

# Evaluation of Commitment Strategy toward Social Capital: A Case Study in Payam Nour Universities of Ardebil

Rahimeh Soleimanzadeh

Instructor in Payam Nour and Azad University of Meshkin Shahr

## Abstract

One of the main significant indices of today's progress and development in each society is social capital through which a targeted system is formed guiding people to gain valuable goals and provide the required conditions for human and physical efficiency. If the managers can create and maintain the social capital using proper strategies in HR, they have supplied their own job and organizational prosperity path. Therefore, in this research, it was attempted to study the relationship between commitment strategy in aspects of flexibility culture, organizational commitment, employee's participation and individual merits in SRP model and creation of the social capital. The research was applicable in terms of objectives and the research method was survey-descriptive plus a questionnaire as the research method that by confirmation of its reliability and validity among the employees of Payam Nour universities of Ardebil as population, data implementation and analysis was conducted using descriptive-inferential statistical method. The research findings show that there is a significant relationship between aspects of the commitment strategy and creation of social capital. In other words, in order to create social capital, the university authorities should pay attention to its initial elements which include attention to dynamic and flexible culture, an increase in trust level and organizational commitment, reinforcing individual merits and participation of employees in decision-making and implementation of the affairs.

**Keywords:** commitment strategy, strategic management, human resources, strategic reference points, social capital

## Introduction

Evaluation of ups and downs of HR development shows that the importance of HR has been emerged in progress and development of the organizations more than past and the human is considered as the main significant human capital and key element of creation of constant competitive advantages for the organizations. It may be claimed with no exaggeration that the success of each organization in the first place depends on the proper selection of the employees and training them and in the second place, is subject to the performance of its members (Arabi & Mahdieh, 2010). Thinkers of management science believe that we should consider the employees as the main basis of profitability in the organization (Salehi Amiri, 2008). Submission of products and various qualified services, costs reduction, creativity and innovation and competitiveness increase are of the advantages of qualitative and knowledge-oriented HR. Therefore, business strategies of today's organizations are necessarily focused on HR (Ganji & Rabbani, 2008). Most researches indicate a strong relationship between a set of the social performances of the companies and power of their HR management and a strategic approach of HR management can be regarded as a key success of each company (Badakhshani & Forouzanfar, 2010). so that type of the strategies which is taken and implemented in the company enable it to remain qualified to the environmental variable in people management (Armstrong, 2006)

In fact, Human Resource Strategic Management makes the future organization's guidance possible through making some proper decisions, so that taking and implementing HR efficient strategies affect effectiveness of the organizational performance (Harrison & John, 2010). In one word, it should be noted that achieving goals and development requires study of the essential solutions that creation of the social capital be-

**Corresponding author:** Rahimeh Soleimanzadeh, Instructor in Payam Nour and Azad University of Meshkin Shahr. E-mail: r\_soleimanzadeh@yahoo.com

side the human and physical capitals have been recognized as an effective variable in this matter. According to the most scientists, the social capital points to the links and communications between members of a network as a valuable source through which following the norms and mutual trust, cooperation between members and facilitation of the social relationships can lead to reduce costs of interchanges and communications which pave the way to fulfill the objectives (Tajbakhsh, 2005). In absence of the social capital, other capitals lose their own effectiveness, so that development paths will be hard in various aspects. Therefore, the social capital can be regarded as a main factor to gain success (Doroudi, 2011). Lack of attention to the social capital in a way the social capital leads to the knowledge transfer of the group members to each other and a proper course of learning and knowledge between them will be supplied (Dyer & Holder, 1998). Formation of the social capital in an organization needs a suitable base and proper selection and implementation in HR field can be a key factor in this matter.

### Statement of the problem and significance of the study

Today, the HR strategies are regarded as the key elements of improvement in the organization performance and applying it to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the management activities and HR development of the organization is essential. The objective of HR strategies determination and implementation is to relate policies and HR methods to HR strategic goals (Krajewski & Thompson, 2010). A proper HR strategy has specific features including internal coherence with personnel policies and external coherence with strategy of the whole organization, responsibility of the line managers to implement HR policies, increase of collective morality, focus on commitment, innovation and role of the managers as "guide" and facilitator (Bratton, 2006).

Today, in most organizations, relationships based on trust, cooperation and participation of employees, culture of creative and active learning supportive, accountability and people's commitment have been reduced and numerous regulatory institutions, guidelines and circulars have been replaced it. These changes can bring negative effects for the quality of the social relations in the organizations (O'Connell & McCallum, 2009).

Payam Nour University which is one of the main pillars of Higher Education System in order to achieve training development in the country is not exempted from this rule and managers and programmers of the university should be sensitive to these changes in quality

of interactions and human relations and make policies and strategies in order to prevent negative consequences (Abbas Pour, 2005). Definitely, the social capital formation plays an important role in improvement of HR performance. In this regard, the efficient HR strategies including Strategic Reference Points (SRP) as a functional model with high flexibility and application of commitment strategy provide a base to consider central criteria as a benchmark in this field (flexibility culture, individual merits, organizational commitment, mutual relations, cooperation and public participation) to form empathy, cooperation and coherence, norms control, ethic principals, commitment, trust and social capital.

### Research Hypotheses

There is a significant relationship between commitment strategy and creation of social capital in Payam Nour Universities of Meshkin Shahr.

#### *The main hypothesis*

#### *Sub-hypotheses*

- There is a significant relationship between flexibility culture and creation of social capital.
- There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and creation of social capital.
- There is a significant relationship between individual merits and creation of social capital.
- There is a significant relationship between employees' participation and creation of social capital.
- There is a significant relationship between trust between employees and creation of social capital.

### Literature review

#### *Strategic planning of human resources and its importance in organization*

According to Dyer and Holder (1998) the HR strategies identify that which measures the organization intends to do regarding performance and HR management policies and how these issues are related to the strategy of the company and each other. Such strategies enable the organization to measure development degree and evaluate the results based on the desirable objectives. Determination of a proper HR strategy can matter for the organizations because they have noticed that in 21<sup>st</sup> century, a knowledge-oriented human force

is the most valuable capital. And it is obvious that this capital is not created spontaneously but also it should be gained, maintained and be utilized properly in rode to create added value which requires Thought and Action. On one hand, without planning, it is not possible to take advantages of the human capital in fulfilling long and short term goals of the organization. Thus, the mechanism of the importance to the human capital and using it as an endless and stable capital toward dynamism is the HR strategic planning organization (Yarahmadi Khorasani, 2008). Determination and implementation of a proper and efficient HR plan can provide important results for the organization (Beheshti, 2010). Obtaining and training essential skills to develop the organization, reduce non-functionalist conflict in the organization, more discipline, coordination and greater coherence in conducting affairs by the employees, increase enthusiasm and passion among employees in order to do tasks, create mutual understanding and increase mutual trust between them (Boxall, 2003).

Moreover, the researches show that proper strategic implementation can create a logical organization in which people's participation in decision-making and variability mood and acting creatively is seen more and in such organization, people look for learning to increase the level of their abilities, reinforcing their communicative networks in order to do better group actions and increasing trust and organizational commitment by more interaction (Farhadi, 2009).

## Models of HR strategy

In determination of HR strategic model, various models can be used that some of them are pointed for identification (Farhadi, 2009)

### *Model of Strategic Management of Employees' Advantage ( Systematic View)*

The systematic thought presents a 5-stage framework to clarify the HR strategic planning and its implementation. This model begins today's planning by considering the future.

A stage: Output: Define the ideal success by your own words (Where do we want be at X time in the future?)

B stage: Feedback circle: Measure the key factors and prepare a report from the results' status.

C stage: Input: Data related to the place measurement that the organization is located in it today, is an initial tool to remove gap between today and ideal future using the main strategies which can take the organization to the ideal perspective.

D stage: A set of required and particular annual actions to ensure successful implementation of the scheduled plan.

E stage: Environmental study is a continuous process which is done at least seasonally or every six months.

### *Strategy Model of Human Resources of Culture-Orientation (Cultural Model)*

In this model, "organizational culture" is presented as strategic logic base of the HR. In this model, at the first stage the future that the organization is facing is shaped by a clear understanding from the trend of external environment (customers, investors, legislators, competitors, technology, and globalization) that in fact, determination of perspective- approaches, goals and prioritizations is conducted (Fukuyama, 1995).

- At the next stage, a clear statement from sources of competitive advantage of the organization and related measures to any source.

- At this stage, HR activities which have the most effect on creation and maintenance of the desirable culture are recognized.

- At the last stage, general design and determination of the executive plan is conducted.

### *Model of Strategic Points (Bamberger & Meshoulam, 2005)*

This model which was presented by "Bamberger" and "Meshoulam" includes two aspects (method of control and market of force provision) which result in extracting four strategies named paternal strategy, contractor, commitment and secondary. The strategic reference points are determined by job features, expected features by employees and HR infrastructure features.

**Table 1: Categorization of all HR strategies**

| Commitment strategy | Contractor strategy |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Paternal strategy   | Secondary strategy  |

- In the contractor strategies, all forces have freedom, high managers' merit, and recruitment and selection is done by high accuracy. The reward is based the individual performance and high attention is regarded for creativity and innovation. Moreover, the employees' commitment is high (Chalabi & Mubarak, 2005).

- In the second strategy, jobs are repeated and there is no accuracy and sensitivity, the reward is based on the group supervisor, creativity and innovation is low, managers don't have essential merit, and commitment to the organization is low.

- In paternal strategy, there is roughly accuracy in selecting, the reward is based on the group performance, and there is a few creativity and innovation. Managers have merit to some extent; the employees' commitment to the organization is to the extent.

- In the commitment strategy, selection with accuracy and high sensitivity, high creation and innovation, high merit of managers and employees, reward based on group performance and individual, and a few control is conducted on the employees' work, high commitment, employees' participation in decision-making and high implementation of affairs, the organization culture doesn't protect participation, creativity and competence, the focus is done on education and development of the employees and faithfulness and commitment of the employees toward the organization is high.

The social capital is a set of norms (good deeds) in social systems leading to cooperation level of the society members and reduction of costs level in interchanges and communications. The social capital is a real or potential source according to Pierre Bourdieu view which results in durable networks of more or less institutionalized, mutual acquaintance and recognition or in other words, it's membership in a group that each member has the social capital support (Fanakary Bahri, 2008).

Pantham considers the main bases of the social capital as networks, norms and trust that all these factors can improve the society efficiency by facilitation of coordinated measures (Lin & Bonnie, 2008).

### Significance of Social Capital

The social capital is regarded as key element of the employees and organization's success in communication era and it is a capital which can fulfill the organization's objectives by interaction and communication with people. Today in exporting, the managers need the social capital more than human, physical and economic capital. In fact, the social capital provides suitable base for human and physical capital efficiency. The social capital results in communication creation and optimum participation of a society and finally their mutual profits are supplied. In fact, the social capital is one of the main capabilities of the organization which can affect creation of constant competitive advantage because objectives of this type of capital is to understand and optimum use of the available capabilities in the social networks of the people and groups in the organization (Fanakary Bahri, 2008).

### Advantages of Social Capital

- By increasing trust among people, application of new tools such as e-business or e-government finds more capability.
- Self-control and following accepted norms are observed more, so that there is no need to costly control and monitors.
- Cooperation amount and people's participation in decision-making and implementation of the affairs by a work group or team, strengthening and accountability, responsibility and employees' commitment in doing activities will be more.
- By enhancing the communicative networks, knowledge creation, sharing and using, it will be facilitated based on the common trust.
- Order, harmony, coherence and integrity between members are created due to adherence to the established norms.

### Effective Factors in Social Formation

Various factors are effective on creation of the social capital in the organization including:

- Application of HR efficient strategies in which it has been attempted to spread mutual trust, attention to individual's generosity, enforcement of self-belief, creation and support area of creativity, innovation, improvement and enforcement of relations between people had been considered particularly (Baron & Kreps, 2005).

- Presence of the flexible structures in the organization, bureaucracy reduction and effective application of information and communicative technology can enforce the communicative networks and interaction between them along with providing an increase of commitment level and satisfaction (Badakhshani & Forouzanfar, 2010)

- Continuous training in this regard could have important role because through the process of learning and by educational programs, attitudes and behaviors are changed. Individuals through learning by problem-solving and learning through interaction with others can know each other or have effective communication with each other, and how to raise their opinions and ideas to create more level of understanding and less conflict (Andishmand, 2009).

- Organizational culture in which people are constantly encouraged to think and solve problems collectively, a culture in which people are encouraged toward cooperation, responsibility, partner-

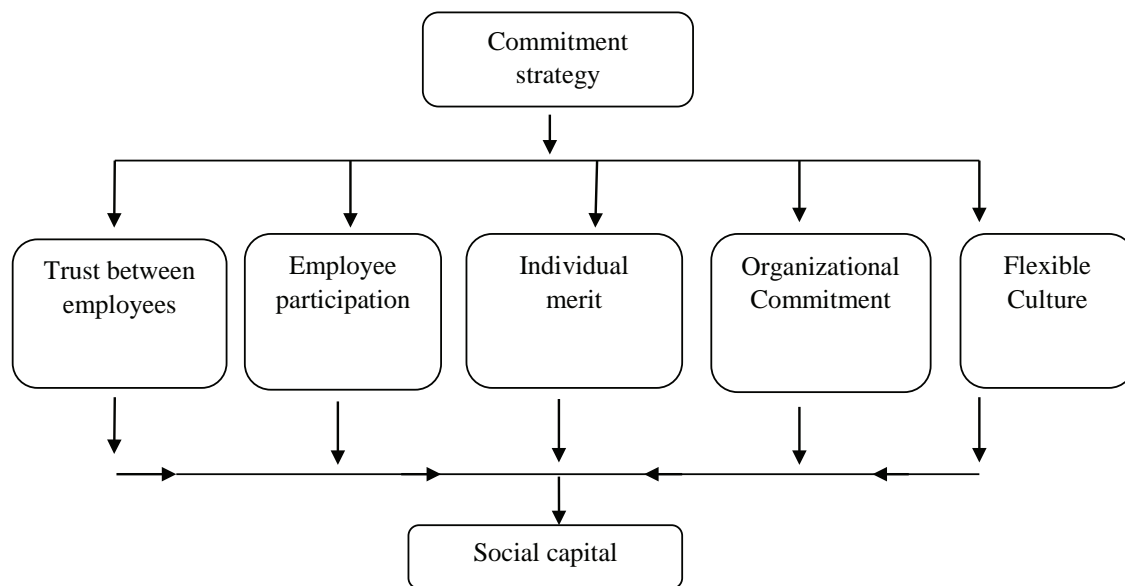
ship, and empathy and a culture in which being learning and learners is supported, course of communication is facilitated, and loyalty, personal commitment, team working socialization is extended (Saul & Gass, 2009)

In study of factors, the key role of leadership in the organization should be noted because by knowledge-based leaders, optimistic, committed to the ethics, with a spirit of cooperation rather than control (delegate more authority to workers) seeks to build trust and commitment in facilitating current climate of information sharing can encourage free

expression and easy communication (Bamberger & Meshoulam, 2005).

### Conceptual Model of Research

The present research focuses on SRP model based on the research literature in study of HR strategic planning relation that considering the four key strategies in this model (commitment, paternal, contractor and secondary), the commitment strategy has been used based on the features of social capital creation.



**Figure 1. Conceptual model of research**

### Materials and Methods

The research is applicable in terms of the objective and descriptive survey in terms of the method. Data collection was used by using library method in section of the theoretical basis and research history. In order to collect data for study of the hypotheses of the research-made questionnaire based on the theoretical structure, research history and similar researches available in the hypotheses were used. In order to score the questionnaires choices, Likert scale was used. In order to measure validity, the method of expert judgment was applied. The determined questionnaire was offered to a couple of professors and executive experts who were proficient at the subject and after some required modifications and pre-tests, its content validity was confirmed. The reliability of the whole questionnaire is con-

firmed as internal consistency by Cronbach's alpha method using SPSS software with (0/879) figure. At level of data analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequency, frequency percentage, density percentage as a figure and table to process demographic information was applied.

Moreover, the table of frequency for all questions related to each variable, mean, mode and SD was also made. To test normality of the variables, Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was applied. In study of the hypotheses, the statistical inferential methods including Pearson correlation coefficient and multi-variable regression were utilized. The results of Variance analysis of F-test have been used to determine the regression significance. The Friedman test was used for rating research variables according to the respondents' view. All data analyses have been done by SPSS software.

## Results

From 170 persons in the population, (44/1%) women, (55/9%) men, in terms of education (13/5%) diploma, (65/9%) Bachelor, (15/9%) Master and (1/2%) PhD, in terms of years of service, (1-5) years (39/4%), 5-10 years (45/3%) and more than 10 years (15/3%) and in terms of job title, managers (5/9%)

and employees (94/1%). Regarding the five components of commitment strategy, mean of the scores related to the flexible culture was (3/15), organizational commitment (3/65), individual merits (3/122), employees' participation (3/14) and trust between employees (3/408) that all are higher than the average level. Moreover, mean of all social capital variables is gained (3/78) that the theoretical mean (3) was more.

**Table 2: Test of research variables normality**

| Employees Participation | Organizational Commitment | Individual Merits | Trust between Employees | Flexible Culture | Social Capital | Level of significance |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 249/0                   | 102/.                     | 245/0             | 256/.                   | 164/0            | 574/0          | sig                   |

Considering the above table results, it is observed that value of Sig for each of the variables was

more from the value of (0/05), therefore normality of the variables is verified at level of 95% confidence.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation Test**

| Pearson correlation relationship | r     | Sig   | Test result                            |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------|--|
| Flexible culture                 | 817/0 | 000/0 | H <sub>0</sub> hypothesis is rejected. |
| Organizational commitment        | 809/0 | 000/0 | H <sub>0</sub> hypothesis is rejected. |
| Social capital Individual merits | 727/0 | 000/0 | H <sub>0</sub> hypothesis is rejected. |
| Employees Participation          | 826/0 | 000/0 | H <sub>0</sub> hypothesis is rejected. |
| Trust between Employees          | 881/0 | 000/0 | H <sub>0</sub> hypothesis is rejected. |

**Table 4: The Multiple Correlation Coefficients and Determination Coefficient**

| Adjusted coefficient of determination | Determination Coefficient | The multiple correlation coefficient |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 874/0                                 | 877/0                     | 937/0                                |

**Table 5: Regression Model Coefficients**

| Model                     | Non-standardized Coefficients |       | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig    |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|--------|
|                           | B                             | SD    | Beta Coefficient          |       |        |
| Constant Value            | 511/0                         | 107/0 | -                         | 784/4 | 000/0  |
| Flexible culture          | 388/0                         | 046/0 | 427/0                     | 471/8 | 000/0  |
| Organizational commitment | 224/0                         | 041/0 | 248/0                     | 519/5 | 000/0  |
| Individual merits         | 127/0                         | 040/0 | 155/0                     | 141/3 | 002/0  |
| Employees Participation   | 128/0                         | 053/0 | 126/0                     | 419/2 | 017/0  |
| Trust between Employees   | 096/0                         | 040/0 | 097/0                     | 419/2 | 0017/0 |

**Table 6: ANOVA Analytical Table for Significance of Regression Model**

| Sig   | F       | df | Significance of model           |
|-------|---------|----|---------------------------------|
| 000/0 | 774/234 | 5  | Regression model is significant |

Considering the table results, based on the variance analysis, F test, calculated F value at level of 5% Alpha is significant, therefore the regression is significant.

**Table 7: Mean of Dependents Variables Rating**

| Independent variable      | Rating mean |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Flexible culture          | 57/2        |
| Employees' participation  | 3/11        |
| Trust between employees   | 3/12        |
| Individual merits         | 31/2        |
| Organizational commitment | 89/3        |

**Table 8. Friedman Test to Prioritize Variables in Research Hypotheses**

| Sampling volume | Relief degree | Statistical value of test | Sig   | Test result                      |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 175             | 4             | 241/102                   | 000/0 | Rejection of variables' equality |

As it is observed at 5% significance level with 95% of certainty, similarity in rate of the variables is rejected and five variables don't have equal priority. Considering the Friedman test, the variables according to the respondents' view are respectively as follow based on priority:1- organizational commitment, 2- trust between employees,3- Employees' participation,4- Flexibility culture,5-individual merits.

### Findings of the study

Considering the main objective of the research and main hypothesis, the result of the executive process showed there is a positive and significant relationship between elements of the commitment strategy and creation of the social capital. The multiple correlation coefficient of table 3 is equal to 0/937 which shows a relatively severe relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. The determination coefficient of 0/877 shows that 87 % of the changes of the dependent variable with independent variable are being explained.

The results taken from the second hypothesis, Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between flexible culture and creation of the social capital at 95% of certainty (correlation coefficient =0/817 and significance figure =0/000) and with B coefficient calculated as 0/338 in multivariable regression analysis of Table 4, 38/8 % of the changes in creation of the social capital are documented to the changes of the flexible culture and by considering calculated Beta coefficient of Table 4, this variable of 0/427 has changing effect on the dependent variable and according to the Friedman test in rating variables, in Table 6 and 7 , the variable of the flexible culture is placed in the fourth priority. The results taken from the second hypothesis, Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between organizational commitment and creation of the social capital at 95% of certainty (correlation coefficient =0/809 and significance figure =0/000) and with B coefficient calculated as 0/224 in multivariable regression analysis of Table 4, 22/4 % of the changes in creation of the social capital are documented to the changes of the organizational commitment and by considering calculated Beta coefficient of Table 4, this variable of 0/248 has changing effect on the dependent variable and according to the Friedman test in rating variables, in Table 6 and 7 , the variable of the organizational commitment is placed in the first priority.

The results taken from the third hypothesis, Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between individual merits and creation of the social capital at 95% of certainty (correlation coefficient =0/727 and significance figure =0/000) and with B coefficient calculated as 0/124 in multivariable regression analysis of Table 4, 12/7 % of the changes in creation of the social capital are documented to the changes of the individual merits and by considering calculated Beta coefficient of Table 4, this variable of 0/155 has changing effect on the dependent variable and according to the Friedman test, in Table 6 and 7 , this variable is placed in the fifth or last priority. The results taken from the fourth hypothesis, Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between employees' participation in decision-making and creation of the social capital at 95% of certainty (correlation coefficient =0/826 and significance figure =0/000) and with B coefficient calculated as 0/128 in multivariable regression analysis of Table 4, 12/8 % of the changes in the social capital are documented to the changes of the employees' participation and by considering calculated Beta coefficient of Table 4, this variable of 0/126 has changing effect on the dependent variable and according to the Friedman test, in Table 6 and 7 , the employees' participation is placed in the third priority. The results taken from the fifth hypoth-

esis, Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between trust between employees and creation of the social capital at 95% of certainty (correlation coefficient = 0/881 and significance figure = 0/000 (and with B coefficient calculated as 0/096 in multivariable regression analysis of Table 4, 9/6 % of the changes in the social capital are documented to the changes of the trust between employees and by considering calculated Beta coefficient of Table 4, this variable of 0/097 has changing effect on the dependent variable and according to the Friedman test, in Table 6 and 7, the trust between employees is placed in the second priority.

## Conclusion

Considering the main objective of the research, result of the executive process of this research indicates there is a significant relationship between elements of the commitment strategy in HR strategic programming and creation of the social capital in Payam Nour University of Zanjan. Therefore, it can conclude that creation of the social capital in each organization (Payam Nour University of Ardebil) requires making basis and considering the basis factors. On one hand, if University is seeking such objective to be able to take advantages of the available abilities in the social network and to submit required exploitation by its human capitals in order to make the university reach the competitive advantage in this regard, at first the requirements should be prepared for forming the social capital through paying attention to the basic factors including efficient HR strategies. In this research, it was found that presence of a proper HR strategy can form an organization in which culture of cooperation, empathy, sincerity and trust exist and an environment will be prepared for the people that the employees are places constantly in the learning path in order to improve level of their own abilities, plus reinforcing the communicative networks to facilitate group reactions and increasing trust between employees, increasing organizational trust so that a social capital is created that the organization can use it. In prioritizing implementation of features in this strategy, a particular attention should be paid first to the organizational commitment variable and after that the trust is created between the employees because creation of the social capital of such variables in this research is more important according to the respondents and then next steps were made in order to increase the employees' participation and changes of the organizational culture and increasing level of the employees' abilities.

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