

## Identification of Managerial Competences in the Fundamental Evolution Plan and Education Outlook Using Future Studies Approach (Case Study: Khuzestan Province Ministry of Education Managers)

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Received: April 20, 2015

Accepted: June 15, 2015

### ABSTRACT

The Fundamental Evolution Plan clarifies fundamental and leading principles and regulations which are used to fulfill its perspectives and objectives. In doing so, principles and components of managerial competences are as follows: religion-basedness and justice-orientedness, responsibility and accountability, meritocracy, participation seeking, research-basedness, holism, transparency, and continuity and cohesion. Methodology of this research is a descriptive survey. To analyze data obtained from the questionnaire, statistical methodologies including finding patterns for structural equations and Friedman grading test were utilized. Results show that an assortment of above-mentioned components has a significant impact on formation of competences by managers working at the Ministry of Education. Results obtained from the equations used in this research indicated that all components, save for the first one, i.e., religion-basedness and justice-orientedness, are good predictors for measuring managerial competence among the managers and personnel working at the Ministry of Education with impact factor of 0.71, so that their impact factor is between 0.80 to 0.90. Among above components, holism, continuity, and cohesion have the highest prediction ability with impact factor of 0.90.

**KEY WORDS:** Human resources development; future studies; competences; Evolution Plan of the Ministry of Education.

### INTRODUCTION

In all organizations, management constitutes the most important factor in achieving organizational objectives. The organization's success would be secured provided that there is a competent, efficient, skillful, experienced, and fully knowledgeable about managerial principles and techniques at the apex of the organization. On the other side, along with new developments in the business arena, the patterns for supply, employment, and development of human resources have begun to be changed in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Developments such as staff maturity, appearance of knowledge forces in all aspects, scientism at all organizational processes, upstream documents like the Fundamental Evolution Plan and the 20-Year Outlook Plan, necessity of knowledge base improvement at all organizational levels, high rates of modern technologies' growth, and increase in importance of social and human investments at the process for improvement of countries have directed modern management strategies toward meritocracy. In fact, the progress made by the organizations toward establishment of meritocracy is started upon consideration of the facts that improvement of organizations and countries is associated with creativity and innovativeness of human resources development and that successful organizations are those which are able to employ the best people equipped with the highest capabilities and competences. The objective *First Who, Then What* is one of the most important objectives of present-day excellent organizations (Collins and Jerry, 2001). Therefore, commitment expressed by advanced societies to meritocracy and paving the way for governance of the competent at all social aspects and areas are among important secrets of their development—the objective which is met through establishment of a competence system with national, regional, and global definitions at important organizations and pillars of the community. Moreover, personal, occupational, and behavioral competences and capabilities of the citizens form significant indices for their level of development (Ebili, 2005).

Fulfillment of the State's Outlook Plan and acceleration in achieving its purposes call for taking required steps and establishing coherence and cohesion at all layers of the organization so that making strides thereto is considered as a chief task to be completed by all personnel who regard it as their organizational and citizenship behaviors. Having a look at the Education's 20-Year National Plan indicates that the managerial system of this Ministry is an efficient, effective, perfectionist, and revolutionary one. This, undoubtedly, calls for developed human resources in the future. Consequently, identification of managerial competences of Khuzestan Province's Education managers based on the competence model is of paramount importance due to sensitivity of managers' activities and necessity of taking a coherent approach in selecting and developing agents of this group of managers and dearth of comprehensive studies on managerial competence of the Education managers. With consideration given to the importance of competence at the present age, the present study intends to investigate the Fundamental Evolution Plan as illustrator of basic and directing principles and rules, which can make possible achievement of such perspectives and objectives. In doing so, principles

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and components of managerial competences are as follows: religion-basedness, justice-orientedness, responsibility and accountability, meritocracy, participation seeking, research-basedness, holism, transparency, continuity, and cohesion. A competence model is, finally, to be designated for Khuzestan Province Ministry of Education managers.

**Statement of Problem:** Competence is any sort of knowledge, skills, or characteristics that enables a person to have successful performance; it is measurable characteristic of a person that is associated with his/her effective performance in specific occupation, organization, and culture.

Future studies include a series of attempts that try to embody the potential future and plan therefor using analysis of resources, patterns, and change factors. Future studies illustrate how the reality of future is born out of changes/non-changes of the present (Maleki Far et al., 2006). Designation and description of the competence model based on the upstream documents especially in the Education system lack a long, significant history. Many managers believe that previous behavioral patterns are no longer able to solve present problems, failing to provide a confident coverage on system mechanism processes. Thus, there is a type of uncertainty happening upon making decisions and offering strategic plans whose minimum disadvantage is loss of human and financial capitals in different sections of the system (Dorri, 2001). In this respect, World Bank Group's 1998 report regarding the split in human resources development is significant (Table 1) (Ghaffarian, 2000, page: 9).

*Table 1: The split in human resources development*

Country	Annual wealth (dollars)	Human resources share	Physical wealth share	Natural wealth share
Japan	565,000	%80	%18	%2
Spain	268,000	%78	%13	%9
Turkey	34,000	%72	%15	%13
Iran	38,000	%34	%37	%29

On the other hand, the Fundamental Evolution Plan in the Education is expresses in the Leadership and Management System as follows: "The Leadership and Management System at the State's 20-year perspective is an efficient, effective, and perfectionist system relying on the superior proportion of human resources equipped with excellent capabilities at the Islamic Republic of Iran in the regional scale that is justice-based, learning, participation seeking, pious, trimmed with Islamic virtues, emanating righteous actions, perfectionist, revolutionary, evolving, astute, commitment, trustworthy, conversant, and loyal" (Fundamental Evolution Plan in the Education, 2011).

Using Iran's Fundamental Evolution Plan, Education's 20-Year National Plan, and 20-Year Outlook Plan, the paradigm suggested by the present research includes six main dimensions and eight secondary components. Thus, with consideration given to above-said components and variables, the primary pattern in the Figure 1 was proposed. Afterward, main components and framework of the model as well as the relationships dominant thereon are analyzed and examined in order to gain a thorough insight into the future studies in Education's human resources development.

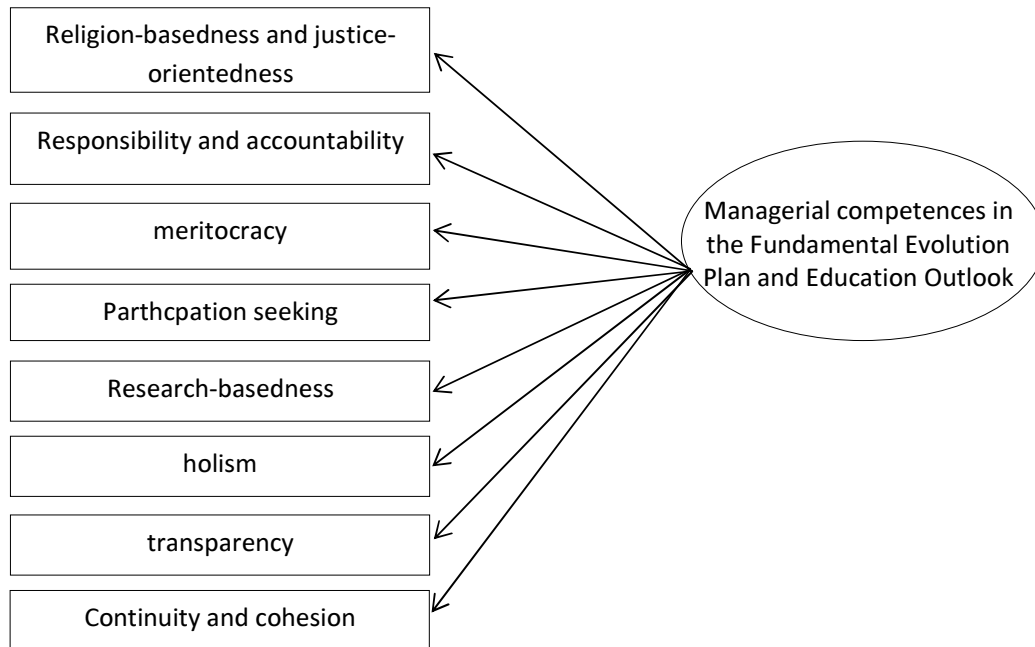


Figure 1: Primarily suggested paradigm

Generally, according to above intimations, the chief issue in the present research is to provide answers for the common question: "What is the desirable paradigm for future of the Education to identify managerial competences in managers based on the Fundamental Evolution Plan and 20-Year Outlook Plan?"

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### -Research Design

Delineation of research's objectives calls for a strong reasoning, which is provided through searching in research literatures and theoretical topics and designating general theorems expressed by related experts' viewpoints. The present study is based on practical purposes to find a pattern for analyzing future studies and identify managerial competences based on the Fundamental Evolution Plan and Iran's 20-Year Outlook Plan. This research is, accordingly, a descriptive survey. Both qualitative analysis methods and experts' opinions are presented in this research, which uses descriptive statistics (dispersion concentration indices) inferential statistics, covariance and correlation matrices analysis (analysis of structural equation models).

Cronbach's alpha reliability test was conducted to determine significance level of the questionnaire using SPSS, version 15. Statistical community of this research includes approximately 200 persons from proficient managers, assistants, experts, and manager general in charge of Khuzestan Province Ministry of Education, who had slight acquaintance with the Iran's Fundamental Evolution Plan, Education's 20-Year National Plan, and 20-Year Outlook Plan. The researcher, therefore, identified 132 persons who were qualified to take part in the research using non-probabilistic sampling method. According to the table provided by Cerjesi and Morgan (1970), 119 subjects were selected to answer the questions. The answers were then analyzed. There are times when the researcher may, and should, obtain data from certain people instead of those at hand (certain people are those who are in accord with the researcher's particular criteria—the method which is called purposeful sampling (Omasekaran, 2002, p: 103).

Validity of the study was affirmed using content creditability by Education experts and specialists, as shown in the Table 1. Cronbach's alpha voted to reliability of the research's dimensions and components in preparation of human resources development process (alpha coefficient: 0.98). According to the standardized alpha coefficient in model (0.97), this was concluded that this coefficient has been calculated in case each of the model's components is removed. In case deletion of one component causes significant change in alpha amount, the related design should be modified. In the present research design, no one of the components was found to increase or decrease the alpha amount. Thus, all components remain in the model with only minor changes and relocations.

**Table 3:** Distribution of questionnaire items based on components of research model

Main dimension	Component	Number of articles	Article
Managerial competence in the Fundamental Evolution Plan and Education Outlook	1 <sup>st</sup> com. religion-basedness and justice-orientedness	3	Compatibility of approaches, purposes, plans, and managerial methods with Islamic criteria
			Priority of religious and justice-oriented outlook in developing and implementing plans at different managerial levels
			Just distribution of resources and facilities and paying attention to schools and supportive educational regions
	2 <sup>nd</sup> com. responsibility and accountability	3	responsibility and accountability of the leadership system toward its functions, tasks, outlooks, and strategies
			responsibility and accountability toward its performance
			Good performance of managers in completing their duties and activities at different levels
	3 <sup>rd</sup> com. meritocracy	3	Making use of qualified religious, ethical, and scientist persons at the head of leadership and management affairs
			Making use of experiences gained by those who have resigned from their positions in accepted causes
			Preventing from biased, favoritism-based appointments
	4 <sup>th</sup> com. participation seeking	2	Having consultation and synergy at all decision-making levels
			Participation of educational managers, teachers, and parents in school quality improvement processes
	5 <sup>th</sup> com. research-basedness	2	Making decisions by managers and leader based on scientific-research findings
			Making decisions aided by management information systems
	6 <sup>th</sup> com. holism	2	Paying attention to all organizational aspects (content and structural variables)
			Making conjoint use of peripheral and direct outlooks in leadership and directorship
	7 <sup>th</sup> com. transparency	3	Establishment of supervision and evaluation system and continuous presentation of reports in web-based, mechanized manner
			Delineation of policies and reasons for making large-scale decisions at different organizational levels
			Obviating obscurities upon misunderstandings and gossips
	8 <sup>th</sup> com. Continuity and cohesion	3	Continuity and cohesion at different superiors, intermediate, and operational management levels in order to fulfill approved decisions
			Continuity and cohesion in management process based on successes, experiences, and attempts made by previous managers
			Continuity and cohesion in plans' content and commitment thereto at all management levels and managerial courses (Education National Plan, 2005)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After experts' opinions were gathered and components were coded, as cited in the research methodology, data was analyzed using statistical methods, whose results are as is followed. Friedman test was used to investigate importance of the factors impacting on preparation of Education human resources development in order to check their sameness or difference. The results had two types of outputs. Table 4 shows the first output, indicating that importance of examined factors and/or components has, as suggested by experts, not been the same (significance level: 1 percent). In the first Table, statistical sample included 119 subjects, chi-square equals to 534.86, degree of freedom 7, and significance level 0.001.

Table 4: Friedman test, managerial competences paradigm in the Fundamental Evolution Plan and Education Outlook with the approach of future studies

Results of statistical test	
No.	119
Chi-square test	534.86
degree of freedom	7
significance level	0.001

With regard given to the significance level of the test which is equal to 0.001 and less than the first type error ( $\alpha=0.01$ ), this is concluded that dimensions of preparation for Education human resources development are different from one another regarding their priorities. In the second output (Table 5), rank average of the factors is given. Descriptively speaking, dimensions of research model are ranked as follows. First of all, consideration should be given to the fact that Friedman test can only examine sameness of the rankings, and Friedman test-based prioritization and ranking would have solely descriptive state (Farahi et al., 2009, p: 118).

Table 5: Results of rank average for each component of managerial competence paradigm in Iran's Education 20-Year Outlook and Fundamental Evolution Plan based on the Friedman test

Managerial competence in the Education 20-Year Outlook and Fundamental Evolution Plan		
Religion-basedness and justice-orientedness	5.79	2 <sup>nd</sup>
responsibility and accountability	5.49	5 <sup>th</sup>
meritocracy	5.69	4 <sup>th</sup>
participation seeking	1.98	8 <sup>th</sup>
research-basedness	2.62	6 <sup>th</sup>
holism	2.52	7 <sup>th</sup>
transparency	6.12	1 <sup>st</sup>
continuity and cohesion	5.79	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Considering the fact that calculated significance level (0.001) is less than 0.05, components of managerial competence paradigm of Education managers may be ranked with confidence of 99 percent. Their importance, in fact, in making delays cannot be regarded as identical.

Therefore, according to the table, the 1<sup>st</sup> component is ranked second in the paradigm with rank average of 5.79. The 2<sup>nd</sup> component is ranked fifth with rank average of 5.49. The 3<sup>rd</sup> component is ranked third with rank average of 5.69 regarding its impact. The 4<sup>th</sup> component is ranked eighth with rank average of 1.69. The 5<sup>th</sup> component is ranked sixth with rank average of 2.62. The 6<sup>th</sup> component is ranked seventh with rank average of 2.52. The 7<sup>th</sup> component is ranked first with rank average of 6.12. And, finally, the 8<sup>th</sup> component is ranked third with rank average of 5.79.

### - Conceptual Model Evaluation Findings

In order to evaluate the suggested paradigm, the relationships between variables were appraised using structural equations patterning with maximum-likelihood estimation (MLE). All analyses were carried out using SPSS, ver. 21, and AMOS, ver. 16. Fitness of the main paradigm was examined before investigation of coefficients, which are shown in the Table 6.

Table 6: Fitness of suggested paradigms to data based on fitness indices

Index	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA
Amount	819.55	353	2.32	0.905	0.936	0.965	0.968	0.985	0.916	0.08

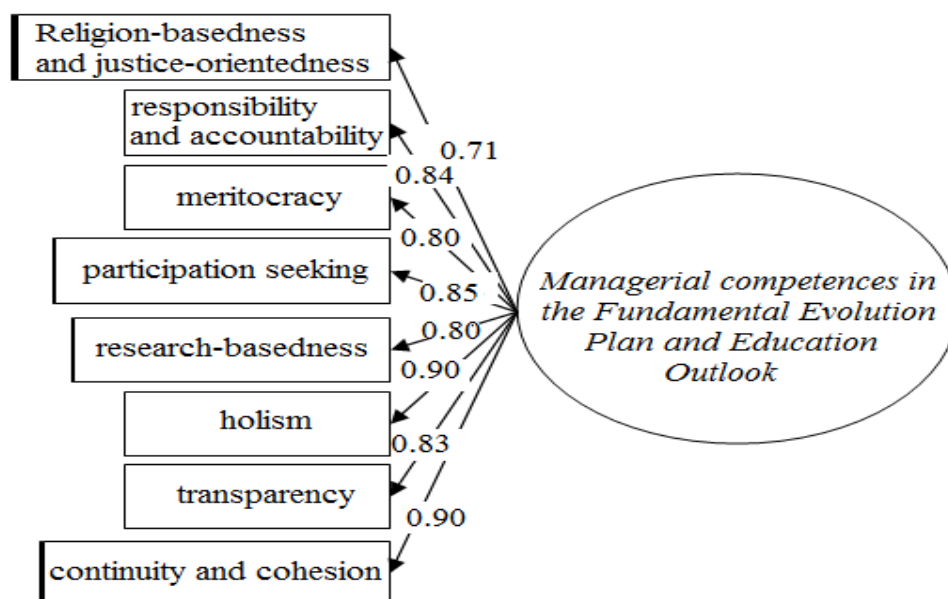


Fig. 2: Final conceptual model of the managerial competences paradigm in the Fundamental Evolution Plan and Education Outlook with the approach of future studies

As seen in the Fig. 2, the proposed paradigm is affirmed, in whose path all coefficients are significant in level  $p < 0.001$ .

#### - Conclusion

This is, in clarification of results, important to note that scientific growth of the Education and its effectiveness in scientific progression that lead to creation of science are a must for future Education. Human beings are the main capital of knowledge-based organizations. As a knowledge-based organization, Ministry of Education should regard its future human capital as a comprehensive phenomenon, making attempts to offer continuous plans and guidance therefor.

The next century belongs to knowledgeable workforce that is able to work everywhere. In such a condition, organizations are bound to modify their structures and processes, designing modern structures. With regard to the future of the world and with attention paid to the IRI's 2025 Outlook, what the components and qualifications of future workforce as well as upcoming challenges faced by Education managers are? Managers are obliged to garner required preparation in both acquiring strategic viewpoint and emphasizing on knowledge.

Regarding importance of managerial competence, Armstrong has suggested that importance of qualifications and competences possessed by both intercompany staff and those being employed from outside should be taken into account as a main policy for human resources development. The organization would find the ability to compete and success in its tasks when possessing such competence components. The Fundamental Evolution Plan, moreover, clarifies basic principles by means of which the organization can achieve its objectives and perspectives. Principles and components of managerial competence include: religion-basedness and justice-orientedness, responsibility and accountability, meritocracy, participation seeking, research-basedness, holism, transparency, and continuity and cohesion.

In general, these components play a vital role in creating the dimension of managerial competence. Results are illustrative of the fact that all components, save for the first one, i.e., religion-basedness and justice-orientedness, are good predictors for evaluation of managerial competence among the Education's staffs and managers with impact factor of 0.71. Their impact factor locates between 0.80 and 0.90. It does not, however, mean that religion-basedness and justice-orientedness are of no effect in creation of managerial meritocracy; rather, they have less power of prediction than others. Among above components, holism and continuity/cohesion have the highest power of prediction with impact factor of 0.90.

This is, in clarification of results, important to note that in this approach, holism appears to mean applying system approach by Education's staffs and managers. Holism implies consideration of the whole instead of parts as independent sections. According to such definition, many problems of human beings and socioeconomic systems are rooted in having atomist outlooks. Hence, Education's managers can be enumerated as qualified and competent directors in case they take into account the relationships among all factors in lieu of making perfunctory decisions, emphasizing on continuity and cohesion of their concepts and ideas. According to the findings, therefore, the Ministry of Education is expected to give the highest priority to holistic characteristics as well as continuity and cohesion in order to bring up qualified and competent directors. In next steps, it can focus on characteristics as participation seeking, responsibility and accountability, transparency, research-basedness, and meritocracy.

#### Suggestions

In this section, the author intends to present the findings of this research to Education's managers and other researchers.

A. Education's managers are suggested to:

- Make use of the paradigm obtained in this research to develop human resources in the Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Education, with available strengths and opportunities, makes attempts to pave the way for proper human resources development. A defined budget is better to be allocated for raising public knowledge and making required promotions in this regard;
- A special attention should be paid to socio-cultural dimension of the organization in order to improve human resources' and staffs' competences and characteristics;
- A particular consideration should be given to operational and perspective strategies with which to equip the Education's managers and staffs.

B. Other researchers are suggested to:

- Employing other futuristic approaches such as monitoring, retrospection, modeling, etc., to make macro-plan for the country in this regard;
- Examining other probable scenarios respecting future conditions of the country and combinatory states for human resources planning.

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