

A Study of Effective Managerial Skills

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ABSTRACT

This research studies the managerial skills that influence on competency of the managers. The study is done on managers of Technical and professional education institute at Tehran. Three hundred individuals including 210 men and 84 women have been selected by using a sampling method. The questioner for this survey is designed based on the existing techniques of improving manager's competency and comprised of 137 questions. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire and a value of 0.89 was obtained for the total validity. The result of this survey shows that skill factors influencing on managers' competency in order of importance are: financial management, change management, team building risk management, human resource management, technical skills, and attention to organizational interests.. These skills are explained 57.37% of the total variance for manager's competency.

KEYWORDS: Competency, Management, Team Building, Technical Skills, Attention to Organizational Interests.

1. INTRODUCTION

Management might be viewed as one of the most important social activities in the life of modern human beings. Today, the missions and objectives of the organizations are materialized by such activities. Also, the existing resources and facilities are used together with turning the capabilities and talents of the human beings into action: In doing their tasks, the managers seek a process including such constituents as planning, organizing, controlling, stimulation, communication, direction and decision making. Such activities form management and enable reaching the objectives.

To play a successful role is much more related to capability and efficiency of the managers. In addition, in terms of efficiency the managers depend basically on their competency, skill, knowledge level, insight and capabilities. Due to importance of these factors for successful managers, permanent works and follow up are under way in order to find and educate those with certain kinds of competencies, capabilities and skills which enable them to become effective and helpful managers [1]. Today, different meanings of competency are provided while it seems these meanings are similar in many ways, no single definition exists for competency. Competency has been defined as the power, ability and capacity for doing a task. Cav and Mc Keown [2] defined competency as the results from appropriately applying the knowledge and skills. In other words (In other words), competency = skill+ knowledge. Generally speaking, competency refers to all of the respective behaviors and activities, types of knowledge, skills and incentives which are considered as the behavioral, technical and incentive prerequisites for a successful performance in a certain role of profession [3].

Competency refers to any kinds of knowledge, skill or personal characteristics which enable an individual to successfully perform (Government of Saskatchewan, 1998). Competency involves those behaviors and characteristics which contribute to an individual's efficiency in his or her work place [4]. Woodruffe [5] defined competency as comprised of a set of behavioral patterns which a person needs to bring them into a position so that he or she can competently perform his or her tasks. Kochanski [6] provided a simple description of competency. He defined competency as a factor for employees' success in their organizations, for instance, competency should be viewed as a factor which discriminates the individuals with higher, medium or lower performances. Competencies have been defined through various methods. However, most of the models developed for competencies include the basics and elements of knowledge. Capabilities, skills, attitudes and insights, personal characteristics, behaviors and qualifications which are related to organizational objectives. Also, they play key roles in reaching the objectives. Not only includes the ability to do a task, but the effective performance also involves the incentive or tendency to do the job [7]. Competency model is a descriptive tool for introduction of the competencies needed to do a certain role in a job, profession, organization or business unit [8].

Competency models play vital roles in all processes of human resource management systems. Because with identification of the competencies required to make a job efficient, the organization can concentrate on the functions of selection, training, evaluation and performance in succession planning system which are mostly related to successful performance. For competency of the managers, several researches have been carried out some of which are discussed as follows: European association for human resource management [9] introduced three major approaches for competency of managers which include the following items:

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- Behavioral approach: In this approach, competency is identified based on behavioral terms and the behaviors related to performance are introduced. In this approach, the competencies are variously defined in terms of such major personal characteristics as habits, personality features, knowledge, skills and incentives of the individual in the profession which is related to higher performances.

- Standard approach: In this approach, the minimum performance standards are introduced in management positions in order to guarantee quality resulted from the job based on functional analysis of job or position.

- Contingency approach: This approach can be also considered as a subset of behavioral approach, but it mainly focuses on the fact if the position factors can influence on individual competency as needed for higher performance.

Competency model includes a set of successful factors comprised of key behaviors needed for higher performance in a certain job [10]. Several investigations have been done on the competency of the managers some of which include as the following: In a research entitled “introduction to process requirements and criteria for selection of the managers for government’s human resources”, Adel Azar and Latifi [11] have defined the skills the managers need. The skills include: technical skills, human skills, perception skills, analysis skills, recognition skills, interpersonal communication, skills, team work skills and computer skills. Turner and Crawford [12] categorized competency into two classes of organizational and individual levels. Individual competencies are seen in individuals and include such characteristics as knowledge, skill, capability, experiences belong to organizations and are placed in the processes and structures. Even they remain when individuals turn over. In a research entitled as “studying the competencies of human resources and their effects on the performances of human resource managers: Saipa group”, Zarei [13] found that a significant and positive correlation exists between competencies of human resources and performances of human resources. The finalized model of this research for competencies of human resource include the following:

Information technology, business knowledge strategic management, talent management, quality of work life, and relationship between the employees. Soltani [14] identified some features which can influence on the performances of the managers as follows: loyalty to the organization, being interested in organizational achievement, viewing organizational objectives as superior than personal objectives, being target directed, being process directed being progress directed, making the organization active and keeping it up with modern technologies, being dynamic and stimulated, creating incentive and drive in other employees, follow up and removing barriers, limitations, failure, introducing with strengths and weaknesses, organization and employees, removing weaknesses and utilization of strengths, preparing a long term strategic plan for reaching organizational objectives, introducing with internal setting and outside environment of the organization including the rivals, customers and regulations, utilization of basic solutions instead of transient solutions, direction, monitoring and permanent evaluation of the plans and employees of the organization, adherence to moral principles, trust in the subordinates, establishing good relationship with employees, good leadership and direction, having powerful information, adaptability of the organization with environment, increased awareness and religious and national sensitivities, reconstruction and renovation of beliefs and insights in the behaviors of the employees, skills for creating unity, empathy, accepting risks for decision making, being sensitive to needs and feelings of the customers and employees.

In a research entitled “designing a competency model for university managers”, with using concept sketching technique, Boheirayi [15] designed a competency model for university managers with three axes of competency including individual, managerial and social competencies, and 11 main competencies and 38 auxiliary competencies. The main competencies in this model include:

Moral and value competencies, personality characteristics, decision making, perception, leadership, administration, student directed, team work, management of individuals and communication competencies.

With using evidences from Nahjolbalaghe, [16] categorized the criteria for selection and election into for classes:

- 1- Ideological criteria like faith,
- 2- Background criteria like good records,
- 3- Personality criteria like knowledge, techniques and work experiences,
- 4- Moral and value criteria.

As mentioned earlier, the current research is mainly intended to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the individual factors influencing on promotion of managers` professional competencies (in professional and technical institutes) comprised of?
- 2- How are these factors and indices prioritized?

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The current research uses an applied method with respect to the objectives, uses a quantitative method in terms of the data, and uses a survey method with respect to importance. In order to introduce the competency factors, and explorative factor analysis model is used.

The statistical community of the research includes all managers at Tehran`s technical and professional education complexes. The hundred individuals have been randomly selected as the sample which involves 210

men and 84 women. A researcher made questionnaire 137 developed from previous researches and investigations were used as measurement tool. It was used to measure the managers' competency. Reliability of the questionnaire was obtained as 0.89 for Cronbach's alpha. Also the validity was calculated by factor analysis.

3. RESULTS

A) In order to summarize the materials, descriptive methods (minimum, maximum, SD, Skewedness and Kurtosis) have been used.

The following can be inferred from the numbers of the table.

1-A comparison of the means for the eight factors as viewed by the sample groups generally indicated that such factors as team building, technical skill, change management, understanding individual differences, financial management, attention to organizational interests and crisis management are respectively influencing on the competencies of the managers.

2-A comparison of the SD's for the factors as viewed by the sample groups generally showed that distribution in team building is more than other factors.

3-As viewed by the sample group, the lowest score is for the financial management and the highest score is for understanding individual differences.

4-A positive skewedness indicates that the normal distribution is skewed to the right direction and a positive kurtosis indicates that the distribution is longer than the longer distribution.

B) Data Analysis

In order to prioritize the factors influencing on the competencies of the managers in Tehran's professional and technical education complexes, and analysis of the major factors with varimax rotation method has been used.

Having done factor analysis by using varimax rotation and in order to derive good factors in terms of numbers and contents and with regarding such indices as sampling adequacy ($KMO = 0.74$), and Bartlett test ($Bartlett = 22103.859, P < 0.001$), the Eigen value, percentage of variance explained, factor analysis higher than 0.3 were determined by having 3 items in a factor. Having done the factor analysis, eight factors which totally explain 57.37% of the variance were derived from the data. The questions which were correlated with a factor and were forming a sub- test were derived and named. Finally, the framework of the model was provided.

Table 1. Descriptive indices for the variables

Factors	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewedness	kurtosis
Perception of individual differences	2.88	15.63	5.2350	1.07527	2.719	5.867
Financial management	2.25	11.00	5.0875	1.11169	0.178	1.771
Change management	2.13	7.00	5.2864	1.22428	-0.616	-0.383
Team building	2.38	15.38	5.4550	1.30556	0.852	0.322
Crisis management	3.00	7.08	4.7498	0.65547	0.548	0.850
Human resource management	3.00	7.25	5.3970	0.70633	-0.057	0.831
Technical skills	3.25	7.00	5.3719	0.69841	-0.167	0.065
Attention to organizational interests	3.00	6.75	4.7750	0.69603	0.387	0.109

Table 2. Final characteristics of factor analysis for deriving the factors influencing on managers' competencies

Factor	Eigen Value	Variance %	Cumulative Percentage
1	9.967	12.459	12.459
2	6.459	8.074	20.533
3	6.157	7.696	27.229
4	5.566	6.957	35.186
5	5.122	6.402	45.588
6	4.821	6.027	47.615
7	3.929	4.898	52.513
8	3.883	4.854	57.367

As can be seen from the above table, the share of the first factor with an Eigen value of 10 explains about 12/5% of the total variances.

As the non - rotated factor Matrix and its factor loading don't provide significant structures, it was determined to transfer the derived factors to the new axes based on the common methods by varimax rotation so that exploration of the general body of questionnaire could be done together with enabling recognition of simple structure which shows the main lines in order to reach interpretable solutions. Table 3 outlines the factor matrix created by varimax rotation.

Table 3. Matrices of the rotated factors for 137 questions by using varimax.

Q1	I1	Q2	I2	Q3	I3	Q4	I4	Q5	I5	Q6	I6	Q7	I7	Q8	I8
84	0.79	80	0.67	130	0.73	103	0.72	21	0.78	120	0.61	122	0.67	0.67	0.55
85	0.78	67	0.65	134	0.68	105	0.65	62	0.73	119	0.60	121	0.65	0.65	0.51
88	0.77	81	0.61	131	0.65	107	0.62	94	0.67	118	0.58	35	0.58	0.58	0.26
90	0.75	53	0.59	132	0.6	106	0.58	93	0.43	116	0.53	34	0.45	0.45	
91	0.73	74	0.58	124	0.56	108	0.52	15	0.44						
96	0.72	59	0.56	129	0.54	110	0.44								
99	0.72	55	0.55	117	0.52										
102	0.68	82	0.42	135	0.48										
112	0.62														

According to the analysis, eight factors have been derived for which the criteria have been defined and the derived factors have been named as the following:

a) The rapture and size of the variables for which their derived factors were playing the most notable role.

b) Study of the vocabularies and terms on order to observed the name, nature of the perspective and implication of the variables.

c) The current theories and results from previous investigations.

According to the above mentioned criteria, the eight factors have been named as the following:

First factor: perception of individual differences comprised of 9 indices, second factor: change management comprised of 8 indices, third factor: financial management comprised of 8 indices; fourth factor: team building comprised of 6 indices, fifth factor comprised of 5 indices, sixth factor; crisis seventh factor; technical skill comprised of 4 indices and eighth factor; observation of organizational interests comprised of 3 indices. On the other hand, in order to compare the responses of men and women, independent T test was used. The results indicated that there was no significant between men and women in terms of each the above mentioned factors.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results from the current research indicated the following:

1-Totally, 47 indices have been finalized for the competencies of the managers at Tehran's education complexes.

2-Totally, 8 factors have been finalized for determination of the competencies of the managers at Tehran's professional and technical education complexes.

First factor: perception of individual differences (12.46%) , third factor (7.7%) , fourth factor; team building (6.9%) , fifth factor , crisis management (6.40%) , sit the factor, human resource management (6.3%), seventh factor; technical skills (4.9%) ; eighth factor; perception of organization interests (4.86%).

3-Each of the factors include the following indices with respect to their priorities:

First factor (Perception of individual differences) includes the following indices: 1- perception of others emotions and interests 2- perception of the main reasons too individuals' behaviors, 3- perception of others abilities 4- perception of others' intentions, 5- Perception of others' needs, 6- Implementation of plans with their experimental backgrounds, 7- prediction of risk comes, 8- Importance of others' comments on oneself, 9- Expression of employees' job particulars

Second factor (change management) includes the following indices: 1- Identification and analysis of the current position, 2- observation and controlling service / production operations, 3- preparation of the grounds for changes in the organization, 4- participating in challenging activities 5- voluntary responsibilities, 6- Investigation of effect due to technological changes in the organization, 7- Long term planning, 8- removing resistance against change.

Third factor (financial management) includes the following indices: 1- command in auditing, 2- command in legal issues, 3, command in accounting , 4- command in Contracts, 5- having Sufficient experiences on executive affairs, 6- command in financial affairs, 7- perception of rules and regulations , 8- having perception skills.

Fourth factor (team building) includes the following indices:1- utilization of potential and defector Sources , 2- emphasizing on teamwork , 3- Introduction of factors influencing on teamwork, 4- creation of a good environment for teamwork, 5- exploration of new ways for doing tasks, 6- believing in innovation

Fifth factor (crisis management) includes the following indices: 1- making appropriate decisions in critical Situations, 2- overcoming the problems, 3- Identification of factors which cause crisis, 4- Formation of specialized groups in critical situations, 5- Leadership capability

Sixth factor (human resource management) includes the following indices: 1- having specialized knowledge, 2- Capability of human resource management, 4- capability of control and supervision

Seventh factor (technical skills) includes the following indices: 1- having technical skills, 2- having marketing skills, 3- evaluation of the individual steps for problem solving, 4- provision of the final solution for problem solving.

Eight factor (Perception of organizational interests) includes the following indices: 1- being aware of organizational perspectives, 2- efforts for organization's professional growth, 3- preferring organizational interests over personal interests.

These findings match with results from research done by Moosazadeh and Adli [4], Zanjani, et al. [9], Azar and Latifi [11], Turner and Crawford [12] and Zarei [13].

The most appropriate model of competency of the managers in Tehran's professional and technical education complexes is as following figure.

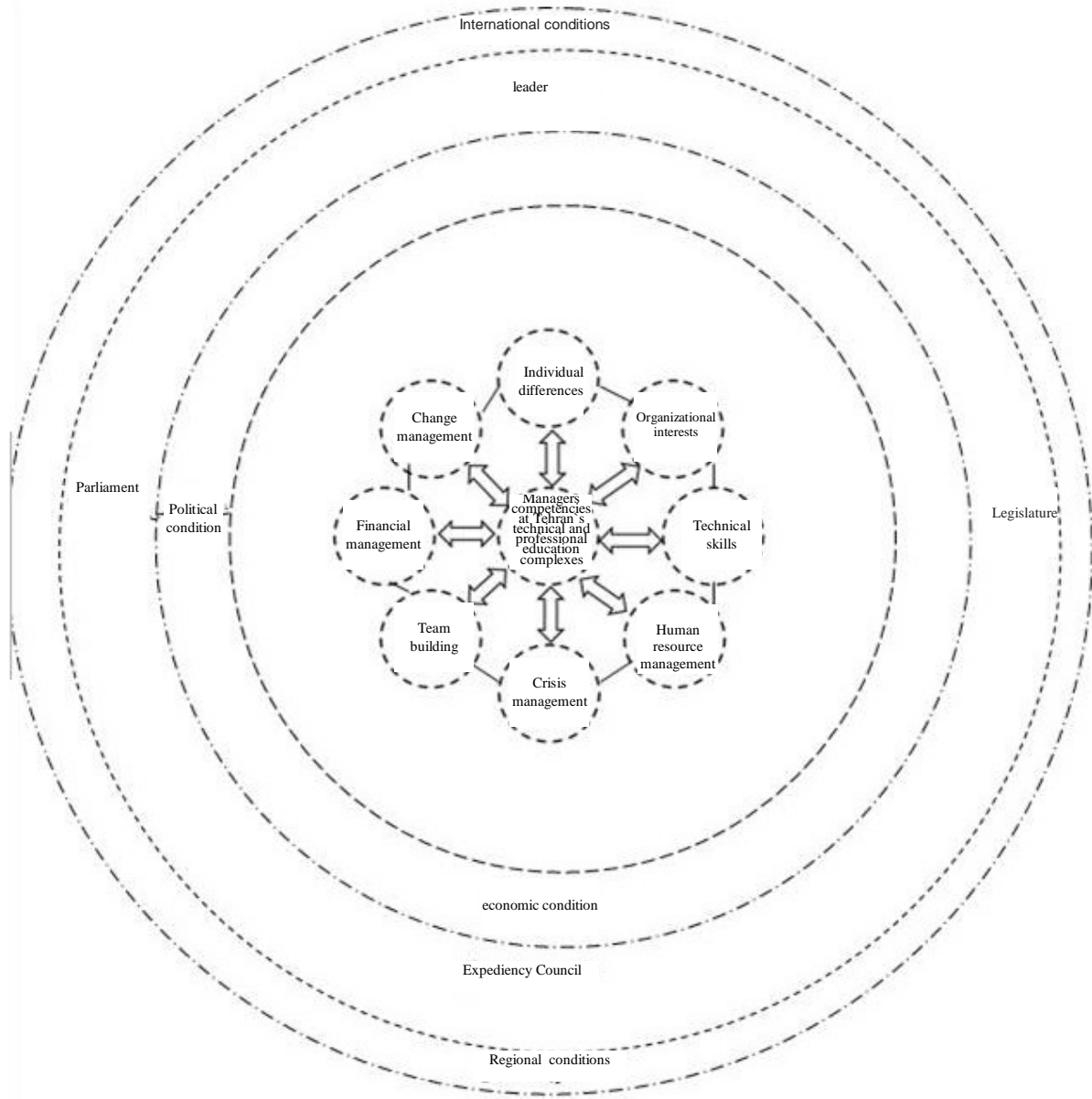


Figure 1. Model of competency for the managers at Tehran's technical and professional education complexes

Competency in the current research should be due by a group of experienced instructors while the indices be formulated and used for election and selection of the managers. We recommend that the manager should be selected based on their education in educational technical or professional fields. Also, we recommend that the factors influencing on the managers' competency should be justified within the framework of annual on service education, especially in summer. All the indices for managers' competency should be provided to the technical and professional organizations at the provinces so that higher quality for open technical and professional organizations at the provinces so that higher quality for open technical and professional institutes could be materialized.

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