

## Proposing a Model for Professional Development of Educational Managers in the Banking Industry

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**Purpose:** Professional development of managers is one of the factors affecting the position of organizations compared to other organizations. Therefore, the present study was conducted to propose a model for professional development of educational managers in the banking industry.

**Methodology:** This study was applied in terms of objective and quantitative in terms of research method. The research population consisted of 280 Bank Sepah branch managers and educational consultants and experts of Sepah Bank headquarters in Tehran in 2021. The sample size was estimated  $n=161$  based on Cochran's formula who were selected by simple random sampling method. For data collection, a researcher-made questionnaire for the professional development of educational managers (78 items) was used, the content validity of which was confirmed by 10 experts, and its reliability was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method above 0.70. Finally, the data were analyzed by exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using SPSS24.

**Finding:** The results of the present study showed that 2 items were excluded due to the factor loading less than 0.40 and the final form of the researcher-made questionnaire for the professional development of educational managers had 76 items and 4 organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions and 21 components with the factor loading above 0.40. Accordingly, a 4D model for professional development of educational managers in the banking industry was drawn.

**Conclusion:** According to the results of the present study, for the professional development of educational managers, it is possible to increase its organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions through the related components and items.

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## 1. Introduction

Human resources is the most important competitive advantage and organizational capital, which had become a certain, definite, universal and accepted statement. For this reason, the valuable role of people in the organization is emphasized and their optimal management is considered very important and sensitive (Mirahmadi, Tadbiri, Afsharnejad & Majidi, 2020). In the existing competitive situation of organizations and in a setting where continuous changes and the necessity of continuous innovations are its main features, only organizations that understand the strategic role of their human resources and have capable, skilled and knowledge-oriented people as employees will succeed in gaining superiority (Turner, Barling, Dawson, Deng, Parker, Patterson & Stride, 2021). Undoubtedly, today's world is the world of organizations and the custodians are humans. In other words, the existential philosophy of the organization relies on human life, and humans breathe life into the bodies of organizations, move and manage them, and organizations not only have no concept and meaning without the existence of humans, but also their management will not be possible. Therefore, human resources are the most valuable resource for organizations that form organizational decisions, provide solutions for problems, and solve organizational problems (Yousefi, Maleki Avarsin & Talebi, 2020). Human capital is the most vital strategic element and the most fundamental way to increase effectiveness and improve organizational performance, and the progress and success of the organization and society depends on it (Ko & McKelvie, 2018). The human capital is the most important competitive advantage of organizations and the main factor of economic, political and social superiority. In this regard, organizations need organizational advantages to achieve competitive advantage, one of which is focusing on human resources (Purkayastha, Karna, Sharma & Bhadra, 2021).

Professional development is a relatively new concept in the field of management and organizational behavior, which aims to develop the knowledge, insight and skills of employees and managers to realize organizational development in the turbulent setting of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, professional development can be a suitable solution or approach for managers and employees to become more professional in order to achieve organizational development (Harfitt, Fung & Liang, 2019). The term development means gradual growth in the direction of progress, strength and expansion, and professional development refers to the development of a person in his professional role (Cathala, Ocho, Moorley & Watts, 2021). Today, professional development is considered an important and fundamental need for any organization, whether educational or non-educational, to improve the quality of organizational services (Ryan & McAllister, 2021). Professional development means increasing the professional knowledge, attitudes, values and skills that a person learns in the organization or outside it to reach a high understanding and insight to make decisions in his profession (Bruzzese, Usseglio, Goldberg, Begg & Larson, 2020). Professional development includes processes and plans that seek to grow and develop professional knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills and cause lasting change in individual and organizational practices (Rutherford, Long & Farkas, 2017).

The success of today's organizations primarily depends on their management capital, and an organization with superior managers will undoubtedly have superior employees. Because top managers seek to attract top employees with a competitive advantage and always try to bring their employees to a higher level of knowledge, attitude and skills (Horace, Dorsey, Turner, Hardin, James & Tran, 2021). Educational managers are responsible for many different tasks and functions, which require various skills, qualifications and competences. The diversity and complexity of the tasks and functions of educational managers is such that only informed, experienced, professional, trained and educated people will be able to perform the assigned tasks and functions (Bicaj & Buza, 2020). The professional development of educational managers means any activity to improve and promote the professional qualifications and competencies of educational managers through the growth and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. In other words, professional development in a broad sense refers to the development of people in their professional role in the organization (Tovkanets, 2017). In general, professional development is the growth of existing potential resources and the development of the organization's structure using plans that lead to productivity so that all employees in their professions continuously increase and update their knowledge, information, skills and experiences (Gage,

MacSuga-Gage & Crews, 2017). The professional development of educational managers can affect the development and empowerment of other employees. In fact, the development of human resources is a type of investment in human and social capital that creates leadership capacity at all levels and improves the individual capabilities and competencies of human capital in the organization (Bondar, Gumenyuk, Horban, Karakoz & Chaikovska, 2020).

Human resources in the banking industry cannot be a static and stable phenomenon due to the dynamics and continuous changes in the setting. Therefore, looking at the business setting and identifying the expected values of the stakeholders and orientation in this regard can be effective on the actions and activities of the human resources field and increase the productivity and effectiveness of the organization (Yip & Bocken, 2018). The recent financial and economic crises of the world clearly show the special position of the banking system in the economy. Banks have an important effect on financing, payment system, implementation of monetary policies and continuation of financial stability. Hence, economists and policymakers emphasize the effect of banks on the modern economy. Of course, it should be noted that these institutions did not play their role well in some cases, which was due to mismanagement and following the goal focused on profit, which caused crises even for advanced societies (Pourebaddolhan Covich, Fallahi & Ebrahimi, 2020). Today, change is the most stable feature that can be introduced for the current business world in any organization, including the banking organization. Because organizations face intense competition due to technological changes in customer demand, and this situation challenges the validity of traditional management models, and all changes, including technological changes, cause changes in the management system of organizations (Arefnezhad, Sepahvand & Rahimi Aghdam, 2020). In Iran, banks act in the form of financial markets along with other sectors, including the capital market, and collect and use people's small and purposeless funds to provide facilities and make investments at the macro level. But due to reasons such as the lack of proper risk-taking culture, the lack of risk-taking and the lack of growth of the capital market, this part of the financial markets is not considered well (Tarkhani, Nazari & Niloofar, 2020).

Few studies have been conducted on the professional development of managers and less studies have been conducted to design and propose the model, which will be reviewed in the following. The study results of Timokhina (2021) showed that to improve the professional development system of managers, it is possible to improve factors such as training, professional competence, accountability of managers and organizational goals. Yousefi et al. (2020) in a study identified the components of professional development of school administrators including three categories of knowledge (with two subcategories of general knowledge and specialized knowledge), skill (with six subcategories of decision-making skills, technical skills, human skills, perceptual skills, skills resource management and technological skill) and attitude (with three sub-categories of positive attitude towards organizational learning, systemic attitude towards the organization and organizational commitment and belonging). The study results of Abili, Hajkhozaymeh, Pourkarimi and Hatami (2020) showed that the professional development components of educational group managers included five categories of leadership and management skills, teaching skills, research skills, personal skills, and consulting skills. In another study, Sadraei, Zolfaghari Zaferani and Vedadi (2020) concluded that the communication skills of human resources managers in the banking industry include the categories of communication skills of human resources managers, individual factors, organizational factors, political behaviors, environmental conditions of the organization, showcase management style, managers' cultural intelligence, government reform community plan, coordination and empathy strategy, adaptive transformational strategy, happy workplace and facilitating communication. Sefidgaran, Golipour, FAgghihi and ShahHosseini (2019) in a study identified the dimensions of the development of human resources managers of the competence-based banking system including four individual (with the components of personality traits, justice-oriented, organizational commitment, professional ethics, trust building and personal brand, analytical thinking, reliable activist, self-management, human resources lawyer, cognitive ability, creativity, innovation and flexibility), interpersonal (with components of leadership, effective communication, accountability, well-being and security, and teamwork), professional (with components of specialized human resources knowledge, business partner and

specialized business knowledge) and managerial (with components of talent management, conflict management, information evaluation and management, planning and decision making, coaching and strategic skills) dimensions. In another study, Asheghi, Ghahremani and Ghourchian (2017) found the factors affecting the model for professional development of managers in the banking industry, including five categories of intellectual-value competence (with four components of general value, organizational value, and personal insight and attitude, and trait), technical-specialized knowledge (with three components of financial-banking knowledge, technological and educational and research knowledge), communication skills (with five components of personal, interpersonal, banking, leadership and professional reliability), management skills (with three components of self-management, managing others and business management) and ability and capability (with five emotional, mental, experimental, academic and physical components). Sehat, Dehghanan and Jalali (2017) identified management factors affecting the success of development banks including five categories of technical approach, environmental approach, social approach, organizational approach and managerial approach. Briere, Proulx, Flores and Laporte (2015) introduced the professional development of managers including adaptability, ability, management skills, communication, personal traits, interpersonal skills, leadership, ethics, network and local knowledge, capacity building and management. In another study, Wesselink, Blok, Van Leur, Lans and Dentoni (2015) reported the professional development of managers including the components of systemic thinking, predictive thinking, normative competence, acceptance of diversity, individual competence, action competence and strategic management.

Today, more than ever, professional development is emphasized, and the reason is that the turbulent world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the rapid changes and developments based on information and communication technology (ICT) have created many challenges in all fields for the organization to face which successfully there is a need for professional development of managers and other employees. Given the importance of educational managers in organizational performance and effectiveness and their role in improving the position of the organization in comparison with other organizations and acquiring a competitive advantage, the professional development of educational managers should not be ignored, but should be considered as a factor to acquire a competitive advantage. Because the professional development of educational managers is a vital requirement for success in playing their professional role, professional development of other organizational employees and improving the position of the organization compared to other organizations. Another important point is that few studies have been conducted on the professional development of managers and less studies have been conducted to design and propose a model for the banking industry. Also, according to the above and the challenges that the researcher observed in some branches of Sepah Bank and the need to update, the present study was conducted to propose a model for professional development of educational managers in the banking industry.

## 2. Methodology

This study was applied in terms of objective and quantitative in terms of research method. The research population consisted of 280 Bank Sepah branch managers and educational consultants and experts of Sepah Bank headquarters in Tehran in 2021. So that in this study there were 250 managers and 30 consultants and educational experts. The sample size was estimated to be  $n=161$  based on Cochran's formula who were selected by simple random sampling method. In this sampling method, a code was assigned to each member of society, and then  $n=161$  were selected as a sample by a random number table.

In the present study, the necessary coordination was made with the officials of Sepah Bank, Tehran headquarters, and after stating the importance and necessity of the research, their consent was obtained and a list of members was prepared. Then, each member was assigned a code and sampling was done. For the samples, in addition to the importance and necessity of the research, ethical considerations were provided and they were asked to participate in this study. It should be noted that the samples were told that the consent of the officials of the central headquarters was obtained and they agreed to conduct the research. Finally, the

subjects responded to the research tool and after checking the full response to all the items of the tool, they were thanked.

In the present study, a researcher-made questionnaire for the professional development of educational managers was used for data collection, which had 78 items and four organizational (21 items), individual (16 items), technological (17 items) and environmental (24 items) dimensions. The items were scored based on a five-point Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree. So that the subjects or respondents indicated their agreement with each item based on a five-point Likert scale. The score of each dimension was calculated with the total score of the items of that dimension and the total score of the tool was calculated with the total score of all its items. The content validity of the researcher-made questionnaire for the professional development of educational managers was confirmed by 10 experts and the average variance extracted (AVE), their validity was calculated by the factor loading and their reliability was calculated by Cronbach's alpha and mixed methods. Finally, the data obtained from the above tools were analyzed by EFA and SPSS24.

### 3. Findings

After the detailed review of the questionnaire completed by the samples, there was no dropout in the present study and with a participation rate of 100% the analyzes were performed for 161 people. Frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage of education level and work experience of banking industry respondents were presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage of education level and work experience of banking industry respondents

| variable        | dimension      | F   | %     | cumulative percentage |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|-------|-----------------------|
| Education level | B.A            | 9   | 5.59  | 5.59                  |
|                 | M.A            | 76  | 47.20 | 52.79                 |
|                 | Ph.D.          | 76  | 47.20 | 100                   |
|                 | total          | 161 | 100   | -----                 |
| Work experience | Below 10 years | 10  | 6.21  | 6.21                  |
|                 | 11-15 years    | 2   | 1.24  | 7.45                  |
|                 | 16-20 years    | 58  | 36.03 | 43.48                 |
|                 | 21-25 years    | 62  | 38.51 | 81.99                 |
|                 | Over 25 years  | 29  | 18.01 | 100                   |
|                 | total          | 161 | 100   | -----                 |

The study results of education level and age of the respondents in the banking industry showed that most had bachelor's and doctorate degrees (n=76 equal to 47.20%) and had 21-25 years of work experience (n=62 equal to 38.51%) (Table 1). Before factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure with a value of 0.81 and Bartlett's sphericity test with a value of 1753.25 were significant at the level of 0.001, which indicated sufficient correlation and sample adequacy. EFA was used to identify the dimensions and components of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry (Table 2).

Table 2. EFA to identify the dimensions and components of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry

| dimension      | component                             | Number of items | AVE  | Factor loading | Reliability (Cronbach's alpha) | Composite reliability |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| organizational | 6                                     | 19              | 0.56 | 0.81           | 0.88                           | 0.88                  |
|                | Human resources management            | 3               | 0.72 | 0.76           | 0.81                           | 0.88                  |
|                | employees                             | 3               | 0.65 | 0.78           | 0.73                           | 0.84                  |
|                | Organizational structure              | 3               | 0.70 | 0.84           | 0.79                           | 0.88                  |
|                | Organizational culture                | 4               | 0.58 | 0.86           | 0.75                           | 0.84                  |
|                | IT infrastructure                     | 3               | 68/0 | 0.71           | 0.76                           | 0.86                  |
|                | Compatibility of system information   | 3               | 0.70 | 0.47           | 0.78                           | 0.88                  |
| individual     | 4                                     | 16              | 0.61 | 0.79           | 0.79                           | 0.86                  |
|                | Innate skills                         | 4               | 0.59 | 0.81           | 0.77                           | 0.85                  |
|                | technical skills                      | 4               | 58/0 | 0.83           | 0.75                           | 0.84                  |
|                | communication skills                  | 4               | 0.53 | 0.70           | 0.72                           | 0.82                  |
|                | environmental skills                  | 4               | 0.57 | 0.76           | 0.76                           | 0.84                  |
| technical      | 5                                     | 17              | 0.63 | 0.77           | 0.82                           | 0.88                  |
|                | Project management                    | 4               | 0.54 | 0.68           | 0.72                           | 0.83                  |
|                | educational requirements              | 4               | 0.56 | 0.83           | 0.74                           | 0.84                  |
|                | localization                          | 3               | 0.70 | 0.80           | 0.79                           | 0.88                  |
|                | implementation                        | 3               | 0.70 | 0.85           | 0.78                           | 0.87                  |
|                | technical                             | 3               | 0.64 | 0.79           | 0.71                           | 0.87                  |
| environmental  | 6                                     | 24              | 0.51 | 0.73           | 0.90                           | 0.84                  |
|                | Cultural and educational requirements | 4               | 0.62 | 0.87           | 0.79                           | 0.86                  |
|                | economic requirements                 | 4               | 0.64 | 0.87           | 0.82                           | 0.88                  |
|                | system improvement requirements       | 4               | 0.64 | 0.75           | 0.81                           | 0.88                  |
|                | maintenance requirements              | 4               | 0.58 | 0.83           | 0.76                           | 0.84                  |
|                | legal requirements                    | 4               | 0.74 | 0.42           | 0.88                           | 0.92                  |
|                | Operation requirements                | 4               | 0.67 | 0.41           | 0.88                           | 0.89                  |

The study results of the dimensions and components of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry showed that 2 items of the organizational dimension (one item of the human resource management component and one item of the organizational culture component) due to the factor loading of

less than 0.40 were excluded from the tool and the final form of the questionnaire had 76 items with 4 organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions and 21 components, the factor loading of which was higher than 0.40. In addition, AVE of all dimensions and components was higher than 0.50, and the reliability with Cronbach's alpha and mixed method for all dimensions and components was higher than 0.70 (Table 2). According to the factor loading of the components and items that make up each of the organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions, 4D model of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry was presented in Figure 1.

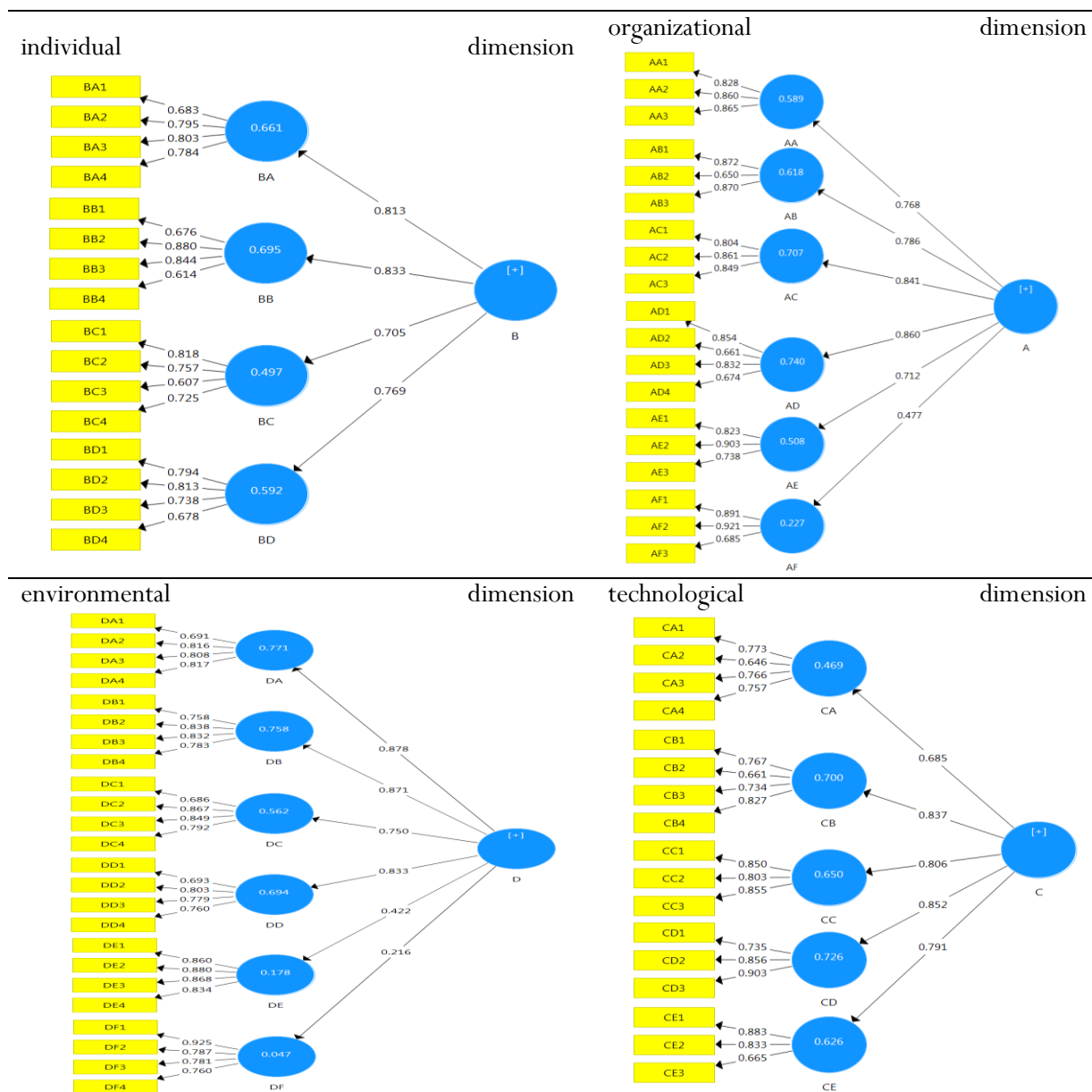


Figure 1. 4D model of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry

#### 4. Discussion

Given the importance of professional development of educational managers, the present study was conducted to propose a model of professional development of educational managers in the banking industry.

The study results of the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry and its dimensions and components showed that 2 items of the organizational dimension (one item of the human resources management component and one item of the organizational culture component) due to the factor loading of less than 0.40 were excluded from the tool and the final form of the questionnaire had 76 items in 4 organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions and 21 components, the factor loading of which was higher than 0.40. AVE of all dimensions and components was higher than 0.50. and reliability by Cronbach's alpha and mixed method for all dimensions and components was higher than 0.70. Although no tool was found about the professional development of educational managers, the results are in some ways consistent with the study results of Timokhina (2021), Yousefi et al. (2020), Abili et al. (2020), Sadraei et al. (2020), Sefidgaran et al. (2019), Asheghi et al. (2017), Sehat et al. (2017), Briere et al. (2015) and Wesselink et al. (2015).

For explaining the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry, it can be said that according to the present study, there are four organizational (with 19 items and 6 components), individual (with 16 items and 4 components), technological (with 17 items and 5 components) and environment (with 24 items and 6 components) dimensions. The organizational dimension had six components of human resources management, employees, organizational structure, organizational culture, IT infrastructure and system information compatibility. For the explanation, it can be said that the organizational dimension in the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry means organizational departments that form organizational processes, including the appropriate selection of individuals, human resources management and planning to attract and maintain latent talents and specialization, setting professional and individual goals, interpersonal skills, paying attention to individual differences, creating appropriate and systematic information flow in the organization and the existence of the evaluation system to facilitate educational affairs and processes and use the professional experiences of colleagues. The organizational dimension also depends on the type of organizational culture. Openness to ideas and innovations, supportive measures, improving the organizational atmosphere and providing culture of acceptance of change are cultural factors that help the professional development of employees and educational managers in banks, but accreditation system and organizational infrastructure should not be neglected for the development of educational plans and vision for educational units. Having a proper relationship between organizational and extra-organizational needs, educational managers can develop the career path and educational research in the bank and improve the professional level of themselves and their employees. The individual dimension had four components of inherent skills, technical skills, communication skills, and environmental skills. For the explanation, it can be said that the individual dimension specifies that not only the structure of a bank affects the professional development of educational managers, but also factors related to the managers themselves as the individual components are very important. People have a series of innate skills that include responsibility and self-control, flexibility, understanding of duties and responsibilities, and patience. Managers' technical skills also help them in their professional development. For example, the ability to solve problems and make decisions, involvement of others in providing a common vision, responsibility and accountability, and professional ethics are skills that lead to the professional competence and finally the professional development of educational managers. Verbal communication skills, cooperative management and need creation and having a democratic spirit, perceptive skills and mutual understanding make employees have more trust in educational managers and mutual understanding is obtained. In the individual dimension, having motivational skills and change management, skill in conflict management, creating interaction and motivation and engaging in learning-oriented settings can also play an effective role in the professional development of educational managers in the banking industry. The technological dimension had five components of project management, and educational, localization, implementation and technical requirements. For the explanation, it can be said that the technological dimension refers to project management, i.e. the program management system, the existence of the human resources management system, accreditation and the existence of the budget management system. Having a



targeted and accurate human resources management system that prioritizes strategic human resources planning and takes steps to improve working conditions, is one of the most important technological factors that play a role in the professional development of educational managers.

Also, the technological dimension includes the educational requirements and the existence of a system for offline courses, curriculum evaluation, online and electronic courses, and educational feedback provide different platforms for providing educational plans for the professional development of educational managers. Therefore, the management of the internal educational network, the existence of a system for obtaining educational records and the reorganization of all professional services are among the solutions for the localization of curricula. Localization provides this platform so that educational managers can benefit from in-bank professional services in a safe and desirable way. For the implementation of educational plans by educational managers, the existence of a knowledge management system, the collection and analysis of educational data, the identification of the best educational system, having technological skills and the existence of a space and equipment management system are necessary. The technological dimension had six components of cultural and educational requirements, economic requirements, improvement system requirements, maintenance requirements, legal requirements, and operation requirements. For the explanation, it can be said that the environmental dimension is another effective dimension on the professional development of educational managers. One of the factors affecting it is the cultural and educational requirements, which refer to the prioritization of managers to positive changes over benefits, the prioritization of managers to the training of system users, the influence of the active atmosphere on the implemented system use, and the extra-organizational emotional relationship between managers and the surroundings. Also, the allocation of the maintenance budget in the annual budgets of the organization, the adherence of managers to the allocation of approved credits, and engineering economy are among the requirements of the environmental economy, which if done correctly and logically, lead to the motivation of managers and their professional development. The improvement system requirements are effective environmental requirements that show up-to-date educational equipment and facilities, social and occupational security of employees, and the extra-organizational social status. In addition, the number of supporting users, the development of a written curriculum, the sleep times of the system during basic maintenance, and the intelligent removal of system errors by the system are among the maintenance requirements that help the professional development of educational managers. Apart from the mentioned requirements, there are also legal requirements that should be considered in the environmental dimension. These requirements help managers to use and protect system information effectively, and support of legal bases and organizational policies in the use of the system allows managers to continue their work without worries and in a safe workplace. The last important requirements in the environmental dimension are the operation requirements, which refer to the effective use of equipment and infrastructure by educational managers, and the use of appropriate incentive systems, infrastructure and requirements, and ease and flexibility of the system and development of decision-making processes in operation based on the educational system are considered important and effective.

The present study had no particular limitations, but the common limitations include the research population limited to Sepeh Bank branch managers and consultants and educational experts of the Sepah Bank headquarters in Tehran, relatively small sample size ( $n=161$ ), lack of review of the results by gender and the lack of finding another tool to compare the results of the present study with it. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct this study on other public and private banks and compare its results with the results of the present study. In addition, it is suggested to conduct the present study on a large group of employees and investigate psychometric indicators to design appropriate plans at the provincial or national level. It is also suggested to investigate the questionnaire of the present study by other researchers as a suitable tool for the professional development of managers or its relationship with other variables. Finally, it is suggested to use the tools of the present study to compare the professional development of educational managers by gender, i.e. men and women. According to the results of the present study and the confirmation of four organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions and 21 components, for the professional development of

educational managers, it is possible to increase its organizational, individual, technological and environmental dimensions through the related components and items. Therefore, it seems necessary to design plans to improve the professional development of managers through the four mentioned dimensions using the components and items of each dimension. As a result, the officials and planners of the banking industry, according to the study results and the results of other studies, can design plans for the growth and development of managers and even employees and their professional development through training workshops.

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