

**Introducing a Model to Combine Suggestion System and Delphi Method toward Decentralization 2012**

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**Abstract:** Authority delegation means to transmit part of organization's manager and leader's special authorities and executive duties, regardless its root to subordinates and heads of units and related offices to speed up implementing affairs and organizational purposes quickly and on time. Authority delegation purpose is to allow subordinates, according to geographical, cultural and economical conditions to be able to decide independently about duties to service more quickly and with less cost to satisfy beneficiaries. Since there is no specific and defined approach in this regard, proposed pattern is partnership management through using subordinates suggestions (to identify process) and Delphi method (expert's opinions) to provide acceptable and experimental approaches.

**Methods:** This is a qualitative study implanted cross-sectional in 2011 in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province. This research is implemented in two stages; at first stage, research community was authorities of province health centers (58 persons), their suggestions about requested processes to delegate were gathered by total count through open questionnaires and; in second stage, which was Delphi, suggestions gathered from previous stage judged by 30 experts. Gathered information of both stages analyzed through SPSS ver.15 and Excel and by help of Chi-square, correlation coefficient, and descriptive diagrams tests and by help of suggestions matrix coefficient estimation in qualitative section. **Results:** Findings showed that 45% of unit's authorities had 1-5 years of working background and 88% less than 6 years management background. 20.69% had no academic studies and only 27% were physicians. And 63% of experts had more than 5 years of management background and 100% academic studies and 63% had working background in township headquarter. 40% of suggestions were in domain of official, 36.92% financial and 23.08% hygienic and 73.85% of suggestions were able to be delegated, based on expert's opinion. First priorities were reward and punishment and providing facilities that 79% agreed on. **Conclusion:** As finding showed, by participation of environmental management levels, several processes may be specified and identify cases which are possible to delegate them executively using Delphi (expert's opinion) and this model can be used as a trust worthy method to delegate authority for decentralization. Findings also showed that persons with higher education were familiar about processes and executive problems, although they stayed in managerial posts less time. It seems that they can be more effective if they can continue to manage.

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### 1. Introduction

Authority delegation means to transmit part of organization's manager and leader's special authorities and executive duties, regardless its root to subordinates and heads of units and related offices to speed up implementing affairs and achieve organizational goals quickly and on time. The aim of authority delegation is to allow subordinates to be able to decide independently about related and assigned

duties so they are not bound to acquire their bosses opinion and order to realize aims quickly and even sooner of due time and consequently to satisfy public and beneficiaries quickly (1). Concentration means that organization managerial authorities are in hand of one or small part of managers of an organization. This causes lack of on time decision making, time loss, increase in costs and so on and is of main reasons of organization's dissatisfaction and inefficiency. (2)

Concept of decentralization has more totality than authority delegation and has more tendency toward political structure. In this regard more breakdowns have done for decentralization and it is believed that authority delegation points to official decentralization. Authority delegation is known as one of the decentralization methods and is a very important procedure because decision making is given from higher levels of organization to lower levels. Three main elements of authority delegation consist of authority of doing the job, its responsibility and accountability. (3) Authority delegation is accepted all around the world as an approach to improve organizational efficiency. But there is no distinct and accepted approach about how implementing decentralization in an organization and what affairs should be delegated to subordinates in a way that causes acceptance of subordinates, none resistance of managers and increase in efficiency (4). Anyway, authority delegation has advantages and disadvantages and caution should be taken during delegation to not result in bad effects on organization operation, and the affairs which has to be transferred to subordinates determine with distinct purposes correctly and train local managers and reinforce them toward new duties and then give them trust and confidence and supervise them with more concentration (5, 6, 18). Also, to elevate organizational health and increase efficiency, managers in organization should accept suggestions and critiques of lower classes and customers. (7)

Based on employees, experts, and managers' opinions in one hand and continues experiences of researchers and implemented studies, on the other hand, centralization is one of the main problems of health system in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province. Lower levels are required to pass kilometers for any affair which causes time loss, increase in costs and so on. In this paper we were going to first define transferable procedures in health centers of township and second, explore role of demographic characteristics of environmental managers in identifying these procedures. Results may help us providing acceptable and practical approaches using suggestions of executive units about decentralization through identifying transferable procedures. So proposed pattern in this study is partnership management through using suggestions of subordinates to identify transferable procedures and Delphi method (expert's opinion).

## 2. Methods

This is a qualitative study which carried out sectional in 2011 in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province. Research population at first stage was health care authorities (58 persons) and Delphi experts (experts) (30 persons) at second stage. Data at first stage collected using questionnaire with open

questions and through interviews with environmental managers and then by focus group (researchers) information reviewed and set in 5 degree Likert table. Totally, 65 suggestion categorized in hygiene, official and financial domains. At second stage, research was given to Delphi experts personally (determined previously by researchers) by previous coordination and explaining the aim. Then, after a week, they returned again and complete gathered questionnaires. Then the data coded and recorded into computer by the researcher group. The data analyzed using SPSS and Excel software and Chi-square, correlation coefficient, drawing diagrams and estimating coefficients tests. Excel used to determine agreement degree on the extent of problem, for this purpose: average weight of answers in each domain considered as the amount of magnitude and importance of subject and then averaged weight of different domains compared in form of graph. Averaged weight: in this research, frequency of responder's response to each question considered as weight and rank of answer as the number of each domain and then averaged weight calculated by Excel.

## 3. Results

Findings showed that, from experience viewpoint, 45% (26 persons) of environmental managers had less than 6 years and more than 19 years background and from management viewpoint 88% (51 persons) had less than 6 years background that this instability increased by increase in education, so management background less than 6 years was none academic 83.33%, upper diploma and B.A 56.66% and physician was 93.75%. Findings about demographic situation of Delphi experts showed that 90% (27 persons) had upper 6 years background and 90% (27 persons) higher than .... and 100% had academic education. 63% (19 persons) had background in health centers (the most environmental management levels in health system). Totally, 65 suggestions after reviewing gave to Delphi group. Results of Delphi group judgment are shown in table 1. Results of extent of problems in the most environmental levels of hygiene management showed that 60.34% (35 persons) had between 5-9 accepted suggestions and this is as follows: Findings about relation of accepted suggestions and demographic status of environmental managers showed that there was no meaningful relation between average of accepted suggestions and duty background ( $P=0.96$ ). Also there was no meaningful relation between average of accepted suggestions and education ( $P=0.90$ ). But there was a reverse meaningful background between education and background, means that by increase in education background decreases ( $P<0.001$ ).

Table 1: suggestions distribution in triple domain

domain	Suggestion group	Suggestions		Accepted suggestions	
	Number	Number	percentage	Number	Percentage
official	4	26	40	17	65.38
financial	4	24	36.92	19	79.17
Hygiene	2	15	23.08	12	80
total	10	65	100	48	83.85

Table 2: accepted suggestions distribution status

Group	Number of accepted suggestions	number	percentage
1	1-4	9	15.52
2	5-9	35	60.34
3	Above 9	14	24.14

More than 60% of persons had between 5 to 9 accepted suggestions.

#### 4. Conclusion and discussion

Current study is designed and implemented in order to feasibility the procedure of implementing authority delegation model to lower management levels with Delphi method. Study results showed that there is numerous and key procedures which are possible to transfer to lower levels, as system experts and managers state. One of the significant findings of this study is that suggestions of high level education managers, despite of lower management background, accepted generally by Delphi groups with the same level of other managers.

Today, there are numerous and complex organizational problems in hygiene domain of our country which has resulted in inefficiency of service providing. (2, 10) on the other side, authority delegation and its relation with decentralization (1, 8) and their role in function of organizations seems evident and accepted (12, 14, 13). Procedure of decentralization and authority delegation was a complex matter with no determined and equal method around the world to operate these concepts in order to correct their organizational system. Different types and degrees of decentralization and authority delegation procedures are implemented and institutionalized based on type of organization and geographical and political conditions. (5,18) Obviously, in case of lack of proper organization and developing standard methods and managed packets and lack of supervision on implementing, the program may have unpleasant consequences for system (10.2). This study showed that majority of managers had less than 6 years (88%) background and among them nearly 25% had less than 1 year of management background which shows that managerial life in hygiene domain is very short. This result is in coordination with the study of Atafar and Zali (9, 19) but different from study of Sabze ali (20). Authorities' background shows that 45% had less than 5 years background and there was no meaningful relation between background and responsibility ( $p > .05$ ). It is

noteworthy to say that researches have not found recorded scientific evidences in this context. About education, 21% were non academic and 52% upper diploma and B.A and about 27% of them were doctors. Status of field of study population shows that all professions of medicine group were reached to environmental managerial level without a distinct orientation. While, based on organizational guideline, doctors are responsible for health team and should be respondent to health problems of their service region. About experts' background 73.5% had more than 5 years background and 63% more than 5 years management background in their workbook and 50% were M.A and Ph.D. based on background in township head quarter, all Delphi experts had job in township that about 37% of them also had experienced working in lowest level of providing hygiene services (health centers). In other words it can be said that, from working, management and education and experimental aspects, all Delphi experts had necessity expert to comment on authority delegation to managerial levels. Based on researches, no documented article have found in this context. About identify transferrable procedures, totally 65 procedure suggested which 15 instance (23.08%) were in hygiene domain and 26 instances (40%) in official domain and 24 instances (36.92) were in financial domain. And nearly 48 instances (73.85%) of procedures recognized as transferrable by experts. Based on Parto diagram, main problems were consist of stuff rewarding and punishment and buying required facilities which in this regard similar study of Jabari shows that 17.5% of all current procedures of headquarter are transferrable (16) and study of Hamidi which recognizes authority delegation with 38% as the third essential craft for managers (15) and study of Ahmadi in which 90% of managers expected superiors to transfer some of authorities to subordinates, which shows necessity of authority delegation in system (17).

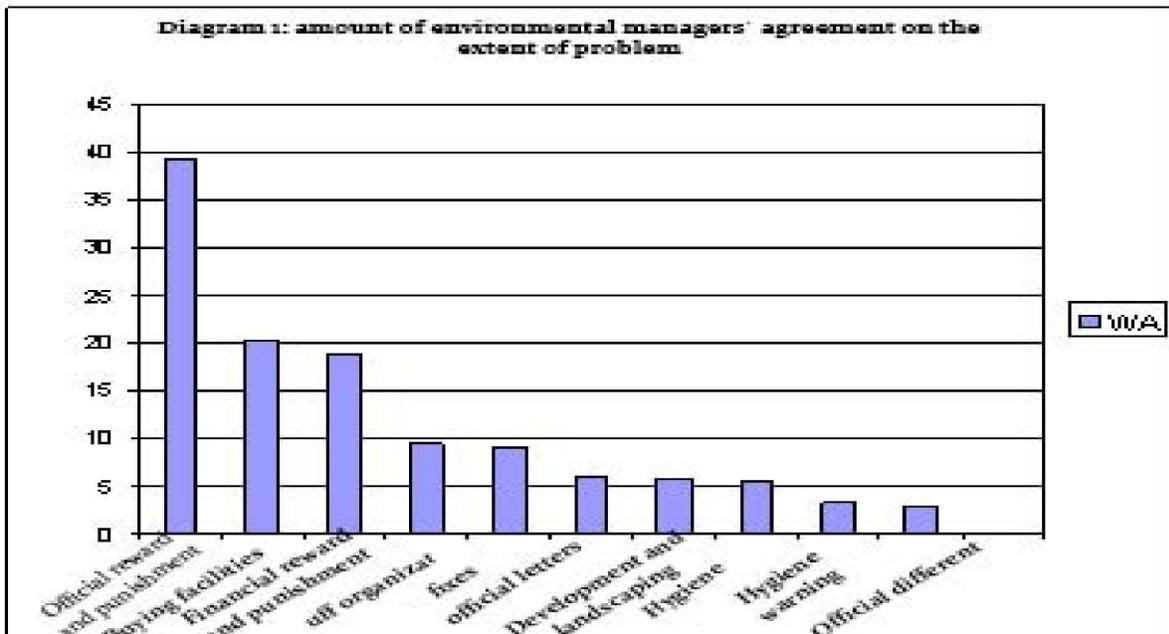


Diagram 1: amount of environmental managers' agreement on each group of problems (problems extent from environmental managers' point of view)

About relation between accepted suggestions and demographic characteristics of centers authorities, this study showed that there is meaningful relation between managerial background and education ( $P < .05$ ). Means that the more education they have, they stay less time in managerial posts which this result is in accordance with study of Zali but it is not in accordance with the study of Arab that shows there is no meaningful relation between decentralization and managerial and working background (11). Also results show that there is no meaningful relation between managerial background and accepted suggestions ( $P < .05$ ). So it can be concluded that although individuals with higher education stay shorter time in responsibilities but their recognition about system problems and suggesting to decentralization and authority delegation has no meaningful difference with other managers with lower education. In case of consolidate management bases; these persons may act more successfully in suggestion to improve system. Finally, it is recommended that using suggestions of subordinate managerial levels with critical and revise opinions of experts and continues supervision (which is of necessities of decentralization and authority delegation) must be considered more as a model of authority delegation for a programmed decentralization.

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