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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Improving Organizational Efficiency in Iran's Administrative System Based on Knowledge-Based Human Resource Management

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## ABSTRACT

This research aimed to improve organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system based on knowledge-based human resource management. The research was conducted using mixed methods. The grounded theory was used in the qualitative part, and in the quantitative part, the structural equation model with partial least squares approach was used. In the qualitative part, the statistical population, according to its subject area, included 10 elites and experts of the telecommunications company. Their opinions were collected using semi-structured interviews. The interviews were entered into the ATLAS TI software. To fit the model, a questionnaire was designed using the identified codes. In the quantitative part of the current research, in addition to the elites of the telecommunications company, some members of top managers (15 people) from twenty units of the telecommunications company in the country were also added to the statistical population. According to the statistical population of 600 people, the studied sample included 234 people calculated based on Morgan's table. The information collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using SMARTPLS 3 software. Based on the analysis of the identified codes, a model with causal, strategy, consequence, intervention, and contextual components was determined. Also, in the structural equation model analysis, the model was confirmed. The results indicated that to increase the organizational efficiency, managers should localize knowledge-based human resource management practices in organizations. In addition, it is important to impart appropriate knowledge, training, and expertise to employees so that they feel motivated and highly skilled in their jobs. ©authors

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## 1. Introduction

In the 21st century, organizations face various fluctuations, instability, competitiveness, and rapid changes in the market (Gupta, 2022). According to the norms of knowledge-based theory, companies can build, combine and use knowledge to improve the overall structure of the organization (Elayan et al., 2022). Therefore, knowledge is a vital resource that ensures the success and survival of businesses in dynamic and uncertain conditions. Today, knowledge-based resources are increasingly recognized as valuable competitive tools to improve organizational performance. Strengthening organizational performance is considered the most important aspect of organizational planning (Suksod et al., 2020). It mainly depends on valuable human resource management because it is the people who design and support the entire system of the organization. Also, it strongly depends on intellectual capital, which includes the knowledge and expertise of employees, information systems, processes, and databases of an organization, and the relationships it maintains with its external stakeholders (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Regardless of industry form, integrating organizational knowledge resources and intellectual capital within a firm has become a tactic for long-term productivity (Qena et al., 2021).

In the current era of globalization and fierce competition, organizations need experienced, qualified, and knowledgeable managers to achieve their company goals (Muqadas et al., 2017). In order to achieve a competitive advantage, organizations are still trying to improve employee skills and managerial competencies. Managerial competence is critical to ensuring organizational productivity and high performance. Researchers also emphasized that managerial skills can help increase the level of employee knowledge and organizational performance (Tracy, 1972). Employee productivity is important in three aspects: optimal use of organizational resources, improvement of organizational commitment, and motivation. Managerial competence refers to the adequacy of performing managerial tasks or the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to

manage human and organizational resources (Peter et al., 1969).

In any organization, knowledge-based programs are very human-centered. Employees have the ability to work dynamically and propose innovative ways out of difficult market challenges (Kianto et al., 2017). The successful implementation of human resource management practices has an important place in this process (Liu et al., 2021). In this research, knowledge has been considered as the knowledge that is related to customers, products, services, operating procedures, competitors and colleagues of the company. In addition, the extraction, analysis, and application of knowledge create a base for any intellectual capital, because intellectual capital requires a certain level of knowledge creation (Liu et al., 2020). Knowledge-based human resource management, like services, adds value primarily from intangible assets provided by employees in the form of innovations and expertise. Therefore, in this dynamic and knowledge-intensive time, successful knowledge-based methods of human resource management can lead to the accumulation of intellectual capital.

As a result, the level of organizational adequacy is also improved (Gupta & Raman, 2020). Iranian administrative officials need knowledge-based human management in order to improve the level of organizational efficiency (Lazear, 2004). These organizations should be directly involved in the formation, growth, preservation, and distribution of knowledge. Therefore, by creating a learning environment, they contribute the most to the country's economic growth (Sadooqi et al., 2021).

Studies of management skills show that improving the competence of subordinates is an important part of organizational and managerial effectiveness. On the other hand, the analysis of power and control in organizations shows that the sharing of employees in power and control increases organizational effectiveness (Uddin Ahmed, 2019).

Knowledge-based human resource management can improve organizational efficiency by increasing employee efficiency (Xu

et al., 2018). Therefore, by studying the competencies of managers whose effectiveness and efficiency have been proven in some way, it is possible to gain the necessary knowledge about the type of skills necessary for effective management in the organization (Shun et al., 2020). Conducting this research, which is based on the logic of taking role models from university chancellors and vice presidents, and experienced managers can provide a very tangible and operational tool for designing knowledge-based human resource management to improve organizational efficiency and support the implementation of project results. In a short-term process, to improve the knowledge-based performance of managers of administrative organizations to a higher point (Kansal et al., 2018). This research considers the Telecommunication Organization as an important administrative organization in Iran. The all-around advancement of affairs in telecommunications requires competent and efficient managers and employees. Attracting the right people to hold managerial positions or empowering existing managers and turning them into effective managers requires knowledge-based management of human resources.

Therefore, the current research seeks answers to the following questions:

1. What is the model of improving organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system based on knowledge-based human resource management?

2. Is the model of improving organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system based on knowledge-based human resources management suitable?

## 2. Literature Review

### *Organizational Adequacy*

Organizations need continuous improvement in competence to survive and thrive in today's competitive world (Acosta, 2010). Adequacy refers to how tasks, activities, and results are performed. Organizational adequacy has been of interest to both academic researchers and managers of executive departments since past decades because the final result is the use of tangible and intangible resources in organizations, although intangible resources are

more important for organizations (Dickinson et al., 2012). Continuing to improve efficiency in the context of political changes leads to processes that are important to recognize for management theorists and practitioners (Druker, 1998).

Analyzing efficiency management in the conditions of political uncertainty will help to discover the important causes, effects, and management rules and increase the knowledge in the field of efficiency management for the successful implementation of public administration. Despite the prevalence of this issue, adequacy management has not been investigated before in government administrative organizations under conditions of political uncertainty and requires a fundamental approach (Qena et al., 2021).

### *Knowledge-based human resource management*

In today's knowledge economy, intellectual capital is considered a sustainable competitive advantage for leading organizations, therefore, management of these valuable, value-creating, inimitable and irreplaceable capital should be an integral part of the companies' strategy and the key responsibility of the organizations' managers (Nawaz, 2019). When we look at organizations from a learning perspective, the traditional aspects of human resource management take on different colors and appearance. In fact, the idea of knowledge-based organizations has built the foundation of human resource management on new and different pillars. The human capital theory focuses on the impact of differences in employee expertise on performance and thus combines with the resource-based view of human resources as a source of value creation (Kamath, 2017). The gap between market value and the book value of companies is identified as intellectual capital (Chan et al., 2012).

Therefore, the performance of human resources management in knowledge-based organizations is very effective and decisive; because it can improve the overall effectiveness of knowledge management strategies in the organization (Della Torre, 2019). Looking at the position of knowledge-oriented human resources in the organization, we can understand that their

role in the implementation of knowledge management processes is very prominent and decisive (Barrena-Martinez et al., 2019). Human resource management also plays an important facilitating and encouraging role in this field through policies and systems that influence their behavior, attitude and performance. In this case, knowledge management can be effectively implemented and developed in the light of the effective performance of human resource management in the organization (Belanger et al., 2018).

In the following, internal and external studies related to knowledge-based human resource management and organizational adequacy have been discussed. Sadoughi et al. (2021) in an article titled "Presenting the model of personal development of managers of Iran Telecommunications Company (a qualitative research)" stated that the findings led to the identification of three key dimensions for personal development. The dimension of individual competencies of managers (knowledge, skill, ability, attitude, and moral competencies), the dimension of individual development actions and processes (definition of performance and setting goals, needs assessment, planning, provision of resources and facilities, individual development measures, evaluation, feedback, and correction) and finally, the dimension of effective factors (including individual, organizational, managerial, occupational, and environmental factors) has formed the pattern of personal development of telecommunications company managers.

Gupta et al. (2022), in research entitled the effect of knowledge-based human resource management practices on organizational performance: the mediating effect of intellectual capital, indicated that the results of the study showed that human resource management practices lead to the creation of intellectual capital and the relationship between resource management Humanity based on knowledge and performance is positively mediated by the

components of intellectual capital in the organization.

Škrinjarić (2022), by examining competency-based approaches in organizational and individual contexts, showed that knowledge-based approaches increase the level of employee competence and also improve the level of organizational competence in the long term.

Qaina et al. (2022), by examining Peter's principle and the limitations of our current understanding of organizational incompetence, showed that in order to resolve organizational incompetence, it is necessary to create a learning organization and the actions of scholars.

Niazi et al. (2020), in an article entitled "Effect of managerial competence and learning tendency on job performance" state that managerial competence and learning organization based on knowledge-based measures have a positive relationship with job performance and entrepreneurial leadership has a relationship between management ability and job performance and it, mediates learning tendency to some extent.

Swanson et al. (2020), in an article titled "Leader specific competencies in knowledge sharing and job performance," stated that leader competencies are critical for promoting knowledge and improving job performance.

Frexant and Renart (2020) in an article titled "Management knowledge competencies for the survival of small and medium-sized enterprises" stated that manager leadership competencies, teamwork, monitoring, and evaluation are the characteristics and knowledge management competencies for these enterprises.

### **3. Methodology**

This research has been done in a mixed way. In the qualitative part, the grounded theory is used and in the quantitative part, the structural equation model with the partial least squares approach is used. The table summarizes the research method:

**Table 1.** Review of the research method of the present study

Layers of research	Characteristics of the present study
Research direction	Applied-developmental
Research method	mixed method (qualitative-quantitative)
Research philosophy	Interpretation in the first stage, positivism in the second stage
Research approach	Inductive in the first stage, analogical in the second stage
Research strategy	Fundamental and quantitative conceptualization theory (inferential and structural equations)
Research purpose	exploratory-confirmatory
Time horizon	single section
Data collection method	interview, library review and questionnaire

In the first part (qualitative section), the statistical population of this research, according to its subject area, includes ten elites and experts of the telecommunications company. These people were purposefully selected and their views were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview verbatim was entered into the ATLAS TI software. Next, using the Grounded theory by Strauss and Corbin (2007), the interviews were analyzed and coded. After that, to assess the model fit, a questionnaire was designed using the identified codes.

In the quantitative part of the current research, in addition to the elites of the telecommunications company, some top managers (15 people) from twenty units of the telecommunications company in the country were added to the statistical population. From a total number of 600 research population, 234 people were determined as the study sample according to Morgan's sample size table. A convenient sampling method was adopted in the quantitative part of the research. The information

collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using SMARTPLS 3 software.

#### 4. Findings

As stated in the materials and methods section, this research comprised both qualitative and quantitative data. Therefore, the findings are presented in two qualitative and quantitative parts.

##### *Qualitative analysis*

The people who were interviewed were 7 people with specialized doctorate degrees and 3 people in the management position of telecommunications organizations.

Ten conducted interviews were entered into the Atlas software as text files. It was studied many times and its key points were broken into semantic units in the form of sentences and paragraphs related to the main meaning. In the following, the concepts that make up the foundation's data model have been examined.

**Table 2.** Theoretical note, finding the roots of conditions (causal, intervening, contextual); Research strategies and implications

Open coding	Secondary coding	Axial coding	Selective coding
Labor laws	Basic rules	Laws and regulations	Causal conditions
Telecommunications company rules			
Lack of rules			
The need for a new law	Compilation of applicable laws	Organizational Culture	
Organizational ethics	Organizational citizenship behavior		
Mutual relations in society	Social ethics		
Lack of culture	Telecom company criteria	Organizational Structure	
Telecommunication company strategy			
The structure of the telecommunications company			
Selection based on meritocracy	Organizational capability		

Enhancing knowledge			
Effective management	organization management	The need for organizational adequacy	
knowledge management			
Organizational competence	Management ability		
performance management			
Customer Orientation	Reliable communication	customer relation management	
Security of knowledge			
Applicability of technology	Communication development		
Personal communication			
interpersonal communication			
Virtual services			
Development of knowledge-oriented culture	Compliance with organizational culture	Growth and development of administrative culture	
Application of knowledge and organizational culture			
Administrative ethics	Development of administrative ethics		
work conscience			
Establishing the goals of the telecommunications organization	Formulating coherent and efficient administrative principles and goals	Elaboration of the basic criteria of organizational adequacy	Strategy
Identify the goals of the telecommunications company			
Determining the principles of communication with employees of the telecommunication company	Determining the communication principles of the telecommunications organization		
Determining the principles of communication with the stakeholders of the telecommunications company			
Improving competence (communication skills with customers)	Improving organizational efficiency	Organizational excellence strategy	
Improving competence (competence of managers)			
Improvement of competence (competency of the organization's employees)			
Mental maturity	Promotion of knowledge and creative thinking		
Work creativity			
Supervision according to the rules	Enhance supervision		
Supervise the work of employees			
Organizational guidance	Trans-corporate development	Achieving organizational goals	
Expanding knowledge			
Development of the telecommunications company	Satisfaction with the organization		Consequences
Increase public trust			
Employee satisfaction			
Effective management			
Remote services	Increase customer satisfaction	Achieving the client's goals	
Acceleration of knowledge services			
Cost savings	thrift		
Appropriate use of time			
Efforts to develop the telecommunications company	Good organization	Organizational development method	Contextual conditions
Presentation of organizational adequacy model			
Self-management of others	Good management		
business management			
Inefficient staff	Inefficient organization		
Inefficient managers			
Knowledgeable human resources	Efficient human resources	Effectiveness of human resources	Intervening conditions
Knowledge-based leadership			
The need for the ability of the manager and employee	Ability of organizational resources		

Lack of consensus of human resources			
The chaotic nature of the telecommunications company	Organizational tension	Organizational principles and criteria	
The need to adapt the telecommunications company to the changes of the day			
Interference of interests of stakeholders	Transformation of the administrative system		
Conflict of interests of shareholders			
A sense of systemic adequacy	Organizational adequacy	Organizational adequacy thinking	
Budget allocation for organizational adequacy			
Feeling the need for committed managers	Quality management		
Feeling the need for operational managers			

Among the identified factors, a selective coding paradigm was performed, and based on that, the linear relationship between the secondary code and the central code of the research, including causal conditions, textual conditions, intervening

conditions, strategies, and consequences, was determined. The figure shows the axial coding paradigm, in other words, the model of the qualitative research process.

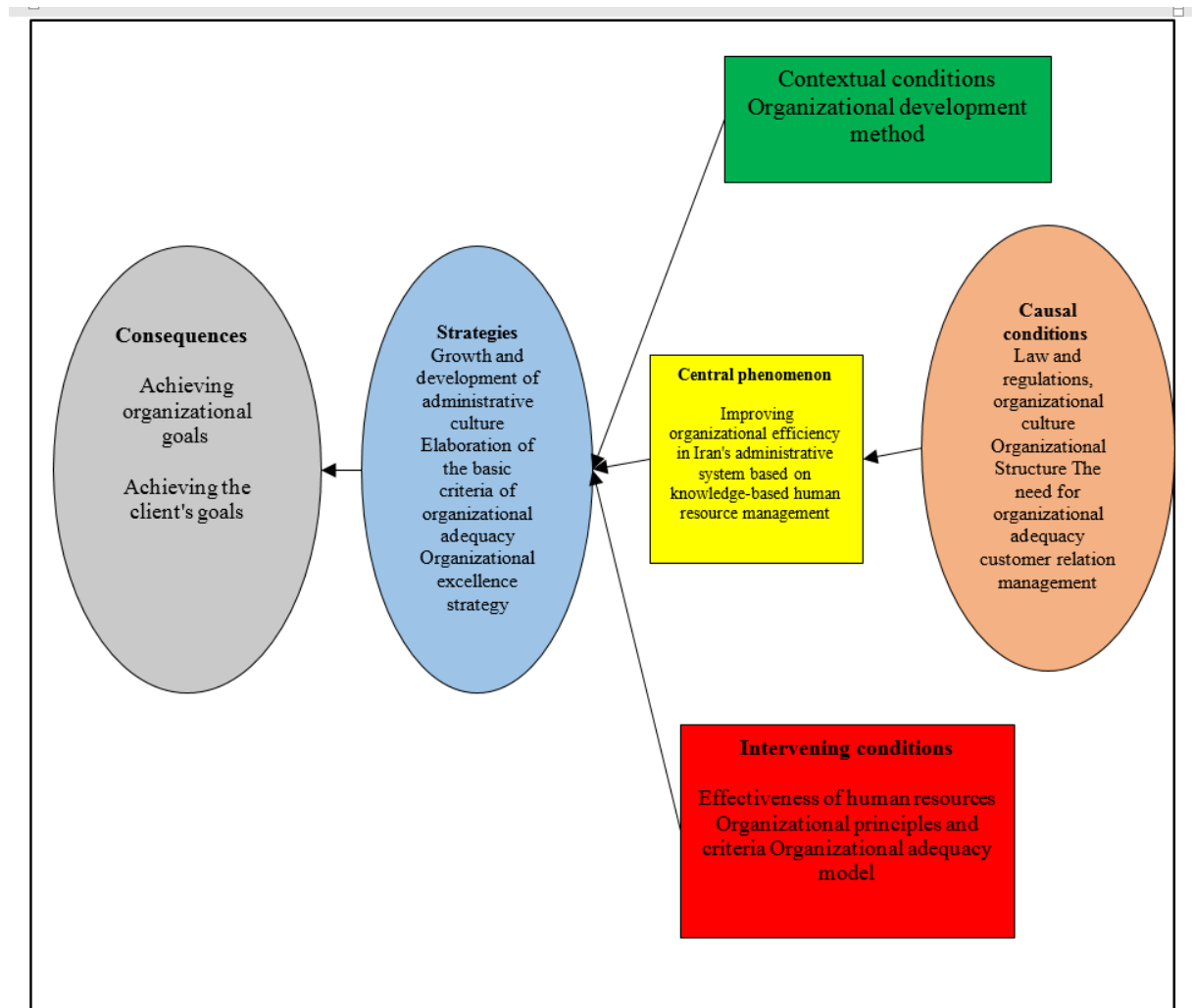


Figure 1. Proposed research model

Using the grounded theory research, the factors identified as causal conditions include laws and regulations, organizational culture, organizational structure, need for organizational adequacy, and customer relationship management. The central phenomenon includes promoting organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system. What is certain is that the promotion of a person to higher positions should not be based on an automatic process.

Experience is a good item, but it does not mean that the person is necessarily suitable for promotion. Based on the basic definitions of the promotion of managers, in this research, the strategies are categorized into three general categories of growth and development of administrative culture, formulation of the basic criteria of organizational adequacy, and strategy of organizational excellence. Intervening conditions include the effectiveness of human

resources, organizational principles and criteria, and organizational adequacy thinking.

Contextual conditions in promoting organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system include the organizational development method. Consequences are the results of actions and reactions. The consequences of this research include the realization of organizational goals, and the realization of client goals.

### Quantitative analysis

A total of 234 completed questionnaires were analyzed in the quantitative section. It included 188 males (58%) and 136 females (42%) respondents. 54 respondents were 25-35 years old, 105 were 36 to 45 years old (26%), 61 people are 45 to 55 years old, and 16 people were over 56 years old. There were 70 people with a bachelor's degree and 101 people with a master's degree and, 63 people had PhD degrees.

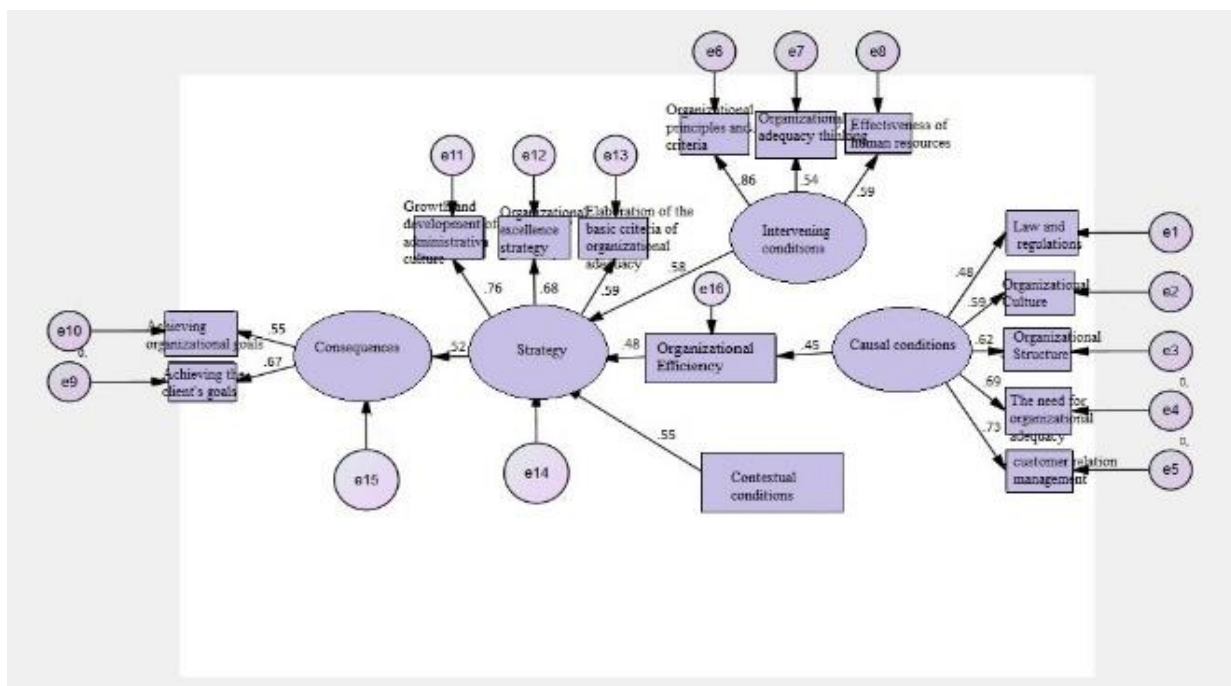


Figure 2. Research model fit

All factor loadings were higher than 0.3, Bentler-Bonnet normalized fit indices, relative fit, incremental fit, adaptive indices, and perfect square have been used to express the acceptability of the model. The results

obtained from the model fit assessment are shown in Table 3.



**Table 3.** Fit indices of the research model

Model	AGFI	SRMR	RFI	IFI	GFI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	X2/df
Acceptable amount	0.8>	0.9>	0.9>	0.9>	0.9>	0.9>	0.9>	0.1<	1-3
Calculated	0.94	0.16	0.94	0.96	0.96	0.99	0.93	0.062	1.99

In the following, the influence of the identified factors on each other has been examined:

Table 4. Examining the influence of the identified factors of the grounded theory model on each other

Effect	Factor load	t statistic	Significance level	Result
Causal factors on the main category	0.45	5.35	0.000	Confirmation of relationship
Background factors on strategies	0.55	8.63	0.000	Confirmation of relationship
Intervening factors on strategies	0.58	9.11	0.000	Confirmation of relationship
The main category on strategies	0.48	5.85	0.000	Confirmation of relationship
Strategies on consequences	0.52	7.93	0.000	Confirmation of relationship

According to the table, the factors identified in the grounded theory model have influences on each other. The factor load of causal factors on the main category is 0.45 and its t-statistic is 5.35, the factor load of contextual factors on strategies is 0.55 and its t-statistic is 8.63. The factor load of intervening factors on strategies is 0.58 and its t-statistic is 9.11, the factor load of the main category on strategies is 0.48 and its t-statistic is 5.85. Finally, the factor loading of the strategies on the consequences is 0.52 and its t-statistic is 7.93. Therefore, it can be said that the research model is approved.

### 5. Discussion

This research investigated the improvement of organizational efficiency in Iran's administrative system based on knowledge-based human resource management.

Based on the grounded theory model, this research proposed knowledge-based solutions to improve the level of organizational efficiency, and in quantitative analysis, based on the opinions of employees of the telecommunication organization, the model was confirmed.

The inconsistency of staff competency development requirements has adverse effects not only on individuals and organizations, but also on the entire society, and more attention should be paid to both academic and policy departments in identifying the causes and providing solutions for this issue.

Promotions are essential to a hierarchical organization because they serve as both incentives and enhance the organization's efficiency and performance by assigning employees to jobs that best suit their abilities. Those who prove their abilities are then promoted to positions that require a higher level of abilities. This approach is the core of the competition model that explains the positive effect that promotions and associated pay increases have on employees. The employee generally has a motivation to try and perform useful actions for the organization. However, this conventional view is increasingly being questioned, as it has been observed that knowledge, human and organizational resources, if not well managed, can also have a negative impact.

On the other hand, most employees who stick to Peter Principle do not realize that reaching such a position in the hierarchy has

detrimental effects, both for themselves and for the organization. This acts like a paradox: the more employees are motivated to work hard to prove their worth, the faster they move up the hierarchy, and the sooner more senior management positions are filled with people with very poor management skills. However, understanding the driving factors of this paradoxical situation, the favorable conditions for its emergence and flourishing, as well as its possible consequences, help to fight it or at least make an informed decision. Therefore, organizational learning and knowledge-based human resource management based on the experiences of the organization can transform this cycle. Qaina et al. (2022), also showed that many organizations unconsciously or without considering the possible consequences, promote good practices based on the achievements up to that point, regardless of their relationship with the acquired position in the future. Therefore, they often end up with incompetent decision-makers and lose highly qualified employees. The basic criteria of organizational adequacy, the formulation of coherent and efficient administrative principles and objectives, the determination of the communication principles of the telecommunications organization, and the determination of organizational excellence strategies to promote organizational adequacy as well as the promotion of knowledge and creative thinking, as well as the promotion of organizational supervision, the results of which are in line with the results of Swanson et al. (2020), the competencies of the leader to promote They know that knowledge and improving work performance are important, Frexant and Renart (2020), Sadri Vayoubi (2019) and Sadoughi et al. (2014) also confirmed the importance of employee development to improve organizational performance. The obtained results are in line

with Rostami et al.'s (2018) research. Amirtash et al. (2018) also showed the importance of empowering employees based on knowledge in improving the level of the organization.

Based on the obtained results, it is suggested that in order to increase the performance of companies, managers should localize knowledge-based human resource management practices in organizations. In addition, it is important to impart appropriate knowledge, training, and expertise to employees so that they feel motivated and highly skilled in their jobs. Also, it is essential that organizations make relevant databases, systems, and information easily available to employees and establish cooperative and understanding communication with external stakeholders. Organizations start with the recruitment and selection process where the HR manager needs to identify highly trained, skilled, and highly motivated candidates. In addition, training and education programs should be organized for the existing staff so that problems can be identified, disruptions can be resolved and staff expertise can be improved. Other measures that help ensure high employee motivation are done through developmental feedback, regular learning, internal promotion, and evaluation of knowledge-based programs.

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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