

Research Paper

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# The mediating role of organizational agility in the relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in gas company

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the mediating role of organizational agility in the relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in Gas Company of Rasht. The current research is applicable in terms of purpose, and descriptive-correlative in terms of its nature and method of data collection, and is specifically based on structural equation modeling. The statistical population of this research is all the employees of Rasht Gas Company, which are 360 people; and according to Morgan's table, 186 people were selected as a sample and the random sampling method is simple. The collection tool in the current research is three questionnaires, which include organizational agility and outsourcing questionnaire of Adib and Minoui questionnaire (2019), and organizational productivity questionnaire of Smith et al. (1998). The research findings showed that according to the research results; organizational agility mediates the relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company. The outsourcing index has a coefficient of 0.568; in other words, has an effect of 56.8% on organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company, emphasizing the mediating role of organizational agility.

**Keywords:**

organizational agility,  
outsourcing,  
organizational  
productivity,  
human resources

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## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

Outsourcing can be defined as the design of activities by third parties, efficient and systematic contracting with external organizations to purchase activities, and a low degree of vertical integration in a supply chain (Ahmadi et al, 2011). Productivity is the effective and efficient use of inputs with resources to produce or provide outputs. Inputs are resources such as energy, raw materials, capital and labor that are used to create outputs, which are goods produced with services provided by an organization; in other words, productivity means obtaining the maximum possible profit by utilizing and optimally using labor force, power, talent and skill of manpower, land, machine, money, equipment, time, place, etc. in order to promote well-being (Torani & Aghaei, 2019). One of the major problems that exist in organizations and departments at various levels of society, especially organizations, is the lack of efficiency and productivity. In other words, the culture and attitude of productivity has not yet dominated the society, and basic measures should be taken in this field, and effective steps should be taken (Oli et al, 2016). The public sector needs agility more than the private sector due to the multitude of clients, the greater need to solve their problems and demands, growth and excellence in terms of speed and quality, and most importantly cost reduction; and since the goal in the private sector is agility and the goal in the public sector is to achieve flexibility and high productivity at the same time, agility capabilities can increase productivity in the public sector (Norozinezhad et al, 2015).

According to the mentioned points, the researcher is trying to answer the main question of whether organizational agility plays a mediating role in the relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company.

### Theoretical framework

Outsourcing is a potential route to reduce prices and increase flexibility, allowing the company to convert fixed prices into variable costs and increase cost savings (Mahmudi et al, 2014). Productivity in a general sense means the ratio of outputs to data, in other words, productivity means the average production per unit of total inputs, so that if the average production per unit of inputs increases, it means an increase in productivity; and the opposite of that means reducing productivity (Baigi & Mosavi, 2022). Today, with the increase in competition and unpredictable changes in the business field, organizations must be agile in order to gain competitive advantages in achieving organizational goals and success in business. This capability helps organizations to discover and respond to unpredictable changes in order to achieve a better position in the competitive market and improve the time cycle in management activities (Arshtabar, 2021).

Maleki & Bagherzadeh Fard (2022) investigated outsourcing and exploratory innovation on industrial marketing strategies and customer behavior. The results show that exploratory innovation has a positive and significant effect on customer behavior. Exploratory innovation has a positive and significant effect on industrial marketing strategies. Outsourcing has a positive and significant effect on customer behavior. Outsourcing has a positive and significant impact on industrial marketing strategies.

Safdari et al, (2021) examined organizational agility and employee productivity in the organization. The research findings show that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational agility and its dimensions (flexibility, responsiveness, culture change, speed at work, low integration and complexity, high quality and customized production, core competencies) and human resource productivity.

## Methodology

The current research is applicable from the point of view of the goal, and descriptive-correlative from the method used. The statistical population of this research is all the employees of Rasht Gas Company, which are 360 people; 186 people were selected as samples according to Morgan's table. A simple random sampling method was used in this research. In order to collect data related to organizational agility variable, organizational agility questionnaire and outsourcing variable from questionnaire (Adib & Minuei, 2010) and organizational productivity variable questionnaire (Esmith et al, 1998) were used.

## Discussion and Results

In order to investigate the hypothesis of the research, the modeling of structural equations, the method of structural equation modeling with the help of spss software was used to test the hypotheses from inferential statistics. Then, amos software was used to test the hypotheses or the conceptual model of the research, and the results of the main hypothesis showed that the outsourcing index with a coefficient of 0.568 and in other words has an effect of 56.8% on organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company with an emphasis on the mediating role of organizational agility. At the confidence level of 0.95 and according to the t-value which is equal to 5.233, it can be said that there is a relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity with the mediating role of organizational agility in Rasht Gas Company. The results of the first sub-hypothesis showed that the outsourcing index has a coefficient of 0.436, or in other words, an effect of 43.6% on organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company. At the confidence level of 0.95 and according to the t-value which is equal to 4.892, it can be said that there is a relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company. The results of the second sub-hypothesis showed that the outsourcing index has a coefficient of 0.578 and in other words, 57.8% influence on organizational agility in Rasht Gas Company. At the confidence level of 0.95 and according to the t-value which is equal to 6.561, it can be said that there is a relationship between outsourcing and organizational agility in Rasht Gas Company. The results of the third sub-hypothesis showed that the organizational agility index with a coefficient of 0.738, in other words, has an effect of 73.8% on the organization's productivity in Rasht City Gas Company. At the confidence level of 0.95 and according to the t-value which is equal to 7.157, it can be said that there is a relationship between organizational agility and organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company.

## Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the mediating role of organizational agility in the relationship between outsourcing and organizational productivity in Rasht Gas Company. This finding is in line with the findings of researchers such as Khalili & Omid (2021), Safdari et al, (2021), Maleki & Bagherzadeh Fard (2022), Hashem Zadeh & Bahrami (2017); competition is known as the most important feature, and in this competitive environment, in order to satisfy customers, the organizations always seek to improve the quality of services, so that they can improve their business performance and overall organizational performance. Today, the increase in instability and disturbances in organizational environments has caused organizations to achieve a level of agility in production in order to respond to the needs of customers in unpredictable conditions; because it is considered the main factor of success and survival of companies. Nevertheless, the production companies do not pay much attention to these issues. It seems that the issue of agility is not something that can be considered only for the private sector. Applying agility in the public sector can be a suitable field for the growth of this sector. Still, some people believe

that due to the lack of competition and speed in the public sector, and in a word, the lack of dynamism in its working and operational environment, it is meaningless to express agility in this sector. Therefore, agility is one of the ways to respond to these factors of organizational change and transformation. In fact, agility is a new paradigm for engineering organizations and competitive enterprises. According to the results of the research, it is suggested that Rasht Gas Department pay more attention to performance, financial and psychosocial risks in its outsourced activities in order to achieve more success in its new outsourcing projects than in the past. The use of outsourcing frees up the company's assets and funds.