

THE EFFECT OF FLEXIBILITY ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIVATE BANKS OF ABADAN

Shahin Abbasi¹, Qanbar Amirnejad^{2*}

¹Department of Management, Persian Gulf International Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khorramshahr, IRAN

²Department of Management, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, IRAN

ABSTRACT

Flexibility was introduced and emphasized as an organizational capability. Companies are able to improve performance through flexibility and in today's competitive and dynamic business environment. This study is conducted with the aim to examine the impact of flexibility on organizational performance private banks of Abadan city. The population of the This study is composed of 9 banks (Saman Bank, Shahr Bank, Pasargad Bank, KarAfarinBank, Pasrian Bank, Ayande Bank, EghtesadeNovin Bank, Ghavamin Bank, Sinai Bank). the method of current research is considered descriptive based on objective, functional and in terms of data collection method and is considered experimental research based on the relationship between research variables and is specifically based on structural equation modeling. Two questionnaires (flexibility and Organizational Performance) is used for measuring research variables and PLS and SPSS.18 software are applied for statistical analysis. The results of analysis of questionnaires indicated that the flexibility and (its dimensions) have positive and significant impact on organizational performance.

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KEY WORDS

Flexibility, organizational performance, private banks of Abadan City.

*Corresponding author: Email: g.amirnejad@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

Rapid and unpredictable changes are of the main features of today's competitive environment. So managers in addition to focus on activities within the organization, should pay greater attention to the rapidly changing environment that surrounds the organization And it would have forced organizations to become more agile, flexible structures So that they can rapidly respond to new market opportunity with minimal investment and risk. What can be confirmed in the initial of the third millennium is that, as time passes, methods of administration and management of manufacturing organizations is less similar to the previous time and environmental requirements of enterprise dictates the necessity to apply new models, approaches and tools to the organization for success and survival. Company executives are aware of the benefits of flexibility, but unfortunately, little theoretical frameworks and models exist to help managers understand and identify the different types of flexibility and the creation and maintenance flexible organizations. Rapidly evolving and competitive market environment imposed additional pressure on organizations for quick adaptation and results in changes in higher levels. The challenge for organizations to create flexible structures and create flexibility in the current changing world, is more than ever before. Business must be flexible enough to manage unpredictable threats and available opportunities in uncertain future and unstable environment. So banks to be able to adapt to the changing needs of the market and customers, should have flexible structure. This research is important and necessary to understand and identify flexibility; flexible structures and dimensions include flexibility and by understanding them, create a way towards exploiting the opportunities. Rapid changes and dynamics of competitive markets make access to felexibility¹ more necessary than before. Flexibility is not a voluntary and spontaneous phenomenon, but organizations should identify factors affecting the flexibility to create them [1]. In the today worlds the change is rapid and successful flexibility is an important integral of success in current era. Rapidly evolving and competitive market environment imposed additional pressure on organizations for quick adaptation and results in changes in higher levels. The challenge for organizations to create flexible structures and create flexibility in the current changing world, is more than ever before. Business must be flexible enough to manage unpredictable threats and available opportunities in uncertain

future and unstable environment. Usually, flexibility and inflexibility are mixed and the thing that is emerging is a new alternative for simple trends towards more flexibility [2]. Thus, the flexibility to fit the turbulent business environment in order to maintain a competitive advantage is one of the main challenges today's managers are facing. Organizational flexibility with regard to resources and management abilities allows organizations to match themselves with environment in environmental changes. Flexibility is considered as a good act, although it is not an absolute good. [3] believed that an organization can respond better to change if get more flexible.

Generally, flexibility can be considered as an indicator of the link between the system and its external environment to attract uncertainties, the dynamics of the system as well as the ability to change and adapt [4]. On the other hand, one of the arguments about the organizational flexibility is its role in the success of organizations. In the past two decades, flexibility increasingly stressed as an organizational capability that enables companies to gain competitive advantage and maintain it and improve performance in today's dynamic and competitive business environment [5]. According to the results of [5] studies Five determinant of organizational flexibility as a set of organizational and managerial capabilities have been identified based of which, some companies are able to adapt themselves with the changes of an environment of intense competition that includes: 1- index of management team 2- Template decision 3- Organizational Culture 4- Understanding the environment and 5- organizational identity.

Thus, given theoretical nature of the research, we seek to study the effect of flexibility Retrieved from [5] model to Organizational Performance. So the main question of this research is that: How does flexibility impact on organizational performance?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Theoretical framework of the research

In this part of the article, we outline the literature of the subject and background of the research regarding to organizational flexibility and organizational performance.

Flexibility

The literature of the management subject indicates that flexibility is considered as a good act although it is not an obsolete good. [6] believed that if an organization becomes more flexible, it can respond better to change. One of the reasons that make defining flexibility difficult is that the definitions are often changeable due to special management circumstances or issues. Generally, flexibility can be considered as an indicator of the link between the system and its external environment to attract uncertainties, the dynamics of the system as well as the ability to change and adapt. Flexibility is considered as a key element for sustainable activities [6]. On the other hand, one of the arguments about the organizational flexibility is its role in the success of organizations. In the past two decades, flexibility increasingly stressed as an organizational capability that enables companies to gain competitive advantage and maintain it and improve performance in today's dynamic and competitive business environment. Company executives are aware of the benefits of flexible but unfortunately, little theoretical frameworks and patterns exist to help managers understand and identify the different types of flexibility and the creation and maintenance of flexible organizations. While today flexibility is a criteria for evaluation and assessment of performance in most organizations [7] research introduced Five determinant of organizational flexibility as a set of organizational and managerial capabilities of which , some companies are able to adapt themselves with the changes of an environment of intense competition that includes: 1- index of management team 2- Template decision 3- Organizational Culture 4- Understanding the environment and 5- organizational identity.

- Index Management Team
Management refers to the people who set the company's orientation. In companies with high flexibility, the lack of homogeneity among the top management is more visible. But in inflexible companies more homogeneity is seen among the managers.
- Template decision
Refers to the concentration of decision-making at lower levels of the organization, Whether decision-making is done centralized or decentralized.
- Organizational Culture
Refers to the extent in which an organization stands on industrial macro culture and also shows how quickly an organization can adapt new strategies.
- understanding the environment
Administrators can understand the environments, events and movements through survey and overcome them.
- Organizational identity
Because of the key role of core values in the concept of corporate identity, Impact of core values on organizational flexibility is studied. Strong identity causes companies to be flexible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Organizational performance

Today's world, especially the world of organizations, is changing dramatically and constantly and all aspects of the organization of the internal environment to the external environment, of human to non-human factors and etc. all are changing from one state to another with stunning acceleration. Performance is one of the most important structures which is discussed in management research and without doubt is considered as the most important measure of success in commercial companies[8]. Performance is a broad concept which covers what a company produces as well as areas they interact [9].

In most organizations around the world, managers and corporate leaders always are seeking to improve performance of their organizations. Performance of the organization is a wide combination of intangible achievements as well as increasing organizational knowledge and concrete and tangible achievements like Economic and Financial Results[10]. Performance literally means the state or the quality of work, so organizational performance is a general structure which refers to how an organization operates[11]. The Most popular definition of performance is offered by [11] as "the process of determining effectiveness and efficiency of past action. According to this definition, performance is divided to two parts: efficiency which describes the manner an organization uses resources in the production of services or products; it means the relationship between the real and the ideal combination of inputs for manufacturing specific outputs and 2- Effectiveness which describes the degree of achievement of organizational goals.

Research model and hypotheses

Figure-1 show a conceptual model which is proposed based on theoretical foundations. This model indicates the effect of flexibility on organizational performance based on [12]modelFigure- 1.

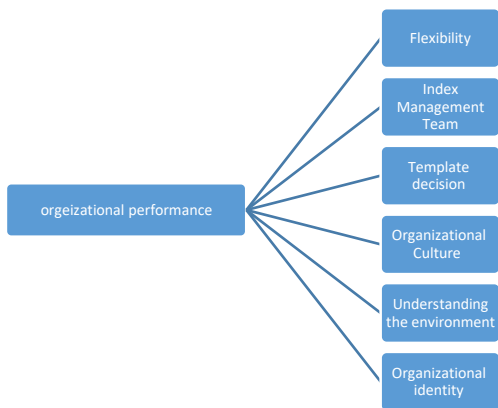


Fig: 1. Conceptual model of research (researcher- made)

Research Hypotheses

The main hypotheses: flexibility has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Sub-Hypotheses:

Sub-Hypotheses 1- index management team has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Sub-Hypotheses 2- template decision has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Sub-Hypotheses 3- organizational culture has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Sub-Hypotheses 4- understanding the environment has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Sub-Hypotheses 5- organization identity has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance in private banks of Abadan city.

Methodology

The current study is considered descriptive based on functional goal and the manner of data collection and is experimental based on the relationship between the variables. The population of this research is composed of staff and manager of private banks in the city of Abadan: Saman Bank (14 people), Shahr Bank (5 people), Pasargad Bank (12 People), KarAfarin bank (8 people), Parsian Bank (8 People), Ayandeh Bank (9 people), EghtesadNovin (10 people), Ghavamin Bank (12 people), Sina Bank (8 People), census approach was used to select the type of sampling. Questionnaire which was made by the researcher by the help of the experts in management and organizational [12] Questionnaire was used for measuring flexibility. A total of 86 questionnaires were distributed And the same number, valid questionnaires were collected from respondents. The questions are divided into two categories: general and specialized questions which are based on five-point Likert scale (Very low, low, medium, high and very high). In order to determine the reliability of the questionnaires the method of Cronbach's alpha using statistical software of SPSS.18 is applied. In **Table-1**, number of items offered for measuring each variable and Cronbach's alpha coefficient of each variable is specified **Table- 1**

Table: 1. reliability of measuring tool of the research

Variable	reliability coefficient	No. of items
Flexibility	0/885	15
Organizational performance	0/727	6

As can be seen in above table, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is indicator of reliability and validity of research instrument **Table- 2**

Table: 2. Descriptive findings of the Variables studied

Variable	mean	Standard deviation	Significance of t test	95% confidence interval of Difference	
				lower	higher
Index of management team	3.4186	.78413	.000	.2502	.5867
Template decision	3.3052	.79927	.001	.1339	.4766
Organizational culture	3.2442	.71295	.002	.0913	.3970
Understanding the environment	3.3411	.67248	.000	.1969	.4853
Organizational identity	3.1977	.75256	.017	.0363	.3590
Flexibility	3.3014	.62125	.000	.1682	.4346
Organizational performance	3.2907	.61420	.000	.1590	.4224

First criterion

Assessment of reliability is possible in several ways: measurement of Factor loading coefficients, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and mixed reliability.

- The criteria for the suitability of factor loadings coefficients is 0.4 that in this model all factor loadings of obvious measures are higher than 0.4 too which shows suitability of this criteria.
- After evaluating of factor loading coefficients, it is time to calculate and report Cronbach's alpha coefficients and mixed reliability of the constructions **Table- 3**.

Table: 3. Factor loading coefficients, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and mixed reliability of research variables

variable	Measurement of factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	mixed reliability
Organizational performance	0.746957	0.842700	0.884929
flexibility	0.628285	0.913850	0.925886
Organizational culture	0.696053	0.739009	0.806610
Organizational identity	0.752981	0.733767	0.810412
template decision	0.766701	0.828853	0.886307
understanding the environment	0.638489	0.829728	0.897983
Features of group decision making	0.583612	0.747963	0.809782

Second criterion

Second criterion for fitting measurement models is convergent validity which studies the correlation of construction with its items (index). AVE criteria by software Smart PLS is used for this purpose. [12] have introduced 0.4 and above as appropriate value for the AVE that according to **Table- 4** indicates that convergent validity is appropriate for this model. As a result, given that the appropriate value for Cronbach's alpha [12], reliability [13] and AVE [13] are 0.7, 0.7 and 0.4 respectively, And in accordance with the findings of graphical model, All of these measures have received the right amount of latent variables, The appropriateness of the reliability and convergent validity study can be confirmed **Table- 4**.

Table: 4. convergent validity

Variable	AVE
Organizational performance	0.564686
flexibility	0.456196
Organizational culture	0.583467
Organizational identity	0.681421
template decision	0.661016
Understanding the environment	0.745912
Features of group decision making	0.586931

- **Third criterion**

Divergent validity is the third criterion for fitting of measurement models. To study the divergent validity by comparing the amount of correlation of a construction with it index against the correlation of that construction with other constructions, it can be act according to [14] too. For this purpose their proposed matrix which contains the square root of AVE values of two constructions in main diagonal and correlation coefficients of latent variables are drawn. As you can see in **Table- 5**, root amount of AVE of latent variables in current research which are located at main diagonal of the matrix, are higher than the coloration among them which are arranged in the lower and left side houses of main diagonal. Then it can be said that validity and divergence of the model is at appropriate limit **Table- 5**.

Table: 5. Matrix proposed by Fornell and Larker for measuring divergent validity

	AS	EN
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AS	AVE $\cong \sqrt{0.56}=0.75$	
EN	0.619336	AVE $\cong \sqrt{0.46}=0.68$

Goodness of fit of general Model (GoF criterion)

GoF criterion is generally used for fitting the model and is calculated by following formula:

$$GoF = \sqrt{\mu Communalities \times \mu R^2}$$

μ Communalities is gained from mean common values of latent variables of higher order of flexibility and organizational performance. According to the below table, this values in the report output reached by the command PLSAlgorithm are respectively 0.46 and 0.56. Then the average of Communalities will be 0.51 **Table-6**.

Table: 6. report output reached by the command PLS Algorithm for Communalities of latent variables

	communality
AS	0.564686
EN	0.456196

On the other hand, output reached by the command PLS Algorithm shows that the amount of R^2 for Endogenous variables of the model is 0.52 which with the existence of two values for mean Communalities would be:

$$GoF = \sqrt{(0.51 \times 0.52)} = 0.514$$

Given three values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 as weak, moderate and strong values respectively for GoF, the amount of 0.514 for this criterion is indicative of strong general fitness of the model.

The findings result from measuring research hypotheses

After measuring the fitness of measurement models of general model, research hypotheses can be measured. This section includes two parts as follow:

- Studying significant coefficients z corresponding to each of the hypotheses

The output of the model using Bootstrapping command which is indicated in **Figure- 2**, shows that significant coefficients of the path between organizational performance and flexibility variables is higher than 1.96 and significant **Figure- 2**.

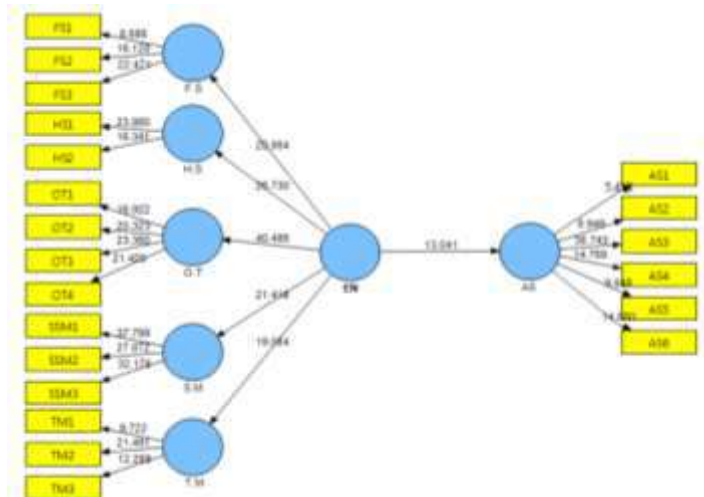


Fig: 2. graphical model with significant coefficients z

Studying standardized coefficients of the paths related to the hypotheses

After studying the amount of significant of the way between the variables, now is turn to study the intensity of effects. Output from PLS Algorithm command shows the model of research in addition to factor loading coefficient. The standardized coefficient of the path between flexibility and organizational performance (0.719) indicates who much dependent variable can be explained by independent variable. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed **Figure- 3**.

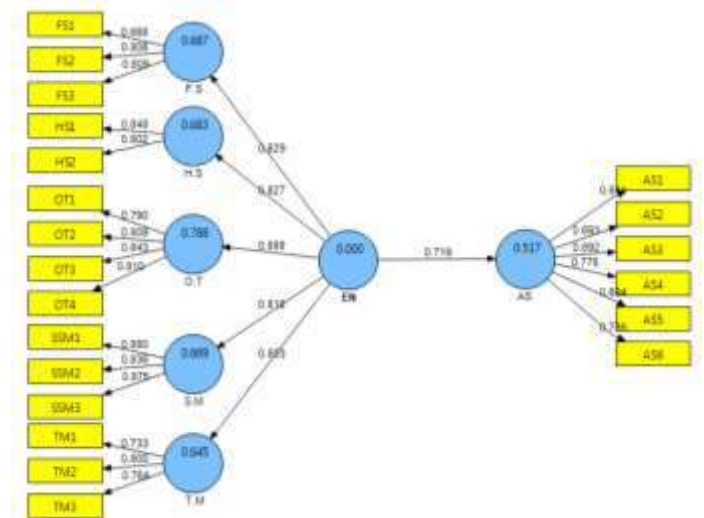


Fig: 3. general model of the research in addition to Factor loading coefficients

Test results of sub-hypotheses

For testing sub-hypotheses of the research, significant coefficients z and standardized coefficients of the paths related to hypotheses were studied again. The output of the model indicated that Significant coefficients of the way between variables of management team's features with organizational performance, Template decision with organizational performance, Organizational Culture with organizational performance, Understanding the environment with organizational performance and organizational identity with organizational performance is higher than 1.96 and significant. After studying significance of the path between the variables now it is the turn to study the intensity of the effects. Standardized coefficient of the path between variables of management team's features with organizational performance (0.742), Template decision with organizational performance (0.638),

Organizational Culture with organizational performance (0.620), Understanding the environment with organizational performance (0.503) and organizational identity with organizational performance (0.866) is indicative of the amount dependant variable can be explained by independent variable. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed **Table- 7**.

Table: 7. test results of sub-hypotheses

Main hypothesis	flexibility	organizational performance	0/719	13.041	Confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 1	Index of management team	organizational performance	0/742	19.064	Confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 2	Template decision	organizational performance	0/638	40.486	Confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 3	Organizational Culture	organizational performance	0/620	20.864	Confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 4	Understanding the environment	organizational performance	0/533	21.418	Confirmed
Sub-hypothesis 5	organizational identity	organizational performance	0/833	26.730	Confirmed

CONCLUSION

This study showed that flexibility and its five dimensions have significant and positive impact on organizational performance. **Table- 7 and Figure- 2 and 3** indicate the results of testing structural relations between the variables of the research.

- The findings of the research is indicative of main hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.742 and significant figure of 19.064. Considering that statistic t was 19.064 and this value is higher than 1.96 then the dimension of management team features has significant impact on organizational performance. On the other hand,
- The findings of the research is indicative of the first sub-hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.719 and significant figure of 13.041. Considering that statistic t was 13.041 and this value is higher than 1.96 then flexibility has significant impact on organizational performance. On the other hand, Standard estimated coefficient is 0.742 which shows that the impact is positive and significant.
- The effect of template decision on organizational performance was tested for the second sub-hypothesis. The findings of the research is indicative of the first sub-hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.638 and significant figure of 40.486. Considering that statistic t was 40.486 and this value is higher than 1.96 then template decision has significant impact on organizational performance. On the other hand, Standard estimated coefficient is 0.742 which shows that the impact is positive and significant.
- Output results of the software shows that the effect of organizational cultural on organizational performance is confirmed. The findings of the research is indicative of the third sub-hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.620 and significant figure of 20.864. Considering that statistic t was 20.864 and this value is higher than 1.96 then the dimension of organizational cultural has significant impact on organizational performance. On the other hand, Standard estimated coefficient is 0.620 which shows that the impact is positive and significant.
- Results from analysis the forth sub-hypothesis confirm this hypothesis. Research findings is indicative of the third sub-hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.533 and significant figure of 21.418. Considering that statistic t was 21.418 and this value is higher than 1.96 then the dimension of understanding the environment has significant impact on organizational performance. On the other hand, Standard estimated coefficient is 0.533 which shows that the impact is positive and significant.
- Results from analysis the fifth sub-hypothesis confirm this hypothesis. Research findings is indicative of the third sub-hypothesis confirmation with path coefficient of 0.833 and significant figure of 26.730. Considering that statistic t was 26.730 and this value is higher than 1.96 then the dimension of organizational identity has significant

impact on organizational performance. On the other hand, Standard estimated coefficient is 0.833 which shows that the impact is positive and significant.

The results of this research are similar to other studies that have been conducted in this area for example [14] arrived to this conclusion that the organizational flexibility, including both operational flexibility and strategic flexibility has an impact on organizational performance. [14] stated that Flexibility to fit the environment in order to maintain a competitive advantage is a challenge for today managers. [15] explained that Organizational flexibility increasingly emphasized as an organizational potential and enables companies to gain competitive advantage and improve performance in today's dynamic environment. [15], [16] postulated that Organizational identity has an impact on operational performance. [17] stated that the existence of operational teams increase function. [17] concluded that the more the attention is paid on indicators of organizational culture, the better employee performance will be and with measures such as improving and strengthening cultural factors that have the greatest effect on employee performance, further improvement of organizational culture and performance of the staff can be seen. [17] stated in their research that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness. [17] stated that there is a significant relationship between organizational culture and productivity. Research results of [18] contains that Organizational culture has a significant relationship with organizational performance. The results of [19] research indicated that organizational culture and performance has strong relationship with each other.

These results indicated that with recognition of managers and organizations from the concept of flexibility, the importance and its role in the behavior and performance of the organization will increase. For this purpose, it is proposed to have: management team with the right mix of different ages, working experience, focus on strategic level and less focus in operational level of decision-making, Creating organizational culture relatively independent of the Bank culture, Monitoring the environment and investigating incidents and events using formal and informal systems, having a strong Organizational identity and appropriate core values, having different options and scenarios and separate programs to deal with the possible future situations, creating the appropriate fields for quick change of competitive strategy against unforeseen environmental changes, continuous improvement of employee skills as a principle by managers and institutionalize it in the organization, senior management full support of continuous change programs, integration and coordination and full cooperation in establishing processes, Full coordination of integration system and team building system with other systems of the organization, employee participation in programs and quality objectives of the organization, the need to engage employees and users in organizational processes and procedures because of importance of staff in achieving satisfaction and reduce the causes of resistance and lift spirits which these factors improve the sense of self-esteem towards the organization, and finally try to improve the performance and effectiveness of the system, Allocate sufficient financial and human resources through senior managers to approve a management philosophy and organizational methods in order to support organizational values, and inducing an flexible, collaborative and supportive organizational culture, try to identify the capabilities and value-added processes, as well as the identification of important units in creation actual and potential customers and allocation of resources to these processes and units in order to gain competitive advantage, evaluation and renovation of processes, structure, functions and goals of the organization by sophisticated authorities and experts sophisticated, in such a way that organization be sufficiently ready to overcome changes and uncertainties, to promote flexibility of the organizations and create a basis for dynamics and moving towards improving organizational performance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare no conflict of interest .

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