

The connection between managers' relationship style and production efficiency of knowledge in the Islamic Azad University of Iran's 4th region (2006-2010)

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Abstract: Given the strategic policies of the Islamic Azad University in the 4th decade of activities named the decade of global competition and quality with the main components such as diversification of income sources and quality competitiveness at the international level, it takes leader-like and qualified managers to be born in the universities in order to improve the quality indicators, increase research activities based on the productivity of knowledge and technology, and eventually turn knowledge to wealth. Therefore, this survey is done in order to study the correlation between managers' leadership style and productivity in science in the Islamic Azad University of Iran's 4th region from 2006 to 2010. The survey method is field study, and the population consists of 589 senior, middle, and executive managers of 6 universities. Using Cochran's formula, 120 people have randomly been chosen to be stratified appropriately with the volume as simple. Information has been collected through two ways, 30-question questionnaires of Likert's leadership style test and gathering science productivity indicators from the universities being studied. For data analysis, methods of descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Spearman rank correlation and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA ranks) have been used. The validity and reliability of this survey have been estimated equal to 85% using Cronbach's Alpha. The results indicated that in every university being studied, managers had the tendency to apply the leadership style in an autocratic way, and there was a direct relationship between managers' autocratic leadership style and lower science productivity indicators ($p < 0.05$), and an inverse relationship between the cooperative leadership style and these low indicators ($p > 0.05$). Hence, it can generally be concluded that one of the major challenges facing universities being studied is applying inappropriate leadership style by the managers in order to enhance the productivity of science and technology.

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1. Introduction

Universities and higher education institutes, as the most obvious scientific establishments which attempt to educate human beings, are the driving force and mastermind of the society and the steersman of movement toward an overall stable development. These institutes are complicated organizations bearing special features such as having scientists who make them distinguished from other institutes, according to Peter Draker. Undoubtedly, changes, varieties, and internal and external pressures of the environment affect the general management of the university, and it shouldn't be ignored that management and leadership have a dominant role in creating changes. Hersey and Blanchard believe, "The successful organizations bear a feature distinguishing them from unsuccessful ones, and it is nothing other than dynamic and efficient leadership." Strong managers and leaders who do not fear change and have the specialized knowledge and information

on management are able to make the most of limited resources, equipment, and opportunities, a fact which associates the real meaning of organizational efficiency. Now, the necessity to know how to run universities is felt more than any other time, and it seems the enthusiasm of internal and external forces, especially the government's, to manage and lead the universities has increased. Hence, the Islamic Azad University has started to design educational plans with a new look at management and leadership of higher education as a specialized ability inside or outside of country, which constantly present the different dimensions of the matter continuously and with the help of the world-class knowledge in the form of extended programs such as specialized and scientific meetings, question and answer sessions, weekly and monthly classes, and educational workshops and short courses to improve the leadership quality and management of the

universities, which finally lead to organization efficiency.

1.1. Leadership

The essence of many myths and legends of different nations has been the presence, tact, and decision power of audacious and clever leaders who managed lead nations, groups, and organizations home safely at difficult times. The impact of leadership is so significant that mostly there is no place in mind to ponder on the other factors of success or failure of organizations. Ralph Stogdill states that studying leadership is a mythical art, and thinkers like Plato, Caesar, and Plutarch noted this matter in their historical writings. The previous Persian literature is considered one of the richest literatures on leadership in the world, too, for instance, Saadi dedicated the first and longest chapters of his both valuable and wonderful books *Bustan* and *Gulestan* named "Wisdom, Justice, and Will" and "The Morality of the Kings" to explain the admired methods of statecraft and leadership (Galbreath, J. and Rogers, T. (1999). The manager as the official representative of organization is at the head to coordinate and enhance efficiency. The success of organization and fulfillment of goals depend on how the management is applied and what choices are made for the efficient leadership styles. The manager in the role of organization's leader can choose different styles to lead the organization. Manager appropriate behavioral patterns result in creating an appropriate organizational atmosphere and enhancing the spirits and motives of staff. How to use the correct leadership style can increase job satisfaction, staff organizational commitment and productivity (Lin WB (2008). The subject of leadership has been noted by many researchers. The results of these researches have led to presentation and development of various theories in managers' leadership styles. Studying these theories includes a broad spectrum of leadership styles from domineering and authoritarian styles to participatory, development-oriented, servant, and etc. However, it should be noted that one specific leadership style is not suitable for all the organizations and opportunities. Therefore, a manager can pick various styles to lead the organization, considering the dominant organizational culture and staff organizational maturity.

2.1. Efficiency

Universities and higher education institutes have always been considered the highest thinking and knowledge-producing in the society. They also have a major role in enhancing science and directing intellectual, credential, cultural, and social

movements with thoughtful presence and activities of thinkers, scholars, researchers, and students in the society. In order to do their dangerous tasks, stay dynamic, and improve them, universities need to present an appropriate tool and pattern to make sure of improving the programs and respective processes. On the other hand, programing the educational and research affairs precisely and training manpower, the higher education system should attempt to enhance the efficiency and optimal use of available capital and be more promising about the development and cultural and scientific authority. The Cultural Revolution High Council has started to provide the indicators of science productivity in quantity and quality dimensions including 25 indicators in order to study and evaluate the efficiency of higher education and providing indicators and rules of assessment with the help of global studies in the realm of specialized higher education (such as patterns for higher education evaluation, patterns for the international quality guaranteeing network in higher education, indicators presented by UNESCO, and etc.), but due to some limitations, the researcher has sufficed to the five major indices.

3.1. Pattern of measuring efficiency in universities

Functionality measurement indices are directly related to what the organization does. However, what an organization does is meant to achieve the objectives and determined goals of that organization. Therefore, a public pattern of what the universities do must be available so that efficiency indices can be considered alongside the functionality measurement. In other words, universities can develop their desired indices with regard to their strategic goals. In the following pattern, every university is considered as a system in which a set of processes are interacting with one another to turn a set of inputs to a set of outputs. Hence, an effort has been made so that the functionality efficiency indices of the output current measure the input process.

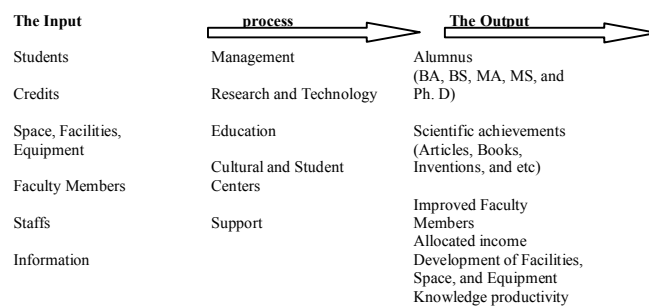


Figure1: Pattern of measuring efficiency in universities

4.1. Measurement of research productivity

The most sensitive and important part of studying efficiency is the measurement through evaluating efficiency correctly at different levels, investigating its changes in various periods, and also comparing the calculated efficiency with the determined or standard indices, pre-determined goals, or functionality quality at different levels of the institute, section, and nation, therefore, productivity measurement is considered the necessary part, or in other words, the starting point of the scientific process of productivity management, and an efficient tool in the management. Productivity measurement provides information which makes it possible to judge an evaluate how to move toward the goal (the desired situation) from the starting point and the previous condition (the available situation). In the institutes, productivity is evaluated to analyze efficiency and effectiveness. Productivity measurement can sometimes increase the efficiency 5% to 10% without organizational changes or investment (Belussi. F.1999). the role of research is high of importance in the university environment. Dill, 1986, says, "Many discoveries happen in higher educational environment." The researches have indicated that survey productivity bears the major role to succeed in formal employment, promotion, and increase in wages and benefits in higher education (Cutter lake et al.). There are a few methods to measure the survey productivity in the research and technology section, which include publications and reference count of the articles in other papers, presenting papers in conferences, awards, prizes, and the amount of financial support (Yin X, Zajac E. 2004). Accordingly, educational groups and institutes have collected a lot of information on faculty member publications, gaining financial help, making their researches and publications reference, and used them to achieve different goals like promotion, official employment, and increase in salary (Woodruff, R.B. (1997)).

There are many subjects on the method of measuring productivity in the research and technology section of universities. For example, is the reliability level meaningful? Are the papers more important than books or vice versa? How much value should be given to a particular journal? How can the reliability of a journal be determined? Stating questions like these indicates measuring the research productivity is faced with many problems (Mavondo. Felix T. et.al.2005).

The productivity of research in the form of financially supportive publications is a quantitative factor which is well measurable, but the important point is that the quality of the research is also important, although it can be mentioned by rankings

of different journals. Although, surveys show that universities do not simply measure publications quantitatively as research productivity which is executed in the universities, major factors can be prioritized. Regarding measurement of research productivity in the universities, many surveys have been conducted in different sections, and more of them include the count of published journals in particular journals (Jensen M, Meckling W. 1992). Hax , 1969, says, "The published surveys are the best touchstone to evaluate faculty members quality." Henry and Barch, 1974, realized that the published surveys in most of the universities are the main indices for productivity measurement. Cargill and Bailey Tez realized that faculty members consider surveys the main factor for decisions of salary allocation. At some occasions, researching is worth two times teaching and five times servicing in the process of promotion and official employment (Venkatraman N, Ramanujam V (1986).).

Given the fact that the share of research and survey in the ranking of most universities is high, for instance in the ranking of journal "THA" which is done with the help of Thomson Reuters institute, the weight of factor representing research and scientific productivity is 30 points, referring to university findings in the world or the world scientific leakage is 30 points, and innovation through using the researches is 3 points, so that paying attention to research is 63 points out of 100 in THA ranking, or in the universities of Islamic world, the weight of research factor is 64 out of 100, which shows the high importance of studying and researching in university rankings. The importance of management and leadership alongside its impact on university productivity, paying attention to the success of Islamic Azad University as the largest non-governmental university in the world and its promising development in almost three decades, given the competitiveness and commercializing science, increasing number of students, especially at high ages for higher education, and higher education becoming a mass, it is necessary to pay attention to the strategic policies of the 4th decade of activities in this university, called the decade of world-class competition, bearing main features like competitiveness and differentiating sources of income. In this regard, promoting quality indices, increasing research activities based on productivity of science and technology, and finally turning knowledge to wealth are quite vital, a matter of significance which need leader-like managers to be reborn strongly in the managing body of universities. Despite of main challenges in the realm knowledge and technology productivity in universities, which is one of the most important components of countries'

economic development and growth, correct and logical leadership of managers is necessary over scientist as human assets to increase productivity in this sensitive and strategic realm. Hence, this paper aims to study the connection between managers' leadership style with the indices of technology and science productivity in the Islamic Azad University in Iran's 4th region from 2006 to 2010 and present an appropriate approach to improve it.

2. Material and Methods

The available method is applied in terms of purpose, due to using the theoretical bases and models, scaling (field) in terms of plan, and descriptive-analytical (inductive) in terms of collecting information and deduction. The statistical society in this survey consists of 589 people of major, middle, and executive managers in 6 universities studied, in which 120 people have been selected with Cochran's formula as the statistical sample to be studied. The method of collecting information was through the standard questionnaires including 30 questions of Likert's leadership style evaluation regarding human-oriented and task-oriented dimensions, which the researcher drew the frontal look of leadership of the managers in the statistical society after collecting and analyzing data. On the other hand, gaining the indices of science productivity from universities studied, the researcher studied whether there was a relationship between them or not, and even the impacts of demographic variables of the survey on the managers leadership styles and also science productivity using the descriptive and deductive statistical methods through applying the statistical software SPSS.

1.2. The main hypothesis of the research

There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and efficiency in research and technology in the branches of Islamic Azad University of Iran's 4th region.

2.2. The secondary hypotheses of the research

1. There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and the indices of authored or translated books in the statistical society.
2. There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and the indices of ISI, ISC, and scientific-research articles printed in renowned journals in the statistical society.
3. There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and the indices of presented and printed papers in the international and national scientific conferences in the statistical society.

4. There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and the indices of finished research plans in the statistical society.
5. There is a connection between the managers' leadership style and the indices of held scientific conferences in the statistical society.

3. Results

There are five main axes in the twenty-year cultural, scientific, social, and economic vision document of Islamic Republic of Iran, which are A) economic axis, B) science and technology axis, C) Iranian identity axis, D) inspiration axis in the Islamic world, E) having a constructive interaction with other countries. The importance and necessity of science and technology in line with country's economic development is crystal clear, since it is among five main axis of the vision document. However, this role is heavily on the burden of universities and higher education institutes as the driving force of stable development, therefore, we should change our traditional point of view which says university is an educational space for education, and move toward the entrepreneur and finally civilizing universities. Since, research is less colored than education in our educational system, and unfortunately, we are consumers in the educational system, a fact which does not befit our nation and country, the only way of survival from this mustiness is to invest and prioritize the matter of science productivity which is the same as research and technology in society, especially in the universities.

What can be referred to as a challenge blocking the way of enhancing science productivity in this research is the leadership method applied by many managers over human assets which means scientists in an authoritarian way which is less cooperative, the main obstacle in the way of enhancing science productivity. Despite of skillful scientists in these universities, the number of five indices of science productivity must be more than the mentioned number in this survey. In this regard, we can point out to refusal to participation or low ranks of Iranian universities, which shows the weak indices of science productivity. Thus, as one of the main recommendations to resolve the problem, replacing the appropriate cooperative leadership style with regard to the situations and culture of universities instead of applying the leadership style which is almost authoritative, which can bear positive impacts on enhancing the efficiency of science productivity indices.

The present paper titled leadership and its role in organization productivity (in research and technology section in the Islamic Azan University of

Iran's 4th region from 2006 to 2010) has been conducted in a field way. Since the main purpose of the survey is studying the connection between managers' relationship style and production efficiency of knowledge in the Islamic Azad University of Iran's 4th region, the following results have been obtained.

Table1: The table of Pearson's correlation coefficients for science productivity with the leadership style (** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		Book	Paper in renowned journal	Paper in scientific conference	Research plan	Scientific conferences	Cooperative score	Authoritative score
Book	Pearson's correlation	1	.906(**)	.779(**)	.828(**)	.917(**)	-.023	.762(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.904	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Paper in renowned journal	Pearson's correlation	.906(**)	1	.763(**)	.904(**)	.896(**)	-.011	.741(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.955	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Paper in scientific conference	Pearson's correlation	.779(**)	.763(**)	1	.789(**)	.854(**)	.224	.520(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.233	.003
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Research plan	Pearson's correlation	.828(**)	.904(**)	.789(**)	1	.811(**)	.032	.523(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.868	.003
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Scientific conference	Pearson's correlation	.917(**)	.896(**)	.854(**)	.811(**)	1	.078	.836(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.682	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Cooperative score	Pearson's correlation	-.023	-.011	.224	.032	.078	1	-.234
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.904	.955	.233	.868	.682		.214
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Authoritative score	Pearson's correlation	.762(**)	.741(**)	.520(**)	.523(**)	.836(**)	-.234	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.003	.003	.000	.214	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

- The mean of acquired scores from managers' leadership style based on the questionnaires show that managers tend to apply the authoritative style to some extent in all the surveyed universities, and among them, the University of Khorasgan bears the highest and the city of Majlesi has the lowest of authoritative leadership style.
- The acquired correlation coefficients from data analysis on the five indices of science productivity used in the survey indicate that there is a direct relation between the somewhat autocratic leadership style of managers and the mentioned lower indices, an inverse relation between the cooperative style and these indices. This suggests that unfortunately, applying the less authoritative style of leadership during the five-year period of the survey, the managers of these universities caused the slow increase of science productivity unfortunately. However, the surveyed universities possess high physical, financial, and human equipment which could

benefit from the cooperative leadership style in order to enhance the science productivity.

- While analyzing the demographic variables of the survey and their relation with managers' leadership style with Kruskal-wallis nonparametric test, the following results have been acquired:
 - The autocratic leadership style of the managers considering their majors are as follows: Science and agriculture> engineering and basic sciences> humanity> Medicine. This means that the educated managers in majors such as science and agriculture tend to apply more the autocratic leadership style and less the cooperative one, while the educated managers in majors like medicine act inversely.
 - There has not been a meaningful connection observed between the surveyed managers' leadership style and the academic rank of their universities.
 - There has not been a meaningful connection observed between the surveyed managers' leadership style and the universities in which they studied.
 - There has not been a meaningful connection observed between the surveyed managers' leadership style and their bureaucratic positions.
 - There is a direct relation between managers' leadership style and specialized management training of serving managers, which means the more managers use this type of training, the less the autocratic leadership style is applied in their field of expertise and the tendency to apply the cooperative leadership style grows.

There is a meaningful connection between the variable of surveyed managers' ages and their leadership styles, in a way that managers from the age 25 to 34 and 55 to 64 tend more to apply the

- Autocratic leadership style, which means managers use the autocratic leadership style more than the cooperative one in their first and last years of managerial services.
 - There has not been a meaningful connection observed between the surveyed managers' leadership style and the years they have served.
 - There is a meaningful connection between the variable of university size and managers' leadership style, in a way that the smaller the university is, the more autocratic the leadership style applied by the managers gets, and the larger the university is, the more cooperative the leadership style applied by the managers gets.
- While analyzing the demographic variables of the survey and their impacts on the indexes of

science productivity, the following results have acquired:

- 2.1. There is a direct relation between the variable of managers' education level and the five indices of science productivity, which means the higher managers' education level get, the more science productivity increases.
- 2.2. There is a meaningful relation between managers' major and the five indices of science productivity, which means the more we move from managers with humanity majors toward those with medical majors, the more the research indices increase. (Medicine> Science and agriculture> Engineering> Humanity)
- 2.3. There is a direct relation between the academic rank of the managers and the research indices, which means the higher the academic rank of the surveyed managers is, the more the research indices of the university grows.
- 2.4. There is a direct relation between the variable of the university in which the managers studied and the indices of science productivity, which means the managers who studied in more renowned universities, caused the indices of science productivity to increase more.
- 2.5. There is a direct relation between the variable of managers' bureaucratic position and the indices of science productivity, which means managers with higher positions help to increase the indices of science productivity more than managers with lower positions.
- 2.6. There is a direct relation between the variable of education while serving and the indices of science productivity, which means the more the managers get specialized educations at each level, the more positive impacts it has on increasing the indices of science productivity.
- 2.7. There is an inverse relation between the variable of age and the research indices, which means the older the surveyed managers get, the more the indices decrease.
- 2.8. There is a meaningful relation between the variable of managers' experiences and the indices of science productivity, which means less experienced managers, tend to print papers in renowned journals or do researches, while more experienced managers tend to print books and present papers in internal or external scientific conferences.

Table2: The table of mean and SD of the studied universities

The Branch		Cooperative score	Authoritative score
Naen	Quantity	9	9
	Mean	7.8889	10.8889
	Total	71.00	98.00
	SD	2.02759	2.31541
Ardistan	Quantity	8	8
	Mean	7.2500	10.8750
	Total	58.00	87.00
	SD	3.10530	3.09089
Majesi	Quantity	22	22
	Mean	7.7273	10.0909
	Total	170.00	222.00
	SD	1.42032	2.32807
Khozistan	Quantity	39	39
	Mean	7.3077	12.5897
	Total	285.00	491.00
	SD	1.74949	2.81647
Felavarjan	Quantity	22	22
	Mean	7.6364	10.5455
	Total	168.00	232.00
	SD	1.73330	2.55841
Natanz	Quantity	7	7
	Mean	6.5714	10.8571
	Total	46.00	76.00
	SD	1.61835	2.34013
Total	Quantity	107	107
	Mean	7.4579	11.2710
	Total	798.00	1206.00
	SD	1.81337	2.76286

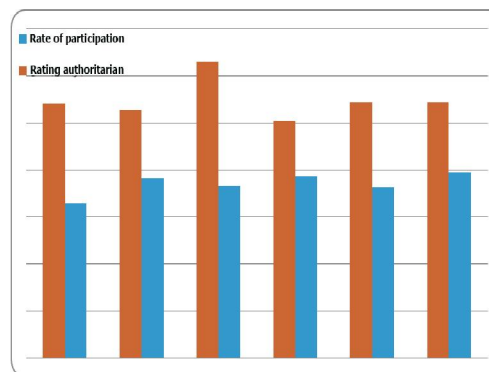


Figure 1: scores' mean on leadership styles of managers in the surveyed universities

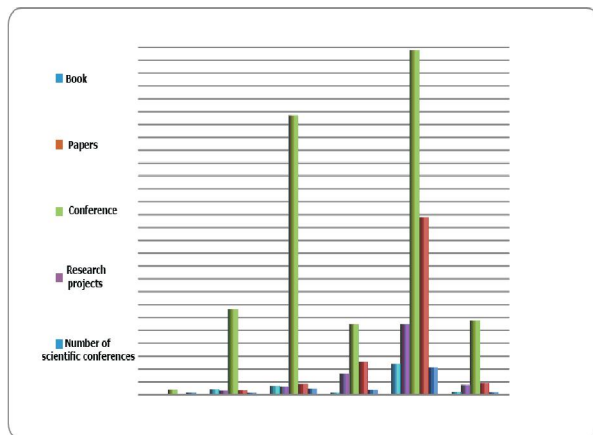


Fig2: mean on science productivity in the surveyed universities from 2006 to 2010

4. Discussions

1.4. Practical suggestions in order to increase the productivity of science in universities and research centers

- 1. Diversification of income in universities and research centers for the prosperity of science through commercialization of science:** The surveyed universities and higher education institutes are private, so it seems that the officials of the Islamic Azad University must attempt to diversify the incomes apart from the tuitions, because there will be difficulties spending money on education due to global economic crisis, its impact on Iran's inflation rate, gradual increase of inflation rate, and creating a gap between people's income and the inflation rate of country. The solution could be the diversification of university revenues apart from students' tuitions.
- 2. Increasing research and technology share of GDP:** Given the fact that research credits and their ratio to GDP is one of the constant factors of evaluating development indices in the world, this ratio is unfortunately very poor in Iran. On the other hand, the way research credits are distributed among universities and other governmental bureaus is not appropriate, so that the maximum research credits are available for organizations which have neither professional researchers nor a well-firmed determination to apply the scientific potential of universities in their research activities. While, some organizations have credits for which they are responsible to use them in any way at the end of fiscal year, a purpose which forms shade knowledge whose frequency is usually more than the original scientific work. Additionally,

investments are concentrated on this kind of science and semi-scientific works.

- 3. Using the state grant:** Currently, there is no work commissioned by the government in universities. The genuine researcher is not different from the ostensible one and passes the same path to define and ratify the project. Consequently, this contract ends up in favor of ostensible researchers, because they both know the ways of absorbing the budget and have plenty of time and number. The real and necessary works for the country, apart from organizations and executive agencies, must be commissioned directly, and the research system in its macro forms must be organized in this way.
- 4. Supporting the private sector to enter the realm of science:** It seems that the private sector has a little share to enter the realm of research and technology, while the major research investment is done by the private sector, and governmental investments are mostly in the span of sciences and strategic researches. However, in our country, the major part of research credits is afforded through the public budget by the government, and the role of private sector is limited in this area.
- 5. Practical fieldwork courses for management students:** One of the main challenges of our educational system is training for education. Although students learn fine theoretical materials in the universities, they have problem taking practical actions. It seems that fieldwork courses should be designed for management students, especially MA and Ph. D ones, as the future managers, so that they can practically get familiar with the ways managers and leaders work in the organizations and become the necessary asset for the future alongside the useful experience.
- 6. Educating and training postgraduate students in three categories:** Universities and higher education centers should prioritize educating three groups of postgraduate students (MA and Ph. D) based on the individual's abilities and capabilities. The first category includes the research-oriented students who have are able to do research projects and produce knowledge. The second one includes students who are merely education-oriented and are used to do educational work in the universities and science centers. The third one includes students who are both education-oriented and research-oriented.
- 7. Meritocracy in selecting managers, universities, and research centers:** The

selection of university managers should be meritocratic rather than imperative. It seems that the senior officials of the Islamic Azad University should design a structure in the form of a comprehensive and strong questionnaire to select university managers and investigate every angle of their cultural, scientific, research, economic, experiential, and social lives thoroughly so that they can lead research and science centers without any political, ethnic, and party intervention, or even without religious dogmas to enhance the science productivity in these centers in the society.

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