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Investigating the relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility in Tehran province relief committee

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Abstract

Background and purpose: Identifying the dimensions and actions of knowledge management and cultural intelligence in agile organizations, and examining their relationship with the actions and dimensions of agility, is an undeniable necessity in the organization; Therefore, the present research was conducted to investigate the relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran province. **Methodology:** The current research was a correlational descriptive study. The statistical population was all employees of the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran province. Sampling was done by simple random sampling by preparing a list of 200 sample employees, and Earley and Ang (2004) Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire, Newman and Conrad (2000) Knowledge Management Questionnaire, and Sharifi and Zhang (2004) Organizational Agility Questionnaire were implemented. **Results:** The findings showed a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility. Also, a significant relationship was found between knowledge (cognition), motivational and behavioral components, and organizational agility. Among the dimensions of knowledge management, the two dimensions of knowledge preservation and knowledge creation have a significant relationship with organizational agility. **Conclusion:** The results showed that cultural intelligence and dimensions of knowledge (cognition), motivational and behavioral, as well as knowledge management and the two dimensions of knowledge preservation and knowledge creation, could predict organizational agility.

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Introduction

Contemporary management scholars often emphasize the effectiveness and agility of human resources, which are created by acquiring, developing, and applying knowledge. They also believe that the acquisition of new knowledge depends on the transformation of organizations and leadership activities, and as a result, the agility of the organization's force causes adaptation to changing conditions in the organization (Sadeghi, Mehdikhani, Nazim, and Nazim, 2016). Hence, agility is an organization's ability to respond quickly to changes in the market and the demands of customers and employees (Wang and Tang, 2016). The word agile expresses the speed and power of response when faced with internal and external events of the organization. An agile organization is structured to understand and anticipate changes in the business environment. The basic factors that create and promote organizational agility are awareness, flexibility, and productivity (Salamzadeh, Salamzadeh, and Markovic, 2016).

In addition, appropriate cultural intelligence and knowledge management of advanced information and production technologies lead to production agility, and production agility also develops organizational agility by reducing costs and increasing speed and quality. According to this model, responsiveness and flexibility, which result from effective communication between leadership, employees, customers, and suppliers, have a close relationship with agility (Heidari, Siadat, Hoveida, and Shahin, 2014). Agility is the result of integrating vigilance to changes in the sense of recognizing opportunities and challenges, both internal and external, using the ability to utilize resources, in response to potential and actual changes, in a timely, flexible and inexpensive manner (Gren and Turker, 2015). An organization necessarily has a set of capacities to respond to environmental changes. The agile organization is more concerned about the environment's change, uncertainty, and unpredictability and tries to show the correct reaction in this situation. Therefore, the agile organization needs potential existing capacities and adaptation to face these environmental uncertainties. Investigating and researching in the field of agility with an emphasis on knowledge-oriented and knowledge management can make a giant leap in the agility and high performance of employees in the organization (Wang and Wang, 2012).

Cultural intelligence is an important issue for experts in organizational development and behavior and is the key to empowering subordinates in vital activities and processes governing organizational life (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005). In addition, globalization and increasing interactions between organizations at the global level require special intelligence and talent, which plays a significant role in people's management processes and job performance. This is Because people have different cultural backgrounds, which requires understanding cultural issues, values, and norms (Nasrasafhani, Vaez Shahrestani, and Bagheri, 2014).

In addition, cultural intelligence, as a new field of intelligence, deals with the ability to act effectively in different cultural conditions (Sadeghi et al., 2016). Cultural intelligence is defined as a person's ability to act and manage in a culturally diverse situation and create a purposeful multidimensional structure in the context of intercultural interactions caused by differences in race, ethnicity, and nationality (Ang et al., 2007). This intelligence is an individual ability to understand, interpret and act effectively in situations with cultural diversity and is compatible with those concepts related to intelligence that consider intelligence to be more of a cognitive ability (Peterson, 2004). Earley and Ang (2003) consider a person with high cultural intelligence to be able to adapt effectively to a new and different cultural context from the cultural context he grew up in without abandoning his cultural identity. In addition, cultural intelligence is a capability that connects people and different groups in an organization. This leads to the interaction and communication of employees in the organization's network and the transfering of knowledge and experience. This intelligence is the ability that helps people to achieve a common understanding of the cultural context in their organization. Recognizing cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic differences and similarities, as well as common anecdotes, myths, and stories leads to creating a common language and sense that enables employees to share knowledge freely. When social relations include common understanding and language, people can increase the opportunities of knowledge dissemination through interpersonal communication platforms created (Amanian & Asadi, 2011).

Today, knowledge management is considered the most important asset for organizations. Knowledge management is the process of discovering, acquiring, developing and creating, training and maintaining, evaluating and applying the right knowledge at the right time by the right person in the organization. It is done by creating a link between human resources, information, and communication technology and building a suitable structure to achieve organizational goals (Ebili, Rominaei, and Beiranvand, 2015). In other words, knowledge management is the process of creating and sharing, transferring and maintaining knowledge so that it can be used effectively in the organization (Hoffman, Mark, Holster and Karma, 2005). Among the issues that exist in line with the implementation of knowledge management in organizations is the issue of knowledge sharing within the organization and between different organizations. Today, in different countries, including Iran, all organizations are willing and eager to create knowledge management systems in organizations with the aim of benefiting from its useful results (Sadeghi et al., 2016). One of the most important and common processes in the various structures introduced for knowledge management is knowledge sharing, which has motivated managers to be more efficient in the organization (Ebili et al., 2015). In fact, one of the main goals of managers in using knowledge management in organizations is to improve knowledge sharing between people in the organization and between people and the organization to create a

competitive advantage. Effective knowledge sharing among the organization members leads to the reduction of costs in the production of knowledge, ensures the dissemination of the best working methods within the organization, and enables the organization to solve its problems and issues (Renzle, 2012).

Knowledge management is a business optimization system that identifies, acquires or creates the necessary knowledge of an organization in a way that improves the performance of employees and its competitive power and helps to share it among employees; to use in the path of organizational growth; and to improve the quality of knowledge by continuously evaluating it (Worely and Lawler, 2010). Many researchers believe effective knowledge sharing is one of the most important ways to apply key competencies and gain a competitive advantage (Palanisamy, 2008). Knowledge sharing is the most important part of knowledge management; in fact, the tool by which knowledge is shared and the factors that facilitate sharing and transfer are knowledge management (Zabihi, Tabatabaei, Ghamari, and Hanif Asadi, 2015).

Despite many studies in the three areas of organizational agility, cultural intelligence, and knowledge management, not many studies have been conducted on the relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility and their influence on each other, and most of the studies are theoretical and non-experimental. As a result, it seems necessary to research cultural intelligence and knowledge management, focusing on its process and infrastructure effects on various organizational processes. Considering these cases, in this research, we decided to investigate and evaluate the process and infrastructural effects of cultural intelligence and knowledge management on organizational agility with a comprehensive approach. In addition, although the researcher is facing many studies concerning the relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility, it cannot be claimed whether there is a relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran Province. Therefore, the current research seeks to answer this question: is there a relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran Province?

Methodology

The method of the current research is correlational. Using this method, the distribution and relationships between predictor variables and research criteria will be investigated in the population, and finally, the multivariate regression method will be used to predict the criterion variable. The statistical population of this research consists of all the employees of the Relief Committee of Tehran province. The sampling method of this research was as follows. First, a list of the employees of the relief committee was provided. According to

the recruitment statistics of the relief committee, the total number of employees was around 712 people. Then, according to Morgan's table, a sample of 250 people was randomly selected. After obtaining consent to participate in the research, they answered questionnaires on cultural intelligence, knowledge management, and organizational agility. The collected questionnaires were discarded after scoring 50 questionnaires due to incompleteness, and a total of 200 questionnaires were analyzed in this research. The information collected from the subjects was analyzed by cultural intelligence, knowledge management, and organizational agility questionnaires using appropriate statistical tests and research hypotheses were tested. For this purpose, descriptive statistics indices were used to describe and classify the data collected from the sample. Finally, Pearson's correlation and multivariate regression were used to test and analyze the hypotheses.

Materials

1- Questionnaire of cultural intelligence. 20-question cultural intelligence questionnaire designed by Ang et al. in 2004. This questionnaire has four factors, which are: strategy or metacognition (items 1 to 4), knowledge or cognition (items 5 to 10), motivational (items 11 to 15) and behavioral (items 15 to 20). Each item is scored on a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4). In Hamidi et al.'s (2013) research, the face and content validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by 12 university professors. Using Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient, the reliability value of the cultural intelligence questionnaire was 72%, which indicates good validity and reliability.

2- Knowledge management questionnaire. Newman and Conrad designed this questionnaire for the first time in 2000. This questionnaire consists of 21 items that measure the components of knowledge retention (items 1 to 5), knowledge transfer (items 6 to 10), knowledge creation (items 11 to 15) and knowledge application (items 16 to 21). The items of this questionnaire are graded based on a four-point Likert scale (I strongly disagree = 1, I disagree = 2, I agree = 3, I strongly agree = 4). Cronbach's alpha total score in the research of Newman and Conrad (2000) was 0.92. The reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was reported in Niazi's (2012) research through Cronbach's alpha of 0.95, which indicates the good reliability of this questionnaire.

3-organizational agility questionnaire. Organizational agility questionnaire with 29 questions designed by Sharifi and Zhang in 2004. The first part of the questionnaire contains questions related to the demographic variables of the people participating in the research, and the second part contains 29 closed questions. The factors affecting the organization's agility are set in the form of four agility indicators: responsiveness, competence, flexibility and speed. The scoring scale of the questions is based on the Likert scale and includes the options of very little, little, somewhat (moderate), much and very much from one to five. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed based on the

opinions of professors and experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by Cronbach's alpha method, which was 0.96. Also, to check the reliability of the questionnaire, a value of 0.91 was obtained from Guttman's dichotomization method.

Results

In the present study, 44.5% of the statistical sample were women, and 55.5% were men. Also, 5% of the statistical sample comprised people with a diploma or associate degree, 63% with bachelor's degrees, and 29% with master's degrees.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics indicators and interval estimation of cultural intelligence variable and its components (N=200)

		Variation Range	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Estimated interval with 95% confidence	
								Lower limit	Upper limit
Cultural intelligence total score		40	40	80	57/59	0/66	88/76	0/12	0/44
Cultural intelligence components	Strategy (metacognition)	7	9	16	12/86	0/14	4/03	0/11	0/92
	Knowledge(cognition)	17	7	24	15/79	0/26	14/48	0/07	0/24
	Motivational	11	9	20	15/27	0/22	10/40	0/07	1/03
	Behavioral	14	6	20	13/66	0/20	8/71	0/54	0/69

As shown in the above table, the indicators of the descriptive statistics of the cultural intelligence variable are reported. For example, this variable's mean and standard deviation are 57.59 and 0.66 respectively. At the same time, the numbers in the distance estimation column indicate that it can be estimated with 95% confidence that the average of the cultural intelligence variable is between 0.12 and 0.44 of the community average. Also, the average of other components of this variable is reported in the table.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics indicators and interval estimation of knowledge management variable and its components (N=200)

Components	Variation Range	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Estimated interval with 95% confidence	
							Lower limit	Upper limit
Knowledge management total score	40	32	72	45/30	0/81	134/45	0/97	1/20
Knowledge retention	14	5	19	10/58	0/25	13/14	1/76	2/29
knowledg	12	7	19	11/60	0/23	11/03	0/68	1/76

e transfer								
Knowledge creation	12	7	19	10/59	0/20	8/05	1/56	1/87
Application of knowledge	13	8	21	12/52	0/21	9/36	0/86	2/28

As shown in the above table, the descriptive statistics indicators of knowledge management variables are reported. For example, the mean and standard deviation of knowledge management are 45.30 and 81. respectively. At the same time, the numbers in the interval estimation column indicate that it can be estimated with 95% confidence that the average of this variable is between 0.97 and 1.20 of the society average. Also, the average of other components of this variable is reported in the table.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics indicators and interval estimation of organizational agility variable and its components (N=200)

	Components	Variation Range	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Variance	Estimated interval with 95% confidence	
								Lower limit	Upper limit
Organizational agility total score		53	15	103	72/20	0/89	159/56	0/81	1/10
Organizational agility components	Speed	18	14	32	21/43	0/31	19/48	1/91	2/37
	Competency	15	11	26	18/58	0/23	10/74	0/48	2/08
	Responsiveness	18	10	28	17/63	0/28	15/75	0/77	1/01
	Flexibility	12	9	21	14/55	0/22	9/99	2/10	2/89

As shown in the above table, the descriptive statistics indicators of organizational agility are reported. For example, this variable's mean and standard deviation are 72.20 and 89. respectively. At the same time, the numbers in the distance estimation column indicate that it can be estimated with 95% confidence that the average of the organizational agility variable is between 0.81 and 1.10 of the society average. Also, the average of other components of this variable is reported in the table in order of value.

Table 4: Correlation coefficient

Model	Correlation coefficient	Coefficient of determination	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Standard error of estimation
1	[a]0/774	0/600	0/596	8/033

The first research question was, "Is there a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management and organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran province?" The correlation and determination coefficient between dependent and independent variables are presented in the table above. So that the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.774, and the coefficient of determination is

equal to 0.600; In other words, 60% of changes in the dependent variable of organizational agility are covered by the variables of cultural intelligence and knowledge management.

Table 5: Regression equation coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant	34/246	30/800	-	9/012	0/000
	Cultural intelligence	-0/005	0/062	-0/004	-0/086	0/932
	Knowledge management	0/845	0/051	0/775	16/678	0/000

According to the above table and the regression test, since the sig value obtained in the cases of constant value and knowledge management is smaller than 0.05, the role of these two in the regression equation is significant. However, since the sig value obtained in the case of cultural intelligence is greater than 0.05, its role in the regression equation is not significant.

Table 6: Correlation coefficient

Model	Correlation coefficient	Coefficient of determination	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Standard error of estimation
1	[a]0/567	0/322	0/308	10/510

The second research question was, "Is there a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and its dimensions with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran Province?". The amount of correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination between dependent and independent variables is presented in the table below. So that the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.567, and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.322; In other words, 32% of changes in the dependent variable of organizational agility are covered by the independent variables of cultural intelligence dimensions.

Table 7: Regression equation coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant	60/828	5/350	-	11/370	0/000
	Strategy (metacognition)	0/381	0/425	0/061	0/897	0/371
	Knowledge (cognition)	1/909	0/258	0/575	7/388	0/000
	Motivational	-1/195	0/314	-0/560	-6/986	0/000
	Behavioral	0/721	0/322	0/169	2/242	0/026

According to the above table and the regression test, since the obtained sig value is less than 0.05 in all cases except for the dimensions of the (metacognitive) strategy, their role in the regression equation is significant.

Table 8: Correlation coefficient

Model	Correlation coefficient	Coefficient of determination	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Standard error of estimation
1	[a]0/979	0/635	0/628	7/709

The third research question was, "Is there a significant relationship between knowledge management and its dimensions with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran Province?". The amount of correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination between dependent and independent variables is presented in the table below. So that the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.979, and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.635; In other words, 63% of changes in the dependent variable of organizational agility are covered by the independent variables of knowledge management dimensions.

Table 9: Regression equation coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant	33/284	2/342	-	14/214	0/000
	Knowledge retention	1/298	0/326	0/341	3/984	0/000
	Knowledge transferring	0/006	0/254	0/002	0/023	0/982
	Knowledge creation	2/069	0/395	0/465	5/236	0/000
	Knowledge application	0/150	0/327	0/036	0/458	0/648

According to the above table and the regression test, since the obtained sig value is less than 0.05 in all cases except for the dimensions of knowledge transfer and knowledge application, their role in the regression equation is significant; Therefore, the regression equation can be found as follows.

Discussion and Conclusion

The current research aims to investigate the relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility in the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee of Tehran province. The research's first finding showed a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and knowledge management with organizational agility. In this regard, Keshavarz et al. (2016) showed that there is a relationship between knowledge management and organizational agility; Also, the results showed that 3 of the five factors of knowledge management had an effective role in organizational agility, which is in line with the results of the present study. Rezaei et al. (2015) examined knowledge

management and agility strategies in the publishing industry in their study. The results of knowledge management and agility studies in this research showed a significant and high correlation between these factors. Also, the results showed that among the elements of knowledge management, the factors of "creating and acquiring classified knowledge" and "facilitating actions related to knowledge in the field of the organization's goals" have the greatest effect on organizational agility, and these findings are consistent with the results of the present study.

The second finding of the current research showed that the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.567 and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.322; In other words, 32% of changes in the dependent variable of organizational agility are covered by the independent variables of cultural intelligence dimensions. Zabihi et al. (2015) showed a significant relationship between organizational intelligence and organizational agility in hospitals; The components of strategic vision, performance pressure and unity and agreement contributed the greatest to determining agility. Also, Gren and Torker (2015) showed that the greater the depth of cultural intelligence, the more organizational agility we will have. These findings are consistent with the results of the present study.

The third finding of the current research indicates that the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.979 and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.635; In other words, 63% of changes in the dependent variable of organizational agility are covered by the independent variables of knowledge management dimensions. Ghanbari et al. (2013) showed in their research that the direct effect of the process dimension of knowledge management on organizational agility is positive and significant. Also, the direct effect of the infrastructural dimension of knowledge management on organizational agility is also positive and significant. They showed that the most effective agile measures is one of the infrastructural elements of knowledge management from the aspect of the nature of the organization. Also, the most effective elements of the knowledge management process are from the aspect of knowledge transfer and application. Wang et al. (2016) showed a significant positive relationship between knowledge management and organizational agility. These results are consistent with the findings of the present study.

In the knowledge-centered era, knowledge has become a strategic resource for many organizations. Today, many organizations, especially government organizations, are facing many challenges, including rapid changes in technology, systems expansion, society's diverse demands, increase in educational costs, and the need to adapt to the age of knowledge and information. One of the tools used to deal with these conditions is knowledge management. Pérez Bustamante (1999, cited in Ghanbari et al., 2014) has considered a series of knowledge-based activities, including having a strong innovation culture and knowledge creation and sharing environments, as the characteristic features of knowledge management effective in the innovation and agility of organizations.

Meanwhile, Dove (1999, quoted by Liu et al., 2016) believes that if knowledge management and organizational agility are not in balance, they can act as an inhibiting factor and the effectiveness of knowledge management through organizational agility or vice versa is possible. At the same time, some researchers have considered science and knowledge orientation as one of the core capabilities in the agility of organizations (Jung, 2010) and have mentioned information technology and knowledge management as a category that affects the performance of agile organizations (Ghanbari et al., 2014).

According to the stated content, success in knowledge management requires a fundamental change in culture and commitment at all organizational levels. It will be more effective and easier to implement knowledge management in an organization where values and norms such as trust, participation, collaboration and knowledge sharing are common and valuable. Knowledge sharing is possible merely if the culture's intelligence supports it; These intangible assets of the organization influence each other and can strengthen each other. Organizations with a culture of innovation encourage innovative behaviors in employees. In this way, each employee's knowledge, skills and capabilities increase (Ghanbari et al., 2014). On the other hand, having a collaborative environment provides opportunities for knowledge sharing and successful implementation of knowledge management programs. Cooperation is a fundamental issue in creating, sharing, and transferring knowledge. Encouraging employees to participate in work networks improves employee knowledge and value-added by creating new knowledge. Also, creating a strong information technology system can facilitate intra-organizational communication and the collection and reuse of knowledge in the relevant organization. In addition, facilitating the cooperation of organization members with people inside and outside the organization with appropriate use of technologies, the organization's use of technology to create an effective communication organizational structure, and reviewing the reward system is of great importance in order to motivate employees to provide new and innovative ideas (Rezaei et al., 2015).

Based on the results of this research, it was found that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between cultural intelligence and the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions of this intelligence with knowledge management. This means that the higher the cultural intelligence of the employees of the relief committee, the greater their desire and ability to manage knowledge and the behaviors related to its processes, especially the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Employees with high cultural intelligence have a greater ability to adapt to a diverse cultural environment, facilitating communication processes between them and ultimately making them share their experience and knowledge easily (Liu et al., 2014).). In addition to reducing learning costs, this will save learning time. In addition, people who have a better understanding of cultural differences and similarities and have reached an acceptable level of general knowledge regarding the cultures in their society use their cultural knowledge in dealing with different cultural

groups and show more organized behavior. All these capabilities ultimately lead to creating a two-way and effective interaction, the result of which will be the exchange of work experiences among employees. By creating a platform for developing interpersonal interactions, cultural intelligence plays an important role in facilitating knowledge management actions that are often manifested in relationships between people in an organization (Keshavarz et al., 2016).

Although few studies have been done regarding the ability of cultural intelligence and the topic of knowledge management and organizational agility, this amount is enough to show that this intelligence promotes knowledge management and its activities in organizational agility. Therefore, paying attention to cultural intelligence and strengthening it in various organizations can be a step towards improving interpersonal relationships and facilitating each of the processes of knowledge management and organizational agility. Every research always faces problems and limitations, and the following factors can be mentioned among the limitations of this research: the insufficient willingness of some subjects to answer the questions, using a questionnaire as a tool for collecting information, Imam Khomeini relief committee as statistical population. Therefore, generalizations should be made with caution.

Ethics

This research observed ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring privacy and confidentiality. Also, while completing the questionnaires while emphasizing completing all the questions, the participants were free to withdraw from the research at any time and provide individual information. They were assured that the information would remain confidential, which was strictly adhered to.

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Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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