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## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES IN 22 MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS OF TEHRAN

H. Azimian<sup>1</sup>, M. Jafari<sup>2\*</sup> and Z.A. Sabegh<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of management, faculty of governmental management-Human Resources, Saveh branch, Islamic Azad University, Saveh, Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Science, Faculty of Social Science, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.(corresponding author)

<sup>3</sup>Department of management, faculty of Executive Management, Saveh branch, Islamic Azad university, saveh, Iran.

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to investigate a relationship between organizational agility and organizational health of employees in 22 municipal districts of Tehran. It is an applied research in terms of purpose of study and it is a descriptive – correlation study in terms of methodology. In order to collect data, an author made questionnaire for organizational agility by Nikpoor and Salajeghe and organizational health questionnaire by Hoy and Feldman were used. Collected data were analyzed using statistical tests in SPSS software such as regression analysis and correlation. Research findings showed there is positive significant relationship between organizational health and organizational agility. There is positive significant relationship between all aspects of organizational health and organizational agility. Results showed making organizations as agile is an effective factor in creating healthy organization and it is necessary that managers of the organizations take it into account and take effective steps in this regards by paying attention to factors affecting agility and its implementation in organizations.*

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**Key words:** Organizational agility, organizational health, municipality, employees.

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### Introduction

In today's competitive world, in which change is one of its major features, it is necessary that organizations seek for developing and crating capabilities in order to produce various types of products and provide diversified services considering changing needs and expectations of the customers so that they can remain and survive, and at the same time, they can improve quality and create innovation in their products and services in shortest time and least cost. In fact, it can be stated only organizations can survive in competitive markets which achieve such capabilities. One of these capabilities in responding environmental changes is organizational agility (Heydari et al., 2013).

Innovation and creativity highly tend to knowledge, expertise, and commitment of employees as key inputs in value creation process, while organizations with higher

innovation act more successful in responding environmental changes as well as developing new capabilities which help them to achieve higher performance. On the other hand, knowledge -based attitude conceptualize organizations as sources of knowledge and competency. Organizational agility theory facilitates knowledge application and development based on organizational view and integrated knowledge management. Today competition is recognized for agility of the organization and improvement of service quality as a strategic issue for the organizations which are active in service sector. Organizations which achieve higher level of service quality will have higher levels of customer satisfaction as an introduction for achievingsustainable competitive advantage (Pashazadeh and Gohari, 2012, quoted in Ghanbari et al., 2014).

The term of agility means rapid, agile, and active movement, and ability for quick and easy movement and ability to have quick thinking with an intelligent approach (Hornby, 2000, quoted in Bagherzadeh and Dibavar, 2010). However, in the current space, agility means effective reaction to varying and unpredicted environment and using these changes as opportunities for organizational development. Maslell (2001) defines agility as ability for nourishment and prosperity in the environment with ongoing and unpredictable changes. Thus, organizations should not have fear of their working environment changes and they should not avoid them, rather they should consider changes as opportunity for achieving competitive advantages in the market environment (Bagherzadeh and Dibavar, 2010).

Administrative system of every society is regarded as executive arm of the society's political system and its proper or improper performance can survive the political system or delegitimize it. Hence, fundamental attention to administrative system of the society and accurate pathology of it may considerably help the policy makers of the society so that they can provide necessary solutions by due recognition (Pope, 2000, quoted in Ghahremani and Heydari, 2013).

Considering importance of healthy administrative system and its effects in national development, health of administrative system is considered as one of the major elements of the sustainable development establishment, requirement of which is paying attention to the knowledge, culture, and experience of the managers and employees of the organizations. It should be noted that organizations with healthy administrative system are able to have proper and timely decision making (Ghahremani and Heydari, 2013).

Cities are regarded as important part of the sustainability spatial outlook and development occurs in the context of the

cities, thus they can be considered as the main ground for sustainable development.

Effective urban management for such city as Tehran, with extensive system composed of effective formal and informal elements in various social, economic, and structural areas aiming at sustainable and perfect directing, controlling, management and development, has characteristics which reflect an open complicated social – human system which confronts various elements and relationships. Data of this system is expectations and demands of the citizens and customers (including government, legal communities, employees, and other organizations) and its outputs include development of quality and quantity of urban life and it has organizational multi-process nature in performance (Abtahi et al., 2012).

Organizations should think beyond compatibility to changes and they should seek for utilizing potential opportunities. Undoubtedly “proper performing the work” and “performing proper work” are expected from the organization which is equipped with suitable systems and policies in administrative health area. Also, creating and continuity of such characteristics as planning, citizenship-orientation, change-orientation, and productivity is not possible without having lively and “healthy” organization.

Over recent years, the main and major concern of the managers in Tehran municipality is administrative health and its promotion as much as possible in order to achieve determined macro goals.

Organizational growth, productivity and coherence are possible only in healthy administrative environment. Thus, evolutionary actions without considering administrative health area in organizations would not result in expected results and their outcomes would lose their effectiveness quickly. In addition, emphasis on and management dimensions in administrative health issue can provide

novel and effective attitude, policies and tools for promoting administrative health in affairs of Tehran municipality districts (Abaszadeh, 2006).

Healthy organization is one which is able to achieve its human goals and intentions for its survival, it is able to identify obstacles for achieving its goals, and eliminate them. Healthy organization is one which is realistic about itself and its situation, it is flexible, and it is able to utilize its best resources for confronting any problem (Abaspour, 2005).

Hoyand Feldman (1996) introduced dimensions of organizational health or collection of organizational characteristics and variables within seven dimensions: scientific emphasis, spirit, resource support, structuring, consideration, influence of manager, and institutional unity (Nazem and Karimzadeh, 2010).

Hence, considering above mentioned materials, current research aims at investigating relationship between organizational agility and its role in promoting administrative health in Tehran municipality districts so that small but effective step is taken for promoting service quality in Tehran municipality districts.

### Research Methodology

Current research is an applied research in terms of purpose and it is a descriptive correlation study in terms of data collection and methodology. Research statistical population includes all employees in Tehran municipality districts ( $n = 19,367$ ). Using Krejcie and Morgan Table, sample size was estimated as 377. Multistage sampling method was used for sampling. Firstly, cluster sampling method was applied. That is, municipality districts under study including 22 districts were considered as clusters. Then, samples were selected from each district or cluster using stratified sampling method and questionnaires were distributed among samples.

Tools used for data collection in this research included questionnaire proposed by Hoy and Feldman (1996) with six dimensions for measurement of administrative health and an author made questionnaire for measuring organizational agility. Regarding organizational health questionnaire, which was also used in work by Nazem (2010), its content validity was reinvestigated through expert ideas and its reliability was obtained as 0.908 using Cronbach alpha.

It should be noted data obtained from the research were analyzed using SPSS software. Results of the research were provided using descriptive statistics including mean, medium, SD as well as inferential statistics such as correlation and regression analysis.

### Findings

In order to investigate and test research hypotheses, firstly normality of collected data was tested using Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, results of which showed collected data are normal (Table 1).

As results of statistical test showed, 14 ones (3.7%) of employees had low level of organizational agility, 117 ones (31.2%) has average level of organizational agility and 246 ones (65.1%) had high level of organizational agility.

Also, results of statistical tests showed 28 ones (7.5%) of employees had low level speed, 163 ones (43.125%) had average level of speed, and 186 ones (49.375%) had high level of speed.

Table 2 gives status of organizational agility and organizational health of employees in 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.

Results of correlation and regression analysis between organizational agility and organizational health and seven dimensions showed there is positive significant relationship between organizational health and organizational agility at significance level 0.01, i.e. at confidence level 99 percent (Table 3 and 4).

Table 1: Results of investigating normality of collected data

Main Factors	Variables & their constituents	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistics
Organizational Health	Decision making by employees at all levels	1.357
	Internal ethics of employees	3.746
	Having good working environment sense	1.567
	Division of resource & facilities and compatibility to expectations	2.348
	Employee participation & goal setting	2.488
Organizational Agility	Ongoing training & improvement of existing labor force	1.295
	Responding to customers & service takers	2.271
	Readiness for dealing with problems & changes	1.486
	Paying attention to skills & knowledge	2.113
	Working in virtual manner	1.291

Table 2: Status of organizational agility and organizational health of employees in 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran

Variable	Mean	Medium	Mode	Max.	Min.	No answer	No.
Organizational agility	3.75	4	4	5	1	1	377
Organizational health	3.59	3.5	4	5	1	2	377

Table 3: Correlation between organizational agility and organizational health

Correlation Coefficient	Organizational health		
	N	R	P
Organizational agility	377	0.41	0.000

Table 4: Correlation and significance level between organizational agility and nonstudents of organizational health

Dimensions of organizational health	Scientific emphasis	Spirit	Resource support	Structuring	Consideration	Institutional unity	Influence of manager
Statistical index	r = 0.38 p = 0.001	r = 0.12 p = 0.001	r = 0.33 p = 0.000	r = 0.16 p = 0.001	r = 0.29 p = 0.002	r = 0.11 p = 0.000	r = 0.29 p = 0.000

Summary of research findings are as follows:

- There is positive significant relationship between organizational health and

organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.

- There is positive significant relationship between scientific emphasis and

organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.

- There is positive significant relationship between spirit and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.
- There is positive significant relationship between resource support and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.
- There is positive significant relationship between structuring and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.
- There is positive significant relationship between consideration and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.
- There is positive significant relationship between institutional unity and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.
- There is positive significant relationship between influence of manager and organizational agility in employees of 22 Municipal Districts of Tehran.

### Discussion

One of the main research findings is that there is positive significant effect of organizational health on organizational agility. Findings of the research in this regard are consistent with findings by Dries (2012), Jackson (2003), Savari et al. (2013), Pei- Huang et al. (2012), Arteta and Giachetti (2004), Nikpoor and Salajeghe (2012), Jelodar (2011), and Abesi et al. (2013).

In other words, in the organization in which professionalization of employees and increasing experience and skill of employees is on the top priority of the organizational plans, the organizational environment is safe and secure environment and employees feel trust and confidence, suitable tools and equipment are provided for the employees, macro general goals of the organization and operational goals for realization of macro goals are specified,

informal structures are strengthened and emphasis is put in leadership role of the organizational manager and organization is in communication and interaction with the environment and it has power of compatibility to the environment, i.e. if there is organizational health in the organization, then organization moves toward agility. In other words, in such organizations, there is higher compatibility and flexibly to the varying and instable external environment, creativity of employees is increased, flexibility of the organization is increased in dealing with any change, and organization reacts quickly in achieving goals, determining policies, changing policies and it can better achieve its goals.

Also, research findings showed there is positive significant relationship between scientific emphasis in the organization (as one of the organizational health components) and organizational agility. Considering scientific emphasis is applied on the increased level of expertise and technical skills of the employees, and increasing level of expertise and technical skills and technical knowledge of human resource is one of the constituents of knowledge management, thus it can be stated findings in the current research are consistent with findings by Ghanbari et al. (2014) and Fatah Nazem et al. (2010). It can be concluded the higher is the knowledge level of human resource and the skills and expertise of employees is more improved, then flexibility and compatibility with the organizational environment is increased and the organization will be more accountable and flexible and compatible.

The other finding in the current research is positive significant relationship between influence of manager (one of organizational health components) and organizational agility. In other words, there is positive relationship between manager's ability to influence the subordinates and encouraging others and subordinates and organizational agility. That is, in the organizations where

the managers mostly lead rather than manage and encourage and motivate employees toward organizational goals and create self-motivation in employees and love and attachment to the organization, the organization will be agile. In other words, it will be quicker in reaction, accountability, and flexibility against internal and external changes. This finding is consistent with findings by Sharhi and Karuski (2014) and ZahedBabolan et al. (2008).

### Conclusion

As observed in research findings, there is positive significant relationship between organizational health and organizational agility. That is, the higher and better are constituents of organizational health, the ability for identifying changes, rapid reaction and utilization of the changes is increased, organizations will have the ability to achieve long term goals. Such organizations are more flexible and they can achieve their goals better and quicker using identical facilities, and they perform their activities in shortest time. In other words,

these organizations create value for the customers and they are totally ready for dealing with changes and they consider high value for human resource skills and knowledge. Thus, it is necessary to put emphasis on increasing staff knowledge and skills, uplifting and motivating employees, encouraging employees to work and creating interest and attachment in the organization and self-motivation in organizations, capacity making to adapt to change and growing forward with changes, staff support and trust, creating sympathy and confidence of the employees by managers in order to develop novel changes in the organizations and improve organizational agility. These factors are constituent factors of organizational health and it can be hoped they increase accountability and power of change and compatibility to environmental conditions in the organization and organizations are matched to the present day's expectations and conditions and organizational agility is realized.

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