
official	88	80.0
contracted	22	20.0
total	110	100.0

According to table 4, about 80% of employees are employed officially and frequency of those employed through contract is about 20% of the sample size.

Distribution of employees by work experience

Table 5. Distribution of employees by work experience.

Work experience	frequency	percentage
6-10	38	34.5
11-15	27	24.5
16-20	18	16.4
21-25	20	18.2
More than 26 years	7	6.4
total	110	100.0

According to table 5, the most frequency belongs to the employees with 6 to 10 years of experience (about 34.5), and the least frequency (about 6.4) is at the group with a work experience more than 26 years.

Findings related to research hypotheses

Main hypothesis: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the

organizational agility in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Table 6. Correlation coefficients between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility among the employees.

Predictor variable	Statistical indicator		Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	Number of samples (n)
	Criterion variable				
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Organizational agility		0.74	0.0001	110

According to table 6, there is a significant relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company ($r=0.74$ & $P=0.0001$). Therefore, the main hypothesis is confirmed, in other words, promotion of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees of institutional offices of National Iranian South

Oilfields Company would increase their organizational agility.

Hypothesis 1-1: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the promptitude of staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Table 7. Correlation coefficients between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in promptitude of the staff.

Predictor variable	Statistical indicator		Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	Number of samples (n)
	Criterion variable				
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Organizational agility in promptitude		0.61	0.0001	110

According to table 7, there is a significant relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in promptitude of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company ($r=0.61$ & $P=0.0001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1-1 is confirmed, in other words, promotion of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees of institutional offices of

National Iranian South Oilfields Company would proportionally increase their organizational agility in promptitude.

Hypothesis 1-2: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and competence of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Table 8. Correlation coefficients between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and competence of the staff

Predictor variable	Statistical indicator		Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	Number of samples (n)
	Criterion variable				
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Organizational agility in competence		0.71	0.0001	110

According to table 8, there is a significant relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in competence of the staff in the

institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company ($r=0.71$ & $P=0.0001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1-2 is confirmed, in other words,

promotion of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees of institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company would increase their organizational agility in competence.

Hypothesis 1-3: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and flexibility of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Table 9. Correlation coefficients between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and flexibility of the staff.

Predictor variable	Statistical indicator		Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	Number of samples (n)
	Criterion variable				
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Organizational agility in flexibility		0.71	0.0001	110

According to table 9, there is a significant relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in flexibility of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company ($r=0.71$ & $P=0.0001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1-3 is confirmed, in other words, promotion of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees of institutional offices of

National Iranian South Oilfields Company would proportionally increase their organizational agility in flexibility.

Hypothesis 1-4: There is a relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and responsiveness of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company.

Table 10. Correlation coefficients between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and responsiveness of the staff.

Predictor variable	Statistical indicator		Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	Number of samples (n)
	Criterion variable				
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Organizational agility in responsiveness		0.72	0.0001	110

According to table 10, there is a significant relationship between Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and the organizational agility in responsiveness of the staff in the institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company ($r=0.72$ & $P=0.0001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1-4 is confirmed, in other words, promotion of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees of institutional offices of National Iranian South Oilfields Company would increase their organizational agility in responsiveness.

According to the findings in table 11, when it comes to Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and also organizational agility in promptitude and flexibility, there is no significant difference between male and female employees. In other words, male and female employees are almost the same in their Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and also organizational agility in promptitude and flexibility. But as to the organizational agility itself and in competence and responsiveness, there is a significant difference between male and female employees, in other words, considering the average values of the two groups, male employees have more organizational agility itself and in competence and responsiveness.

Independent group t-test for the comparison of average value of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility:

Table 11. The results of Independent group t-test for the comparison of average value of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility between male and female employees.

variable	group	number	average	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t	p
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Female employees	32	34.78	7.17	108	1.21	0.227
	Male employees	78	36.36	5.66			
Organizational agility	Female employees	32	63.50	11.87	108	-2.20	0.029
	Male employees	78	69.03	11.93			
Organizational agility in promptitude	Female employees	32	16.59	2.36	108	-1.69	0.094
	Male employees	78	17.56	2.78			
Organizational agility in competence	Female employees	32	15.97	3.42	108	-2.35	0.020
	Male employees	78	17.50	2.96			
Organizational agility in flexibility	Female employees	32	15.78	3.48	108	-1.53	0.128
	Male employees	78	16.91	3.50			
Organizational agility in responsiveness	Female employees	32	15.16	3.63	108	-2.64	0.009
	Male employees	78	17.05	3.31			

Table 12. The results of Independent group t-test for the comparison of average value of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility between official and contracted employees.

variable	group	number	average	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t	p
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	Official employees	88	37.34	4.54	108	5.59	0.001
	Contracted employees	22	30.09	8.14			
Organizational agility	Official employees	88	69.92	11.24	108	4.73	0.0001
	Contracted employees	22	57.41	10.43			
Organizational agility in promptitude	Official employees	88	17.73	2.60	108	3.56	0.001
	Contracted employees	22	15.50	2.68			
Organizational agility in competence	Official employees	88	17.70	2.87	108	4.70	0.0001
	Contracted employees	22	14.45	2.97			
Organizational agility in flexibility	Official employees	88	3.36	17.22	108	4.02	0.0001
	Contracted employees	22	3.04	14.05			
Organizational agility in responsiveness	Official employees	88	3.18	17.27	108	5.13	0.0001
	Contracted employees	22	3.03	13.41			

As it is observed in table 12, there is a significant difference between the attitude of official and contracted employees toward Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and also their organizational agility in promptitude, flexibility, competence and responsiveness. In other words, considering the average values of the two groups, have more Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and higher organizational agility in promptitude, flexibility, competence and responsiveness.

According to table 13, there is a significant difference between the attitude of employees with different academic level toward Islamic values, beliefs and

traditions, and organizational agility (and its all components). The significance of the ANOVA doesn't specify which groups are different. Therefore this analysis was followed by Scheffe post hoc test. The results are illustrated in the table below.

According to table 14, when it comes to Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with diploma and those who have bachelor and master degrees. In other words, considering the average scores, employees with diploma have less Islamic values, beliefs and traditions compared to those who have bachelor and master degrees. Further education

might have a role in this difference. No significant difference was observed between other items.

Table 13. The results of one-way ANOVA for comparison of the average values of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility among the employees with different academic level.

variables	Total sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average square	F	p
Islamic values, beliefs and traditions	569.04	3	189.68	5.66	0.001
Organizational agility	2592.73	3	864.24	6.81	0.0001
Organizational agility in promptitude	125.09	3	41.69	6.26	0.001
Organizational agility in competence	175.53	3	58.51	6.77	0.0001
Organizational agility in flexibility	180.51	3	60.17	5.43	0.002
Organizational agility in responsiveness	190.08	3	63.36	5.85	0.001

Table 14. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of Islamic values, beliefs and traditions among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	31.07			* p=0.035	* p=0.001
2 AA	35.88				
3 Bachelor	36.19				
4 Master	39.56				

Table 15. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of organizational agility among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	59.02				* p=0.001
2 AA	65.19				* p=0.014
3 Bachelor	68.40				
4 Master	76.69				

As it is observed in table 15, when it comes to organizational agility, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with diploma and AA degree and those who have master degree. In other words, considering the average scores,

employees with master degree have higher organizational agility compared to those who have diploma and AA degrees. Further education might have a role in this difference. No significant difference was observed between other items.

Table 16. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of organizational agility in promptitude among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	15.20			* p=0.001	* p=0.019
2 AA	16.84				
3 Bachelor	17.66				
4 Master	19.00				

As it is observed in table16, when it comes to organizational agility in promptitude, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with diploma and those who have bachelor and master degrees. In other words, considering the average scores, employees with diploma have less

organizational agility in promptitude compared to those who have bachelor and master degrees. No significant difference was observed between other items.

Table 17. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of organizational agility in competence among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	14.87				* p=0.0001
2 AA	16.75				* p=0.025
3 Bachelor	17.11				* p=0.045
4 Master	19.56				

As it is observed in table17, when it comes to organizational agility in competence, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with master degree and those who have diploma, AA and bachelor degrees. In other words,

considering the average scores, employees with master degree have higher organizational agility in competence compared to those who have diploma, AA and bachelor degrees. No significant difference was observed between other items.

Table 18. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of organizational agility in flexibility among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	14.33				* p=0.004
2 AA	15.88				* p=0.045
3 Bachelor	17.02				
4 Master	18.81				

As it is observed in table 18, when it comes to organizational agility in flexibility, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with diploma and AA degree and those who have master degree. In other words, considering

the average scores, employees with master degree have higher organizational agility in flexibility compared to those who have diploma and AA degrees. No significant difference was observed between other items.

Table 19. The results of Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average score of organizational agility in responsiveness among the employees with different academic level.

groups	Average score	1	2	3	4
1 Diploma	14.80				* p=0.003
2 AA	15.72				* p=0.007
3 Bachelor	16.62				
4 Master	19.31				

As it is observed in table 18, when it comes to organizational agility in responsiveness, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of employees with diploma and AA degree and those who have master degree. In other words, considering the average scores, employees with master degree have higher organizational agility in responsiveness compared to those who have diploma and AA degrees. No significant difference was observed between other items. According to Scheffe post hoc test, when it comes to Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, there is a significant difference between the attitudes of

employees with diploma and those with bachelor and master degrees.

The results of one way ANOVA and Scheffe post hoc test for comparison of the average scores of organizational agility among the staff indicated that employees with master degree have higher organizational agility compared to those who have diploma and AA degree. Considering the average scores, the organizational agility of the employees with diploma in promptitude is lower than those who have bachelor and master degrees. Employees with master degree have higher organizational agility in

competence compared to those who have diploma, AA and bachelor degrees. Compared to employees with diploma and AA degree, those who have master degree, have higher organizational agility in flexibility as well. The employees with master degree have higher organizational agility in responsiveness than those with diploma and AA degree.

Conclusion

Based on the independent group t test, there is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female employees toward Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility in promptitude and flexibility. In other words, male and female employees are almost the same in their Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and also organizational agility itself and in promptitude and flexibility. But as to the organizational agility itself and in competence and responsiveness, there is a significant difference between male and female employees, in other words, considering the average values of the two groups, male employees have more organizational agility itself and in competence and responsiveness. There is also a significant difference between the attitude of official and contracted employees toward Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and also their organizational agility itself and in promptitude, flexibility, competence and responsiveness. In other words, considering the average values of the two groups, have more Islamic values, beliefs and traditions and higher organizational agility itself and in promptitude, flexibility, competence and responsiveness. A significant difference was also observed between the attitudes of employees with different academic degrees toward Islamic values, beliefs and traditions, and organizational agility (and its all components).

Suggestions

Considering the results achieved through this research, some suggestions are presented below:

1. Implementation of the model of governmental organizations and other related companies, with the

help and support of the top-level management and other responsible individuals

2. Training individuals and promoting their culture of the significance of agility in institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company and agility of processes

3. Fixing the existing weak points of organizational agility in institutional offices of the National Iranian South Oilfields Company and promotion of the strong points within a specific schedule.

4. Determining the responsibilities of each organization and individual involved in organizational agility in governmental organizations

5. Designing a punishment and reward system in order to pave the way for implementation of agility model in governmental organization.

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