Reform Managers: Heroes of Civil Society?

ABBAS MONAVVARIAN, State Management Training Center
Islamic Republic of Iran

THE CONNECTION between reform of public administration and civil society is a concern of intellectuals and practitioners. To see if the reform managers in Iranian public administration, during the First Five-Year plan (1989-94), could contribute to the establishment and strengthening of civil society, the current research on skills and competencies of reform managers has been done. The assessment is based on five clusters of goals, roles, communication, negotiation, and managing up adopted from the study of Buchanan and Boddy (1992). Possession of these skills and competencies is considered necessary, although not sufficient, to manage the reform programs. Equally important is the ability to deploy these competencies appropriately in context.

The overall results indicate that the skills and competencies of reform managers, as perceived by their subordinates, was below acceptable level (mean = 2.8). Identification of significant relationship between reform program factors and expertise of reform managers reveals that, low expertise of reform managers might be one of the reasons for the low degree of success of the reform program.

Introduction

Anechiarico (1998) enumerates five elements of civil society: issue nonclosure, coalitional decision, associative emphasis, professional trusteeship, and civil models of reform. He argues that all of the elements are related to public administration. These elements are indicative of civil society in the United States, and may not be applicable in other places. However, it seems that, at least some of them are necessary to achieve civil society in every country. Among them, reform of public administration is, in this study, under consideration, and is considered necessary to reinforce the civil society.

The connection between administrative [reform] and civil society, was an issue on the agenda of the New Public Management (NPM) in the 1960s and 1970s, when social equity and popular empowerment were raised by critics of government management (Fredrickson, 1996). More recently, the reinventing government movement has stimulated both interest in and criticism of the impact on civil society of public sector entrepreneurship. Most of the reform rhetoric at the end of the century, including privatization, public private competition, indeed the whole entrepreneurial approach to public administration is a product of the development of civil society described by Sandel (1996). Therefore in some scenes, it can be argued that, reformers, as far as the connection between civil society and administration is considered, can be the heroes of the civil society. Now the question is whether the reformers in Iran were heroes.
Review of the Literature

Planning, implementation and coping with change has been, and seems likely to remain, one of the main challenges facing managers, in both private and public sectors, today (Carnall, 1990: 2). The management of change is viewed as a complex and difficult area, worthy of special attention and study.

A number of writers have promoted their views of the characteristics of excellent organizations (mostly business enterprises). In Search of Excellence, by Peters and Waterman (1982), The Change Masters by Rosabeth Moss-Kanter (1983), A Passion for Excellence by Peters and Austin (1985) are a few examples. The authors argue that effectiveness is likely to emerge from organizational cultures which encourage accountability, synergy, cross-cultural skills, managing interfaces and financial realism (cf. Carnall, 1990). The focus of these books is mostly on change in companies and individual organizations. Due to the magnitude of reform at national level, consisting of a network of complicated organizations, the role of reform managers is much more challenging and can be expected to require more effective and different expertise. In addition, since, “the good of public organizations and their programs tend to be multiple, vague, shifting and at times conflicting” (Thomas, 1996: 13), the public sector reform managers, and in general, the change agents typically face a range of paradoxes, and of apparently conflicting tasks, responsibilities and priorities.

Different Perspectives on Reform Agents

Review of the literature reveals at least three broad perspectives (project management, participative management, and sociological approach) concerning the main agendas of the change agents.

The project management literature emphasizes content and control agendas (see for example, Darnell and Dale, 1985; Dinsmore, 1990; Harrison, 1985; Gunton, 1990; Birchall, 1975; and Leech and Turner, 1990). Based on the logical-rational approach of this perspective, it has been labelled as ‘rational-linear’ model of change (such as the logic of rational problem solving).

The participative management approach considers the social process as a central factor to effective change (see for example, Pettigrew, 1985; Coch and French, 1948; Buchanan, 1979; Lawler, 1986; Peters, 1987). This approach was described by Pettigrew (1985) as the truth, trust, love and collaboration approach to change. The underlying assumption of the approach is that if people get involved in the process of change, they will feel ownership and more commitment to implement the desired change at its best.

The third approach, that is, the sociological approach, emphasizes the political and cultural nature of the change process (Quinn, 1980; Pettigrew, 1985, 1987) and seeks to demonstrate how the rational and political dimensions are intertwined (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992). The model of the effective change agent emerges from this approach, and “concerns sensitivity to the power and influence of key individuals and groups in the organization,
including the change agent(s), and to how patterns of power and influence will be altered by a particular program of change” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 26).

Whatever approach or perspective is adopted, given the complexity of working as a reform manager, the competence and expertise of people involved in the design and implementation of the reform program is imperative.

Studies of the managerial skills, behaviors, roles, attributes or competencies linked to effective management practice are extensive (Hunt, 1995; Bigelow, 1994; Sandwith, 1993; Hearn et al., 1996; Hunt and Wallace, 1997). However, in regard to “how competencies are generated, how they can be identified and how the association between competencies and performance can be measured and established” (Kamoche, 1997: 273), there is no consensus. Hunt and Wallace (1997) identified three perspectives that have thus far influenced the debate surrounding the competence movement:

(1) Competence consists of attributes possessed by individuals, including knowledge, skills and attributes, all of which are directly measurable and quantifiable based on predetermined categories and criteria (Boyatzis, 1982; Klemp and McClelland, 1986; Gonczi et al., 1990).

(2) Competence is best viewed as being oriented to tasks in specific situations (National Training Board, 1991; Dall’alba and Sandberg, 1993). Based on this perspective the attributes of an individual are identified and evaluated precisely as they relate to the demands of specific organizational or job-related tasks.

(3) Competence is best understood in terms of the manner in which the activities and work-related tasks are conceived by the individual (Sandberg, 1991).

Defining areas of competence and expertise depends on the given situation (cf. Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Hunt and Wallace, 1997). Underpinning this view is the belief that to achieve successful performance entails identifying the organization’s core business and strategic activities and resource implications, and then nurturing the required skills and necessary competencies. Due to the fact that, “public organizations are not always able to articulate their strategic objectives, or to define their productive activities unambiguously” (Kamoche, 1997: 276), identification of the areas of competence and expertise necessary to reform public bureaucracy is more challenging.

The review of the literature indicates that, despite efforts of managers and academicians to achieve consensus in definition and understanding of the term competence, they do not yet share a common language when talking about skills, attributes, and qualities of effective management performance (Mangham, 1986; Slater, 1992). There are several definitions of competence (e.g., Boyatzis, 1982; Training Commission, 1988; Hunt and Wallace, 1977; Sandberg, 1991; Gonczi et al., 1990). One of the definitions, however, which is considered more appropriate to the context of this study, is the one offered by the Training commission
Based on this definition competence is defined as ability to perform the activities within an occupation which “encompasses organization and planning of work, innovation and coping with non-routine activities. It includes those qualities of personal effectiveness that are required in the workplace to deal with co-workers, managers and customers” (Training Commission, 1988: 14).

In the following, by considering the overall context of Iranian public sector and cultural attributes, the expertise of Iranian reform managers is analyzed. The analysis is based on attributes or competencies considered more important for the reform managers.

**Method**

**Subjects of the Study**

The respondents included 174 persons (32 female and 142 male), who all were reform agents in different Iranian public organizations. For the total group of 174 persons, 8 were top managers, 58 were middle managers, 8 were low-level managers, and 96 were non-managers (for the rest, position was not recorded).

**Measurement**

The questions of the self-administered questionnaire are derived from a study by Buchanan and Boddy (1992) which sought to establish the competence of effective change agents, particularly change managers operating with a change program in an environment characterized by ‘high hassle,’ ‘high vulnerability.’

In summary, the original study revealed five clusters which were concerned with goal setting, role specification, communications, negotiating skills, and managing up, and fifteen attributes as follows:

- Goal setting
  1. Sensitivity
  2. Clarity
  3. Flexibility
- Roles
  4. Team building
  5. Networking
  6. Tolerance of ambiguity
- Communication
  7. Communication
  8. Interpersonal skills
  9. Personal enthusiasm
  10. Stimulating motivation
- Negotiation
  11. Selling
  12. Negotiating
The five clusters and fifteen attributes were described as core competencies or the ‘toolkit’ of the change/reform managers. It was argued that:

The core competencies are necessary … [but] they are not sufficient, in the creation of change agency expertise. The effective change agent is able to deploy these core competencies appropriately in context, and is not merely able to display those individual competencies separately (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 115).

In the current study, a modified version of the survey was used to analyze the competencies of the reform managers in different departments of Iranian government. The survey questions were based on the above-mentioned clusters. However, the questions (or attributes) under each cluster were chosen based on those competencies considered more important for the reform managers, in the context of Iranian bureaucracy. Hence, the number of questions (or attributes) was reduced from 30 (in the original study) to 17. The adopted scale was also different from the original one to be able to assess the degree of competencies and skills of reform managers: a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a very great extent), while 3 represents the medium level.¹

The respondents were asked to rate the skills and competencies of their immediate supervisors (the person in charge of a reform committee) in terms of the given attributes. The results are summarized in Tables 1 to 5.

Analysis of Findings

Goals

Those involved in a reform program or affected by it, will more probably accept changes if they have a clear, well communicated picture of the future. If, with any degree of certainty, forecasting of the direction of changes and the probable results would not be possible, those involved in the reform processes will show less commitment and motivation towards the program. It is argued that, in setting the reform goals, “clarity is inadequate on its own. The goals and objectives have to be realistic, and have to be seen to be realistic” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 96).

Fundamental reform programs inevitably never run as they were planned. Especially for reform of public sector organizations, flexibility of plans is needed even more. Reform managers should expect a series of intractable issues and problems to resolve. Therefore, the reform managers’ ability to predict different situations, and have a variety of scenarios to revise the pre-specified objectives as condition change, seems necessary.

In addition, every change and reform in any sector can affect other sectors and groups of people. To understand the internal and external effects of any change, it is vital to reduce the
resistance to the change by insiders, and attract the cooperation of outsiders. This calls for a
system perspective to see the effects of changes in a broad scale to gain the advantages of
synergy, or cooperation and collaboration.

Table 1. Goals: Assessment of Skills and Competencies of Reform Managers
(% and mean)

Table 1 includes the summary of the responses of the survey subjects about the level of
expertise of reform managers in regard to the goal setting cluster: clarity of goals, revision of
strategies as conditions change, and recognition of implications of changes elsewhere. The
mean scores for the items are: 3, 2.7 and 3, respectively. The mean score for this cluster
(goals) is close to midpoint (M = 2.96, s.d = .981). The analysis indicates that 58.6 percent
of the respondents assessed the skills and capabilities of their immediate supervisors at
midpoint or below that.

Roles

Large scale reform programs, such as the one adopted in the first plan of Iran, typically
involve a large number of players, which needed to be formed into organized groups or
teams. Hence, team-building abilities of reform managers is necessary, if the reform is to be
succeed. Together with the clarity of objectives discussed above, a clear idea of what is
expected of each person involved in reform projects is among the signs of an organization
with ‘strong culture.’ Carnall defined a strong organizational culture as “one in which people
may have a clearer idea of what is required of them, a clear sense of the objectives being
pursued” (1990: 163).

In addition, increased commitment to change depends on how well managers succeed to
establish cooperation and collaboration among the team members. Nobody has all necessary
skills and competencies to change a situation properly; so this is the power of the team which
is important, not the separate skills or competencies of individuals.

Despite the potential benefits of team work, the teams initially established to achieve
coordination and cooperation, may often result in greater conflict and furstration rather than
cooperation (Sims, 1986). To prevent such a conflict, reform managers are required to
posses a high competency in management of team(s), and establishing effective working
groups.
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The aforementioned skills and competencies are classified under the ‘roles’ cluster. Table 2 includes the item related to this cluster. The respondents were asked to rate the skills and competencies of their immediate supervisors regarding clarification of responsibilities inside and outside of the organization, and cooperation of various groups working on the given reform program. The summary of the responses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Roles: Assessment of Skills and Competencies of Reform Managers (% and mean)

The mean scores for the three competencies listed under the ‘roles’ cluster, are 2.8, 2.8 and 2.7 respectively, leading to the aggregate mean of 2.8 for the cluster.

Communication

Effective communication and consideration of interests of all affected groups are preconditions for commitment of interest groups. Such involvement helps people understand the change, and gives the participants confidence that management is trying its best to make use of different ideas. Also, the communication skills of the reform managers to transmit effectively to all stakeholders the need for changes in project goals, and in every individual tasks and responsibilities is very important. Motivated stakeholders can have a multiplier effect on the change initiatives. Their optimism and assurance, communicated to the rest of the members and stakeholders will encourage them to persevere during chaotic or painful periods in the reform efforts.

Lippitt, et al. (1985: 111) believe that, “… the most important element contributing to success is the art and act of communication.” The entry from the diary of the Logic Manager Electronics depicted in Buchanan and Boddy (1992) also illustrates the importance of communication and some problems of ineffective communication:

Good communication and the involvement of representatives from all affected groups are mandatory for commitment. Also, politics is more likely to be a factor if communication is not handled efficiently. If strategy is left to filter through, problems will result. Individuals with perceived positions of power can impose their own strategies to achieve their own political desires. Communication is vital. More information should be made available to more people at all levels. Especially important is the ability to be able to listen to ideas from lower levels in the organization (Buchanan and Boddy 1992: 101).

However, based on Table 3, the mean score for the ‘communication’ cluster is 2.6 (s.d. = .848), indicating that Iranian reform managers during the period of first development
plan did not possess an effective communication ability to exchange the ideas, inform all affected groups and staff understand the reasons for change and so on.

Table 3. Communication: Assessment of Skills and Competencies of Reform Managers

(\% and mean)

One possible explanation for low rates of competency of reform managers in communication (as well as team building) attributed by their subordinates, is the individualistic culture dominant in Iranian society, and in public organizations as well. According to Grint (1995: 170):

Individualistic cultures … have a leadership style that is authoritative, if not necessarily authoritarian. It takes the gap that exists between subordinate and superordinate as crucial to the maintenance of the entire system and rejects participatory developments by the subordinates.

Negotiation

To develop and communicate a clear image of the future, according to Beckhard and Harris (1977) is one of the first and most critical step for managing the reform programs. During the period of fundamental reforms, which normally takes a long time, resistance and confusion frequently develop; because people are unclear about what the future state will be like. Thus the goals and purposes of the reform become blurred, and individual and group expectancies get formed on the basis of information that is frequently erroneous. In the absence of a clear picture of the future, rumors develop, people design their own fantasies, and they act on them. So, together with development of a clear picture and image of the future, it is important to communicate information to those involved in the change or affected by it. The information could include about what the future state will be like, how the reform will come about, why the change is being implemented, and how the people affected see benefits of value to them.

Negotiation skill includes the competency of selling ideas to get the agreement of interested parties about targets and objectives. Peter Kean (1981) argues that the change agent should rely on face-to-face interaction to sell, influence and otherwise persuade other members of the organization to accept change. This skill, together with communication, motivation and conflict resolution are called by Buchanan and Boddy (1992) as ‘soft’ skills or competencies which are intangible, invisible and unquantifiable abilities, that in many organizational settings undervalued, but are critical nevertheless.
Table 4. Negotiation: Assessment of Skills and Competencies of Reform Managers
(\% and mean)

The results of survey analysis, concerning the negotiation skills of reform managers summarized in Table 4 indicates that the subjects assessed the negotiation skills and competence of their immediate supervisors, below the midpoint (mean = 2.9, $s.d = .849$). It might mean, that the reform managers developed their negotiation skills at slightly below moderate level, which was not enough to sell the reform ideas properly.

**Managing Up**

Managing up “incorporates of the other four clusters, but represents the exercise of those competencies in a different and significant context, but merits allocating to a distinct category” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 108).

It is argued that, one of the most important tasks of reform managers is managing people with widely different and changing values and expectations (Devine, 1988). In the absence of this integrative role, “the divergent style groups … form cohesive norms and set up strong resistance to integration” (Schroder, 1994: 112). To build such an integrative competency, calls for awareness that agreement among different interests is necessary, if the reform program is to be succeed.

When fundamental changes of the system under consideration are necessary, working as a reform manager calls for competence in marshalling support for reform. In addition, in fundamental reforms, challenging existing political and cultural considerations is inevitable. The goals of the reformists may not always be seen as consistent with the goals of other stakeholders or players in the system and may in some circumstances be regarded as suspect. As Pettigrew (1985) explains:

The content of strategic change is thus ultimately a product of a legitimization process shaped by political, cultural considerations, though often expressed in rational/analytical term. This recognition that intervening in an organization to create strategic change is likely to be a challenge to the dominant ideology, culture, and systems of meaning and interpretation, as well as the structures, priorities, and power relationships of the organization, makes it clear why and how the processes of sensing, justifying, creating, and stabilizing strategic change can be so tortuous and long (Pettigrew, 1985: 443).
Table 5. Managing up: Assessment of Skills and Competencies of Reform Managers
(\% and mean)

Therefore, the reform manager, *inter alia*, is expected to (a) consider the impacts of any change of the attitudes on all stakeholders, (b) reinforce establishing consensus and agreement among different interests to enjoy the benefits of collective support of key players, and (c) possess a wide, broad, and long-term vision, and a 'helicopter' perspective to visualize how all the dimensions of the reform program fit together.

The results of survey analysis, in regard to the ‘managing up’ skills of reform managers summarized in Table 5 indicates that the subjects assessed the skills and competencies of their immediate supervisors, at midpoint (mean = 3, $s.d = .881$). It means that the reform managers, based on the perceptions of their staff developed their negotiation skills at moderate level.

The summary of findings regarding the overall skills and competencies of reform managers, based on five specified clusters is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. The Summary of Results of Analysis of Competencies of Reform Managers

*Correlation Between Expertise Factors and Reform program Dimensions*

The correlation analysis between the overall expertise of the reform managers and success/failure of reform program indicates that ‘there is a statistical relationship between these two (multi) variables’ ($x = 11.15525$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.00378$). The phi coefficient of 0.25320 ($p = 0.00378$) indicates that the correlation is statistically significant. By considering the huge number of factors affecting the results of a reform program, at national level, it could be said that, the correlation is moderate.

It could be said that, the more the competencies of reform managers, other things equal, the more the probability of success of reform programs. This is consistent with the results of the study of Schroder (1994) on managerial competence and style that, “the organizational
effectiveness will be highest ... when managers possess the competencies to perform the
tasks demanded by their jobs and the climate of their organization ...” (Schroder, 1994: 110).

To find the details and direction of relationships between expertise of reform managers
and (success of) the reform program, to provide the reform managers and decision-makers a
useful guide, factor analysis of the items would be necessary.

The 17 items of the questionnaire related to the level of skills and competencies of
reform managers, were factor analyzed. The data reduction led to only two factors, which
explained 67.7 percent of the total variance (Table 7). Examination of the items of factors
suggested the following descriptive titles:

Table 7. Results of Factor Analysis (Varimax) for Competence of Reform Managers

Factor 1: Coordination. This factor (alpha .93) with eigen value of 10.47, which is
representative of 61.6 variance is considered as the most important factor. The factor, as its
title indicates, is related to times in relation to coordination between and among different
groups, and ensuring that all the involved people, groups and departments understand their roles, know what is expected of them, understand the reasons of change and see benefits of value to them.

**Factor 2: Prediction-Based Management.** This factor (alpha .92) is composed of items related to the prediction capability of managers in different areas. Items such as anticipating the effect of one decision or change on the attitudes of people, visualizing how all the dimensions of the project fit together, and recognition of implications of change elsewhere, categorized under the second factor. Also the factor includes items relating to revision of strategies whenever conditions change, negotiating new arrangements to cope with temporary difficulties and early clarification of who is responsible for each part of the job.

Table 8 represents the relationship between expertise factors and reform program dimensions. The results reveal that relationships between ‘Training and Research,’ and both factors of expertise are statistically significant ($r = 0.16$, $p < .05$, and $r = 0.14$, and $p < .05$, respectively). It may mean, accomplishment of the items (or goals) included in training and research factor, is associated with (and in need of) both coordination and prediction-based management of reform managers.

**Table 8. Correlation Between Expertise and Reform Program Scales**

The ‘Simplicity and Capacity-Building’ dimension of reform program is significantly related to ‘Coordination’ ($r = 0.23$, $p < .01$) and ‘Prediction-Based management’ ($r = 0.28$, $p < .01$) factors. The correlation coefficient at the case of ‘Prediction-Based Management,’ is the highest, and indicative of its importance. The results indicate that accomplishment of goals related to simple procedures and rules and regulations, and also goals related to capacity-building in Iranian public sector are significantly related to both types of expertise of reform managers.

Based on the results presented in Table 8, the relationships between ‘Participation and Delegation’ dimension of reform programs and two factors of reform managers’ expertise, are also significant and positive ($r = .27$, $p < .01$, and $r = .24$, and $p < .01$, respectively).
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The relationships between the other two factors of reform program and two dimensions of reform managers expertise are not statistically significant.

The analysis of correlation between the whole reform program and the factors of expertise indicates that, the program has significant correlations with both factors of expertise (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Correlation between expertise factors and reform program

Limitations

The analysis presented in this article may have some limitations. The first limitation may arise from the difference between intended and actual point of reference. The study intended to receive the perceptions of the respondents about the expertise of their immediate managers. However, since most of the respondents, together with working as agent of reform, had other positions, too. They might have described the skills and competencies of supervisors other than reform managers. This limitation can cause disparity in the unit of analysis on which an individual is asked to focus.

The next limitation may arise from the adopted measurement. As explained, the questions for measurement of expertise of reform managers were derived from the study of Buchanan and Boddy (1992) which sought to establish the competence of effective change agents at organizational level. Nevertheless, the intention of the current study is to measure the expertise of reform managers working at national level. Although the selected questions include those attributes, probably the most appropriate ones for subjects of the study, it seems, is that the limitation still exists.

Summary and Discussion

The questions in section three of the questionnaire designed to assess the skills and competencies of reform managers, in regard to five clusters of goals, roles, communication, negotiation, and managing up. Possession of core skills and competencies analyzed here is “equivalent to possession of the right tool-kit – which does not necessarily mean that one is able to use the tools effectively to do the job” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 7). Also it is argued that the expertise of the change agent includes not only the tool-kit, but also, the diagnostic, evaluative and judgmental capabilities required to use the tool-kit effectively.
It is presumed that the effective change agent is the one who is able to deploy those core competencies appropriately in context—the process of change varies from context to context—and is not just able to deploy those individual competencies separately. Therefore, it is the ability of change/reform managers to use the ‘tool-kit’ appropriately that counts, not so much the possession of the foregoing or any other collection of attributes.

Based on the definition adopted, competence is ability to perform the activities within an occupation which encompasses organization and planning of work, innovation and coping with non-routine activities. It includes those qualities of personal effectiveness that are required in the workplace to deal with co-workers, managers and customers (Training Commission, 1988: 14). With this definition, it is expected of the reform managers to be able to use the ‘tool-kit’ appropriately to: deal properly with their co-workers (other reform managers and reform agents); establish team work and improve their commitments; deal in an appropriate manner with their own managers to receive political support; and deal in a well-ordered manner with the clients and customers (the general public or other organizations) to satisfy their needs and requirements.

The findings of the study, however, indicate that the reform managers, according to the perceptions of their subordinates, did not have enough expertise or core competencies to shape, manage or socially construct the reform process through which the public organizations were moved. In other words, during the period under consideration, their staff thought they did not acquire enough interpersonal, social, organizational and political skills to implement changes according to the original expectations. The findings reveal that, the reform managers had, on average, considerable years of experience as follows: accumulated experience of managers in any position was between 21 to 25 years, 16 to 20 years, and again 16 to 20 years respectively for top managers (N = 8), middle managers (N = 58) and low level managers (N = 8). Also, their experience as reform managers was also considerable: 11 to 15 years for all managers at different levels. It means, almost all managers had more than one decade of experience working as ‘reform agent.’ Theoretically this could have been a bountiful time for them to acquire the core competencies discussed above, through training, or experience (even through trial and error method).

The overall result of analysis of the responses of reform agents about the competencies and skills of reform managers, however, reveals that, the reform manager’s capability to implement the objectives of reform programs was regarded slightly below ‘middle point’ (average score for all studied skills and competence was 2.8). Theoretically it could be possible to assess the skills of reform managers slightly below acceptable level (midpoint as criteria). The reform program in Iran was expected to bring about fundamental changes in all aspects of the administrative system, and in the values of the bureaucrats to cope with the new expectation of the general public. Therefore, setting of a minimum yard stick for evaluation of expertise of reform managers, is contradictory with the expectations and specified goals. But, even at this minimum level, too, the acquired level of competence was not satisfactory.

The overall result of analysis of success rate of reform program, and the expertise of reform managers indicates that, the reform managers, not only did not acquire enough skills
and capabilities, they were, also, apparently unable to use the ‘tool-kit’ effectively. It may mean, if the reform managers want to be the heroes in the civil society of Iran, they should improve their competencies, or leave their positions and let the other people with more skills and expertise substitute them.

NOTES

1 In the survey conducted by Buchanan and Boddy (1992), respondents were asked to rate the contribution to project success of thirty different skills and competencies. The scales used were rated as, ‘very helpful,’ ‘somewhat helpful,’ and ‘not at all helpful.’
2 The term is borrowed from Buchanan and Boddy (1992). It is explained that “from a helicopter one obtains, first, a good overview of the ground directly beneath and, second, a good forward view of the horizon” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992: 107).
3 Some statistics texts provide arbitrary rules for evaluating the magnitude of a correlation coefficient, such as: “a correlation that is less than 0.30 is small, a correlation that is between 0.30 and 0.70 is moderate, a correlation that is between 0.70 and 0.90 is large, and a correlation that is greater than 0.90 is very large.” Although such rules provide general guidelines to interpretation, they can be misleading in many specific situations. To tell whether a correlation coefficient is large or small, you have to know what is typical (Jaeger, 1983).

REFERENCES


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