World Applied Sciences Journal 12 (10): 1866-1876, 2011
ISSN 1818-4952

The Relationship Between Managers Problem-Solving Method and Employees Trend Toward Participation in Organizational Decision Makings

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Abstract: In this paper the writer investigated the relationship between managers' problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings in Mashhad Comprehensive Technology Incubators, Research Centers and Science and Technology Park in 2008-2009. Quality of decisions is made through consolidation of knowledge, expertise, skill and approach of committed people who involved in decision-making process and the resulted synergy of all these factors. As the "decision-making" is the major focus of management functions, hence it is so vital for managing organizations and systems. The results of this study are including; there is a direct and significant relationship between manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings. And there is no relationship between the matter of emotionality and sensibility in manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings. Those employees who their managers have intuitive and logical problem-solving methods are more inclined to participate in organizational decision makings and vice versa. And finally the researcher has not found any relationship between the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings of those managers in Incubators, Research Centers and Science and Technology Park.

Key words: Problem-solving method · Emotional method · Logical method · Intuitive method · Sensing method · Participation · Decision-making

INTRODUCTION

In view of developing human resources in technology organizations, in fact the management capabilities should be strengthen in planned form too. Considering to complexity of organizations, high expenses of operation and massive organization structures, it is obvious that managers should enjoy appropriate decision-making methods and take logical decisions. Hence, the present information including science, knowledge and experience of all organization members from different management levels are applied cooperatively, which this approach is one way for achieving to success in organizations. These days based on rapid advance in technology, there would be very important to find the balance and combination between science and practice. So establishing the technology parks is considered a kind of solution which you can provide different technologies and also you can expose those learned knowledge of universities into practice through using modern technology, so in this circumstance, a real combination of science and practice is shown and different commercial and business aspects are taken into consideration too [1]. As Khorasan Science, Technology Park obtained the leading position in producing and applying modern technologies in Iran, therefore, the development of modern technologies, communication and information technology, "ICT" information, biotechnology and nanotechnology are taken into consideration [2]. In this respect, problem-solving is a fundamental element because it is a permanent feature of human performance which is regarded as a action and reaction between individual experience and requirements of a function. As a matter of fact, the problem-solving is the continuous thinking and selecting according to the desired goal [3]. Scienceand Technology Park is a good place for constructing small and middle-class technology companies, research and development departments, research institutes and industries which they are engaging in technology affairs in interaction with each

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other as well as other universities creatively." The final goal of this association is creating technology sources, facilitating the absorption process, upgrading and distributing it, in a way that all or most part of these activities can be done professionally in these parks" [4]. It is certain that the clear study of problem is planning, performing and evaluating an appropriate strategy in order to make decision which is considered as a required skill for solving problems [5]. As managers are responsible for prediction, prevention and solving problems, so the problem-solving which is including improving the quality, creating an intimate and friendly environment and applying an effective method, in fact is regarded as one of the major skills of management [6].

The main objective of this research is to determine the relationship between managers' problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.

Literature Review: Thinkers like Deraker (1954) and Simon (1960) believe that management is synonymous with decision- making. "In fact the studies done by Arjeris (1957), Mack Grigore (1960) and Likort (1961) are the source of the cooperative management thinking in different parts of the world. Per as Wu, T.f (1996), "The problem-solving is a vital skill for living in the present age. "In order to solve a complicated or easy problem, the best option should be selected among all available solutions." [7]. It seems that participation is a logical response against today challenges and circumstances. Most people believe that participation has a natural, moral and rising truth. But from the economic point of view, is it valid too? "The researches of middle 1980's have clearly shown that participation wroth such a cost. Those companies which widely give those previous management responsibilities to their organization people are much more productive and more successful financially than the companies which do not this" [8]. Tylor studies (1999) also shows that management through using the principles of cooperative management and the organization which is learning can affect the changes in participants stimulation and thinking growth [9]. As a result of combination of these two different groups of functions, four types of personality is occurred which consequently one of these methods of logical, sensing, intuitive and emotional is made [10]. Managers' decision-making is consisted of several stages in which the real option is just one stage. In addition, all these cases are in interaction with four methods of problem-solving proposed by Hellrigel, Slocum as emotional, logical, intuitive and sensing [11]. Today, all responsible people in all affairs are recalled to high thinking skills and problem-solving whether in public field or in technology environment and whether in normal activities or in those activities which have problem. In most societies, it is believed that we should more emphasize on increasing problem-solving skills" [12]. Hamidizadeh (2003) in a research has studied about the behavior and the structure of the problem-solving methods of knowledge-based human force among the members of college faculties, groups and research centers of Shahid Beheshti university of Tehran. The method of research was mentioned to be descriptive, scientific-comparing and case study. According to the results of testing the hypothesese, the four methods of problem-solving of knowledge-based human force have different behavior in reaching to innovation and creativity. Errors are a part of problem-solving process, which per as Martinez, the errors are showing that both managers and employees should be more patient against errors and in the case of non-occurrence of any error so there would not be any problem-solving[13]. Fundamentally, the problem-solving is an attempt to find a solution for a problem [14]. the problem-solving method is showing a method which people select during solving problems and it is influenced by personality, so on this basis; there are dominant, secondary, undeveloped and unconscious functions in all peopleAbility of managers in decision-making is restricted to mind capacity, insufficiency and limitation in possibilities and terms. Participation is including wide range of activities which its minimum is non-participation and its maximum is perfect participation in decision-making process [15]. The main idea of these studies was movement toward the cooperation includes a change from the control style to cooperation style" [16, 17]. The report of the international conference of strategies and techniques of problem-solving in Iran (2006) which emphasizes on the application of problem-solving in world level points to the application of four problem-solving techniques "value engineering, pure, organized innovation and six sigma in management, oil, gas and petrochemical, car, dispatches, communications, marketing and propaganda, make and production and energy areas and takes advantage of clear-sighted and specialists and experts views and experiences. Ghorbani, 104: 2007) Making decision is the integral part of the management literature [18]. The ways of making decisions differ from each other a lot in different cultures.Wikipedia

defines it as a permanent thinking and selection according to the desired target [19]. The problem-solving is a fundamental skill and it is a permanent feature of human performance which is regarded as an action and reaction between individual experience and requirements of a function. Most clear-sighted persons believe that decision-making is a kind of reaction or response of a person against the problem and define it as recognizing and selecting the direction or taking the necessary action for solving the problem or exploiting an opportunity or crisis which includes manager responsibility.

We can refer to the newest foreign research in the field of solving the organizational issues done by Shirvaker and *et al*. in 2008. They have explained comprehensively the instruments of the problem-solving in this research: 1. Instruments of the analysis of the problem (analysis of the effect of the error, value engineering and the instruments of managing the quality improvement). 2. The instruments of creating ideas that these instruments are systematic pattern for structuring and analysis of the problem regarding all the parameters existing in the problem [20, 21]. Taslimi's studies (2009) show the richest way of management and decision-making that is the way of partnership. He believes that managing affairs should be based on the positive usage of others' opinions and views and the spirit of the study; research and knowing about others views help the organization to be aware of the all existing facts that makes the organization to make decision according to them.

Link Between Managers' Problem-Solving Method and Employees' Trend Toward Participation in Organizational Decision Makings: In our competitive world there is a high pressure for rapid access to rapid decision-making and results. Unfortunately, the capabilities and practical skills of many managers were not sufficient for effective solving of these problems. Managers are engaged in permanent way of stormy decisions which is just useful till next crisis, in fact, organizations move from a crisis to another crisis which resulted in making superficial and ineffective decisions [22]. All the above indicating that there is a shortage of valid and principle researches regarding problem-solving in an organization. Per as Salimi (2006), problems and challenges are of the present rapid and complex world are inseparable components of human life and job. Present individual or social problems forced on solutions, so recognizing the problem and finding the optimum solution was known as a fundamental and principle skill in individual life and like other skills it requires learning, practice, research and study. One of the major requirements of qualitative organizations is to educate thoughtful managers so that they can apply the quality through all details of their organizational processes. When a organization wants to commence an international business and aims to strengthen its scope worldwide, in this case it is forced to present solution for problems and common factor of all problem-solving methods is utilizing the experience and creativity of all people engaged in doing affairs and this participation may lead to solve an easy problem or resulted in innovation, invention and technologic jumps. In recent decades, the problem-solving techniques are focused considerably in all industrial developed countries as well as the developing countries [23]. The results of researches show that high participation in problem-solving and decision-making relates to organizational commitment and causes to achieve the organizational objectives easier. In this regard, the problem-solving management and stylistic recognition applied by managers for solving the problems are special instruments which lead to making optimum decisions in the organization and also result in satisfaction and more cooperation of employees. Now, the researcher is seeking to find the answer for this principle question: Whether there is any relationship between managers' problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings in Mashhad Comprehensive Technology Incubators, Research Centers and Science and Technology Park?.

A Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis: Science and Technology parks and institutes are as one of the effective social foundations in developing technology and consequently developing knowledge-based economy and generating professional jobs nationally and internationally which play undeniable role in leading educated learners and founding appropriate ground for production and application of modern technology as well as developing societies. What thoughtful managers decide about development, is permanence and productivity of organizations. Based on their decisions, the limits are determined and realized. Accordingly through research, survey and leading numerous tangible and intangible factors which influence on recognizability and problem-solving method of these people quantitatively and qualitatively will devise a form of strategic attitude in technical, technological and industrial areas.

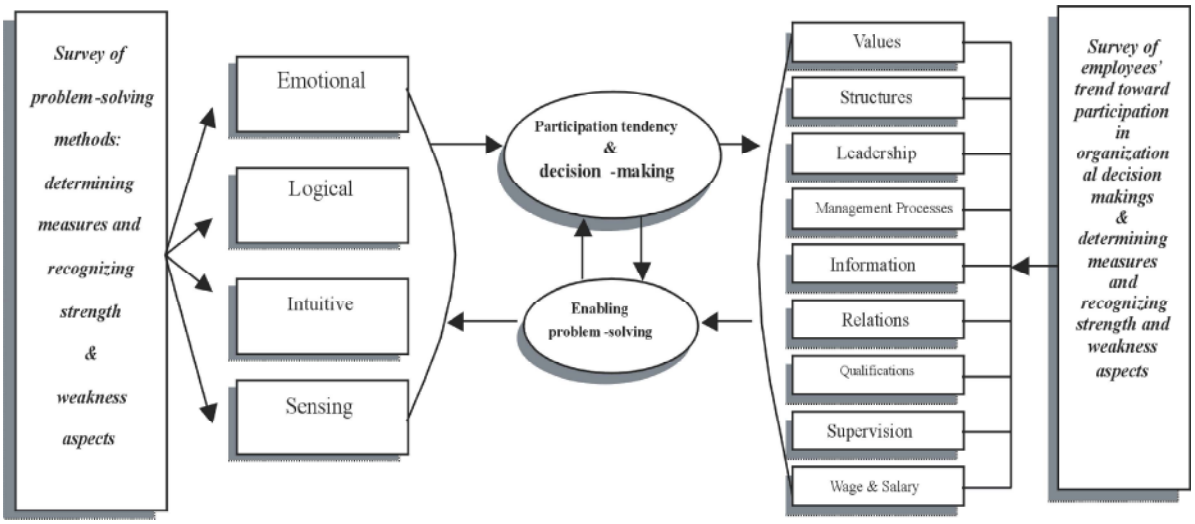

Fig. 1: A Schematic diagram of the conceptual framework

So considering the study and empirical background of this research, we found that there is a relationship between problem-solving methods presented by Hellrigel, Slocum and Woodman and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings presented by Maclegan and Kristonel, which lead to increase in motivation, diversity of opinions, progress of initiatives and creativity, responsibility and finally improve the legitimacy. Along with this purpose, the research theoretical pattern was shown in the following illustration (1).

In this regard, the researcher expresses the following hypotheses:

Primary Hypothesis: There is a relationship between managers' problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.

Secondary Hypotheses:

- There is a relationship between logicality of manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.
- There is a relationship between emotionality of manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.
- There is a relationship between intuitiveness of manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.
- There is a relationship between sensibility of manager's problem-solving method and employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings.
- The trend toward participation in organizational decision makings of the employees who their managers have logical problem-solving method was increased.
- The trend toward participation in organizational decision makings of those employees who their managers have intuitive problem-solving method was increased.
- There is a certain relationship between employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings of those managers in Research Centers and Science and Technology Parks of Mashhad.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample: This study conducts the questionnaire based survey. The purpose of this research is describing, interpreting (explaining) of a situation or an issue objectively and dealing with the present relations and terms, common opinions, current processes, evident effects or under the progress trends [24, 25]. With respect to purpose, it is an applied research. As the researcher, on the one hand, deals with describing, interpreting, recording and analyzing the managers' problem-solving method, on the other hand, examines the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings, so this study is considered as finding background based on correlation analysis. The sample population of this

study is comprised of two groups. One group which is totally 85 people includes all those engaged managers in Incubators and the Subsidiary Companies to Research Centers and Science and Technology Park of Mashhad during 2008-2009. The other group is totally 285 people includes those employees who are working under supervision of the above managers in Incubators and the Subsidiary Companies to Research Centers and Science and Technology Park of Mashhad. So the total number of people in the sample population is 370 people. In this study, since there is homogeneity inside the groups of sample population not among them, so "stratified random sampling" was applied. The reason of selecting this method is that there are secondary groups of known parts in sample population which is expecting to have different parameters in under consideration variable of researcher. This method of sampling allows the researcher to collect the data and then analyze them significantly [26]. With respect to the table of "Krejcie andMorgan", 191 people were determined as the sample volume. Then the random selection of testees was carried out from each stratum proportionately.

Instrument Development: In this study, two questionnaires were used as the measurement instruments for measuring and collecting the research data. The standardized questionnaire of managers' problem-solving method presented by Hellrigel and Slocum and Woodman (1983) was used for evaluating the managers' problem-solving method [27, 28, 29]. And the related questionnaire for the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings is based on the theory of Maclegan and Nel (1999) and nine aspects "Values, Structures, Leadership, Management Processes, Information, Relations, Qualifications, Supervision, Wage and Salary" were stated for the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings. After preparing these questionnaires, they were distributed among managers and employees of three centers of Incubator, Research Center and Park.

Data Analysis Method: The researcher applied the following methods for analyzing the data according to the research hypotheses:

- Descriptive statistics which are more related to attributes and appearance of respondents and presented us a general image of them.
- Deductive statistics which are related to the research purposes and confirmation or rejection of the research hypotheses. Statistics calculations were fulfilled through software of SPSS 15. The researcher performed in proportion of the purpose of hypotheses and the kind of variables per as the following table:

As the hypothesis of normality should be controlled in the research variables, so we should make sure that the research variables are normal prior to determine the applied test. If the parameters are normal i.e. the significant (meaningful) level of variables is not less than 0.05, in this case the Ho hypothesis will be confirmed and consequently the variables are quantitative, so applying the parameter tests are recommended. Otherwise, if the significant level of variables is less than 0.05, in this case the Ho hypothesis will not be confirmed and consequently the variables are not normal i.e. they are ranked, so applying the non-parameter tests are recommended.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Reliability and Validity of the Research Instruments: To be assured of the validity of questionnaires, we rely on the opinion of educational professors and experts as a basis. And for reliability of questionnaires regarding managers' problem-solving methods, firstly they are performed on a sample group of 30 people and the method of "K.M.W" was used for measuring its reliability, Its significant level is less than 0.05 so it is so valid.

Table 1: Kind of Variables and the Applied Test in Hypotheses

Quantitative Variable	Correlation Coefficient of Pearson	Hypothesis 4
*Quantitative Variable (Normal)		
Quantitative Variable* Ranked Ranked* Ranked	Correlation Coefficient of Spearman	Secondary Hypotheses 2,3,5,6
Comparing the Averages in Strata Other Variable		
(Considering Differences)	One-Way Variance Analysis Method	Primary Hypothesis and Secondary Hypothesis 7

Table 2: Managers' Problem-Solving Methods and The trend of those employees (who are under supervision of managers) toward participation in organizational decision makings

	Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Managers	Total	6	10.7	10.7	10.7
		32	57.7	57.7	67.9
		2	3.6	3.6	71.4
		16	28.6	28.6	100.0
		56	100.0	100.0	
Employees	Total	6	10.7	10.7	10.7
		6	10.7	10.7	21.4
		8	14.3	14.3	35.7
		14	25.0	25.0	60.7
		32	39.3	39.3	100.0
		56	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: ANOVA Relating to Primary Hypothesis

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between Groups within groups	7987.444	3			
Total	39330.00	52	2662.481		
	47317.45	55	756.346	3.520	.021

The Chronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used for evaluating the validity of questionnaires regarding the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings and the good coefficient of 0.956 was obtained which indicating that the questionnaire is so valid.

Descriptive Findings: There are 83.9% men and 16.1% women among managers of our considered sample in this study showing that there are a few women working in the management positions of the sample population of this research. But it is further in comparison with some organizations in which women have not any management positions.

Regarding the educational status of managers of this study, there are 41.1% bachelor's degrees (B.A.), 33.9% master of science (M.A.) and 25% doctor of philosophy (PHD), which indicating that the managers of this organization have higher educations.

Considering the above table, approximately 10.7% of managers have emotional methods; about 57.1% of them have logical methods; about 3.6% of them have intuitive methods; and about 28.6% of them have sensing methods.

Per as viewpoints of respondents, 10.7% of the employees who are under supervision of the related managers have very little trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings, about 10.7% of them have little, 14.3% of them intermediate, 25% of them have high and 39.3% of them have too high trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings.

The Analysis of Research Hypotheses

The Results of Primary Hypothesis: Considering that the variable of employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings is quantitative and the variable of problem-solving method (emotional, logical, intuitive and sensing) is nominal and comprised of four categories, so we apply the variance analysis and based on the significant level of (Sig= 0.021> 0.05), there is a significant relationship between two variables. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed and assuredly it can be said 95% that employees' trend toward separation of managers' problem-solving methods is not identical, but it is different.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 1: As the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings is a quantitative variable and emotional problem-solving is not quantitative, so the correlation method of Spearman is applied. In view of the Table 4, as the correlation coefficient is not significant (Sig= 0.057< 0.05), so there is not any relationship between the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings and affectivity of manager's problem-solving method, it means that the increase and decrease in managers' tendency toward emotional method has no effect on the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings.

Table 4: Calculating the Correlation of Spearman for Secondary Hypothesis 1-6

Hypothesis 1				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Emotional method
	Spearman's rho	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Correlations Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 0 56	-.255 .057 56
	Emotional method	Correlations coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N		-.255 .057 56	1.000 0 56
Hypothesis 2				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Logical method
	Spearman's rho	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Correlations Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 0 56	.270 .040 56
	Logical method	Correlations coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N		.270 .040 56	1.000 0 56
Hypothesis 3				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Intuitive method
	Spearman's rho	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Correlations Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 0 56	.263* .050 56
	Intuitive method	Correlations coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N		.263* .050 56	1.000 0 56
*. Correlation is Significant at the 0.50 level (2-taild).					
Hypothesis 4				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Sensing method
	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Pearson Correlations Sig. (2-tailed) N		1 56	-.204 .132 56
	Sensing method	Pearson Correlations Sig. (2-tailed) N		-.204 .132 56	1 56

Table 4: Continued

Hypothesis 5				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Logical method
	Spearman's rho	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Correlations Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 0 56	.276* .040 56
	Logical method	Correlations coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N		.276* .040 56	1.000 0 56
*. Correlation is Significant at the 0.50 level (2-taild).					
Hypothesis 6				Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Intuitive method
	Spearman's rho	Employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision makings	Correlations Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 0 56	.263* .050 56
	Intuitive method	Correlations coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N		.263* .050 56	1.000 0 56
*. Correlation is Significant at the 0.50 level (2-taild).					

Table 5: ANOVA of Secondary Hypothesis 7

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between Groups within groups	1037.161	3	518.581	.594	.556
	46280.29	53	873.213		
Total	47317.45	55			

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 2: Considering to the Table 4, as (Sig= 0.040>0.05) there is a significant relationship between these two variables, so the hypothesis was confirmed. The level of relationship r= 0.267 shows that there is a relationship between two variables and positive correlation coefficient shows that there is a direct relationship, it means that if the managers' tendency toward applying logical problem-solving method is increased, so the employees' trend is increased too and vice versa.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 3: Considering that (Sig= 0.05) and it is approximately equal to 5% so the hypothesis is confirmed prudently, (r= 0.263) indicates that there is a weak and direct relationship. It can be concluded that if the managers' tendency toward applying intuitive problem-solving method is increased, so the employees' trend is increased too and vice versa.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 4: As the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings and perceptual problem-solving are quantitative variables, so the correlation test of Spearman is applied. Based on (Sig= 0.132<0.05), there is no relationship between these two variables, therefore, this hypothesis is not confirmed.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 5: Considering to the Table 4, as the relationship between these two variables was significant and direct and (r= 0.262) so we

can conclude that by increasing the tendency toward applying this method, so the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings is increased too and vice versa.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 6: In Spearman table, (r= 0.263) indicates a significant and direct relationship, it means that by increasing the tendency of managers toward applying intuitive method for organizational problem-solving, accordingly, the trend of their employees toward participation in decision-makings are increased too and vice versa.

The Results of Secondary Hypothesis 7: As the variable of employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings is normal and quantitative and the variable of Incubators, Research Centers and Science and Technology Park is nominal and comprised of four categories so the variance analysis method is applied. Based on the significant level and as (Sig= 0.556< 0.05), so the hypothesis is not confirmed, it means that there is not any difference between these two variables and the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings are identical in all three centers.

CONCLUSION

Further to the above material, generally it can be concluded that the obtained results from testing hypothesis have confirmed the theoretical basics stating that there is a relationship between manager's problem-solving method and the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-makings. In this research, the intuitive and logical methods are very important in reaching to participation. In order to achieve more cooperation of employees in organizational problem-solving, so these two problem-solving methods should be reinforced. As we know, manager with humanism view toward the organization, he can emphasize on participation as a tool for development value in working and reaching to higher humanity and developing inner commitment and forming unity and integrity in working environment.

In order to improve the management skills, ability in decision-making and problem-solving, ability in planning cooperative organizational setting and finally comprehensive education of managers, it is very important to deal with management approach as well as professional education of managers more profoundly. In addition, in order to achieve the higher level of cooperation in organizational decision-makings for optimum problem-solving which ensured constant development in the fields of researches, technology and higher education, so in this case reengineering determinant components of managers' problem-solving is a useful solution.

Besides, technology process is a complicated, complex combination of motivations, abilities and institutions which by proper combination of these three factors and through careful attention to these factors we can comprehend that if the managers can recognize the problem accurately and timely, then match it with appropriate problem-solving method, just in this way they can manage the parks dynamically. And with respect to the added value and essential substructures in science and technology park environment, managers can exploit public and specialized cooperation widely. So in view of all above, it is recommended to honorable authorities of technology parks, research centers. Based on the obtained results and considering that the cooperation is a kind of power sharing in a organization and with respect to complexity and sensitivity of managers' decision-making which is a varied activity and influenced by internal and external factors of organization, so in view of the above discussion you should try to select, employ the experienced management team with the required knowledge, skill and expertise. In this case, it is expected that the outputs of these centers play significant role in developing and improving the organization hopefully.

Limitation of Study: Because of the sensitivity of issue, some of employees declined to response. Despite the fact that the manager and authorities of park cooperate with me satisfactorily, but the procedure of research has been delayed because of bureaucracy. Although the managers and experts of park, research center and incubators have accomplished many researches on their specialty internally or internationally, but following my observation, I found no research in management fields. So hereby the following issues are recommended to interested students and researchers:

- The difference between the managers' problem solving methods of other domestic and abroad science and technology parks and comparing them.
- Study of relationship of managers' problem-solving method with other components of organizational behavior based on individual, group, or organizational systems such as: control focus, job satisfaction, creativity, entrepreneurship, risk taking or leadership strength, management of change, management of disordered world.

- Study of the employees' trend toward participation in organizational decision-making by considering some variables such as individual perception toward team working, dominant value tendencies of managers, philosophical mind of manager, leadership style of manager, work ethics of manager, excited intelligence, organizational culture.

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