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Short Communication

The Relationship between Organizational Ethical Values and Learning Agility in Football Club Consumers

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Abstract

Introduction: Learning agility is an important area of study among consumers due to its significant impact on adaptability and success. The exploration of learning agility in marketing is increasing; however, little attention has been paid so far to its predictors and consequences. The aim of the present study is to examine the relationship between organizational ethical values and learning agility in football club consumers.
Material and Methods: This research is descriptive-correlational in nature. The statistical population included customers of sports clubs in Iraq, and a sample of 411 individuals was selected using stratified sampling. The study utilized the Learning Agility Questionnaire by Gravett and Caldwell and the Organizational Ethical Values Questionnaire. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling and the SPSS version 18 and PLS version 4 software packages.
Results: The results showed that ethical values have a significant relationship with learning agility.
Conclusion: The present study highlighted that ethical values play an important role in learning agility, which leads to perceived value in the use of sports services by consumers.
Keywords: *Learning agility, Ethical values, Football club*

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INTRODUCTION

Learning agility is a multidimensional construct that has attracted considerable attention in organizational psychology and human resource management. This concept refers to an individual's ability to learn from experiences and apply that knowledge to new and diverse situations, which is increasingly vital in today's fast-paced and complex work environments. It encompasses several dimensions-including mental agility, people agility, change agility, results agility, and self-awareness-which have been identified through research in the field [1]. The importance of learning agility is emphasized by its association with leadership potential and performance. Individuals with high learning agility are often seen as high-potential employees who can effectively cope with the challenges of dynamic work environments [2, 3]. For example, DeRue and colleagues emphasize that employees

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with diverse job experiences often exhibit higher levels of learning agility, indicating that exposure to various roles enhances one's adaptability and learning capacity [3]. Moreover, a supportive organizational culture that promotes continuous learning and development is crucial for fostering learning agility among employees [4].

Defining learning agility can be complex, as it overlaps with constructs such as adaptability, resilience, and cognitive complexity. According to Meus and colleagues, learning agility is not merely a static trait but a dynamic capability that can be developed over time [5]. This perspective is reinforced by Harvey and Valerio, who state that learning agility is a meta-capability essential for leadership success, especially in unstable and uncertain environments [6]. The ability to learn from past experiences and apply those lessons to future challenges is a hallmark of effective leadership in today's rapidly changing landscape [7].

Learning agility is increasingly recognized as a critical capability for organizations striving to succeed in today's dynamic business environment. Its importance lies in individuals' ability to learn from experience, adapt to new challenges, and apply knowledge effectively across various contexts. This capability is essential for fostering innovation, enhancing performance, and achieving organizational goals, particularly in environments characterized by rapid change and uncertainty.

One of the main reasons for the importance of learning agility in business is its direct connection to leadership effectiveness. Research shows that leaders with high learning agility are better equipped to navigate complex organizational landscapes and respond to evolving demands [5, 8]. This adaptability not only enhances their individual performance but also positively influences team dynamics and overall organizational success. For instance, a researcher emphasizes that individuals with high learning agility can optimize their performance and carry out responsibilities effectively, even with limited resources [9]. This ability to innovate and adapt is crucial for maintaining a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing market.

Furthermore, learning agility contributes to the development of a strong organizational culture that promotes continuous learning and improvement. Organizations that foster a learning culture enable their employees to participate in knowledge sharing and collaborative problem-solving, which is essential for nurturing agility [10, 11]. Such environments encourage employees to embrace change and develop the necessary skills to succeed in uncertain conditions. As Khan has noted, the capacity for entrepreneurial agility-which is rooted in learning agility-enables organizations to seize opportunities and enhance their operational effectiveness [12].

In addition, learning agility is associated with increased employee engagement and retention. Employees with high learning agility are typically more engaged and committed to their roles, as they feel empowered to take on new challenges and contribute to organizational success [13]. This engagement is crucial for reducing turnover rates and ensuring a stable workforce, which is especially important in industries facing talent shortages.

Organizational ethical values are one of the key components in the domain of organizational and learning agility. The study of business ethics gained attention in the humanities in the second half of the 20th century, as adherence to ethical values across all aspects of human life has been considered one of the most important ways to maintain and enhance the well-being of individuals and society [14]. Human activity can only proceed in the right direction under ethical considerations. Ethics protects human actions from deviation and misconduct. Thus, ethical considerations act as a safeguard over the sciences

to prevent any deviation or harm each branch of science and learning may cause to human society. Educational programs, in particular, must be grounded in ethical considerations more than anything else. The formation of ethics within organizations reduces profit-centeredness and fosters closeness with consumers [15, 16].

Regarding the role of ethics in learning agility, it should be noted that in the contemporary business landscape-characterized by dynamic changes and technological advancements-agility has emerged as a vital concept enabling businesses to navigate and grow amid uncertainty and intense competition. The key to enhancing agility lies in gaining comprehensive support from all stakeholders, especially organizational leaders and employees-and this support is not possible without attention to ethical standards and values. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between organizational ethical values and learning agility in consumers of football clubs.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study employed a correlational research design and was conducted in the field. The statistical population consisted of customers of sports clubs in the cities of Baghdad, Babylon, Basra, and Nasiriyah in Iraq. Based on Morgan's table, a minimum sample size of 384 individuals was required. Anticipating a 10% dropout rate, the researchers selected 425 individuals as the sample. A total of 411 participants submitted complete and valid questionnaires for analysis. The sampling method was stratified random sampling.

According to the findings, among the 411 participants, 262 (63.7%) were male and 149 (36.3%) were female. Regarding educational level, 135 individuals (32.8%) had a diploma or associate degree, 221 (53.7%) held a bachelor's degree, 50 (12%) a master's degree, and 5 (1.2%) a doctoral degree. In terms of age, 63 individuals (15.3%) were under 20 years old, 177 (43.1%) were between 21-30 years, 105 (25.5%) between 31-40 years, 55 (13.4%) between 41-50 years, and 11 (2.6%) were over 50 years old.

With respect to club membership duration, 47 participants (11.4%) had less than one year of membership, 88 (21.4%) had 1-2 years, 120 (29.2%) had 2-3 years, 115 (27.9%) had 3-4 years, and 41 (9.9%) had more than 4 years of membership.

To collect data, the following standardized questionnaires were used:

Organizational Ethical Values: The Organizational Ethical Values Questionnaire, developed by Sharma et al. (2008), consists of 9 items across 4 subscales: General Ethical Behaviors (2 items), Ethics and Success (2 items), Tolerance for Unethical Behaviors (3 items), and Sanctions for Unethical Behaviors Related to Personal Interests (2 items). This tool is used to assess organizational ethical values.

Learning Agility: The 25-item questionnaire by Gravett and Caldwell (2016) was used. It includes four sub-dimensions: Mental Agility (6 items), Change Agility (6 items), Results Agility (7 items), and People Agility (6 items).

The reliability of the questionnaires is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha and compositional reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Compositional reliability	AVE
Organizational ethical values	0.75	0.78	0.55
Learning agility	0.92	0.94	0.73

For implementation, the cities were divided into five regions (north, south, east, west, and central). From each city, four clubs were randomly selected (a total of 16 clubs). The researcher

distributed the questionnaires in front of the club entrances between 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM. The average response time was approximately 23 minutes.

Data analysis was performed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

RESULTS

For construct validity (discriminant validity), researchers [17] suggest that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each variable should be greater than its correlation with other variables. This means that the correlation between each latent variable and its indicators (observed variables) should be higher than its correlation with other variables. The square roots of the AVE are provided at the end of each row in Table 2. It can be observed that the values for each variable are greater than their correlations with other variables, indicating acceptable validity of the measurement instruments.

Table 2: Correlation matrix of research variables and AVE square root

Variables	Ethical values	Learning agility
Ethical values	0.78	
Learning agility	0.51	0.81

Based on the data analysis algorithm in the PLS method, after evaluating the fit of the measurement models, structural models, and the overall model, the research hypotheses were tested by examining the significance coefficients of each path as well as the standardized factor loadings.

If the significance coefficient (t-value) of any path exceeds 1.96, the corresponding path is considered significant at the 95% confidence level, and the associated hypothesis is confirmed. According to the tested conceptual model in Figure (1), the output shows the t-values. Therefore, at the 95% confidence level, the hypothesized paths between organizational ethical values and learning agility are statistically significant.

After performing standardized estimation, the causal relationship between the research constructs was examined. As shown in Figure (1), the relationships between the variables are confirmed since their significance values do not fall within the range of -1.96 to +1.96. In other words, organizational ethical values have a direct, positive, and significant effect on learning agility ($t = 6.6$; $\beta = 0.40$).

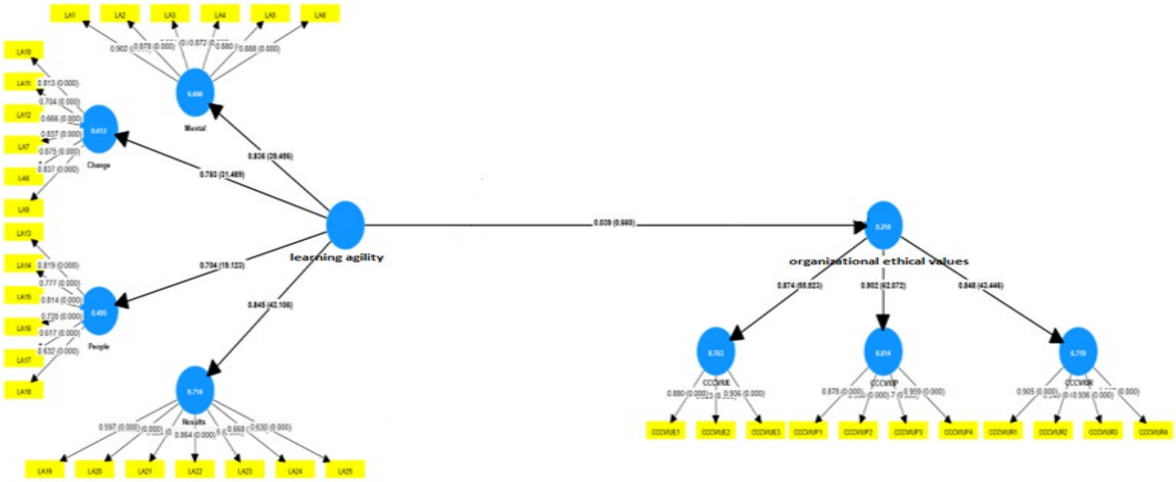

Figure1: Model in the mode of estimating significance and standard coefficients

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between organizational ethical values and learning agility in football club consumers. The results showed that organizational ethical values are significantly related to learning agility. In line with this finding, previous research indicates that ethical values can positively influence both learning agility and organizational agility. Studies suggest that learning agility can be positively affected by the ethical values upheld within an organization. By fostering an ethical culture, sports clubs can enhance their capacity for continuous learning and knowledge sharing, which in turn leads to improved outcomes and performance [18, 7, 8].

There are several limitations in the present study. First, the research was conducted within a single context, which limits the generalizability of the current model. To broaden the applicability of the findings, it is recommended that future studies be conducted in other sports settings or across different industries. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the data does not account for the temporal effects of causal relationships. A longitudinal study would provide stronger evidence and help overcome this limitation.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Sports clubs can leverage learning agility to enhance their organizational capabilities by promoting a learning-oriented culture, providing opportunities for skill development, and encouraging collaboration among members.

Furthermore, adopting an ethical management style can facilitate learning agility within sports clubs.

Sports clubs should also place greater emphasis on ethical components such as social responsibility, justice, and consideration for stakeholder rights, among others.

CONCLUSION

The present study highlighted that ethical values play a significant role in learning agility, which in turn leads to consumers' perception of value in utilizing sports services. Based on existing theories, individuals with higher cognitive levels pay more attention to ethical values, which plays a major role in enhancing learning agility.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues (such as plagiarism, conscious satisfaction, misleading, making and or forging data, publishing or sending to two places, redundancy and etc.) have been fully considered by the writers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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