

## **Examining the screening of factors affecting the improvement of managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations through questionnaire tools and the fuzzy Delphi method**

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### **Abstract**

Trust can be seen as the backbone of cooperation. Trust must be addressed and strengthened so that organizational members can fully focus on the core tasks of the collaboration. Building trust can be seen as one of the key areas in management performance. Therefore, it is important to highlight the responsibility and effects of the actions of each member of the organization, including the manager of the organization. It is also important to focus on how to build trust and how to maintain it in the workplace when we are faced with collaboration challenges. Interpersonal trust as well as management performance are very broad areas of research. But there are still some gaps in these areas that deserve deeper exploration. Therefore, in this article, the screening of factors affecting the improvement of managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations was investigated through questionnaire tools and the fuzzy Delphi method, And it was concluded that planning, organizational performance, leadership and control are effective in strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations.

**Keywords:** management performance, trust enhancement, fuzzy Delphi, organizational performance

### **Introduction**

What distinguishes today's world from the world of organizations a few decades ago is the unstable and complex environment, increasing competition, rapid changes and developments, and the increasing development of communications (Sheikhzadeh and Behramzadeh 2007). And also, the tremendous changes in management knowledge have made the existence of an effective management performance system inevitable for organizations; In such a way that the lack of management performance system in various dimensions of the organization, including the evaluation of the use of resources and facilities, employees, goals and strategies, is considered as one of the symptoms of the diseases of the organization (Adali 2004). The performance of management goes beyond the limited definitions such as collecting information and reporting that exist in conventional patterns and is more than managing people. The performance of management consists of recognizing, measuring and then managing what is important in order to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and overall performance of the organization (Zahedi and Yavari 2012). Management performance within and between teams is of critical importance to organizations (Renzel 2008). Management performance is a strategic and integrated process that provides the sustainable success of organizations by improving the performance of people who work in organizations and by developing individual and group capabilities (Safari et al., 2010). Therefore, the successful and complete implementation of the employee management performance process can greatly increase the success of organizations, But to the same extent, it involves managers in hard and laborious activities (Mirbagheri et al., 2018). Interpersonal trust is an important

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condition for success in management performance; And so, because interpersonal trust plays a key role in the success of management performance, it is very important for managers to know what causes trust to grow among people in an organization. Trust forms a complex structure with levels, bases and determinants, And different trusts result from infrastructures such as predictability, cooperation, and self-confidence. In addition to different areas of trust, there are also different types of trust. There is a difference between personal and impersonal trust, personal trust is based on person-to-person interaction; Whereas impersonal trust is based on a situation (for example, job titles, offices) and not an actual person (Ford 2004). In the discussion of trust, it is the willingness of one party to be exposed to harm from the other party, Based on the expectation that the other party will perform a certain action for the trustor, regardless of whether that party's actions can be controlled or monitored (Levin and Kroes 2004). The value of trust is determined under conditions of uncertainty and risk (Wu et al. 2010). And part of the relationship between people is the issue of trust. Therefore, trust is different for each person and each relationship (Schurman et al., 2007). If there is interpersonal trust, people are more willing to share. Interpersonal trust has many indirect effects on knowledge sharing intention among employees (Wang and Chang 2015). Interpersonal trust is, in fact, the willingness of one party to depend on the other with a sense of relative security (even if negative consequences are possible). In a wide range of fields, researchers have found that interpersonal trust is critical. In other words, interpersonal trust is the main reason why close working relationships in organizations lead to better knowledge transfer (Abrams and others 2003). Therefore, every organization regardless of the type of activity, size and structure, There is a need to design a model for improving managerial performance with a mechanism to strengthen interpersonal trust, based on which it can measure its success in achieving its organizational goals and ideals. On the other hand, the nature of the work in Iran Milk Industries Company (Pegah) is such that it is highly sensitive and due to the large expenses incurred in this company, it plays a decisive role in the strength and growth of a country. Also, improving knowledge and management capabilities in the field of employee performance can help a lot in choosing the right people, proper evaluation, correct encouragement and punishment, correct promotion of people and as a result increase the productivity of employees, This leads to an increase in research achievements in this field. Organizations in the conditions of recent decades, simultaneously with the increase of work and economic relations with the private sector, are faced with goals (such as decentralization, cost reduction, more savings, customer orientation, gaining client satisfaction and improving service quality indicators, accountability legal and social responsibility), which has caused the increase of employees' moral errors and their entry into the field of corruption and criminal offenses, In such a way, the government of men are required to think of a solution against the weakening of morals. One of the most important organizations in which interpersonal trust is of great importance in the organization is Iran Milk Industry Company (Pegah). The basic mission and function of Pegah company is to attract, train and train specialized human resources. Interpersonal trust in Iran Milk Industries Company (Pegah) provides the right context to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in order to make decisions by the officials of Iran Milk Industries Company (Pegah), and helps them to take steps towards the development of their organization. The lack of interpersonal trust in the organization are problems that, if not treated in time, may prevent the organization from growing and developing. Empirical evidence shows that when the interpersonal trust of employees is weak, many problems arise, several issues that we will discuss further, make the present study necessary. The first issue is that in terms of research records, several studies in Iran have directly focused on interpersonal trust in the organization. The important point is that in some researches, interpersonal trust in the organization has been used as an aggregated structure of its more detailed dimensions in the analysis, In this regard, it should be said that the use of aggregated structures can in some cases lead to the concealment of part of the reality regarding the relationships between the more detailed dimensions of interpersonal trust in the organization. The second issue regarding the bases of conducting the current research, beyond the direct and indirect relationship of interpersonal trust in the organization, is very important, that interpersonal trust in the organization is considered a value in Iranian society in many ways, Without paying attention to interpersonal trust in the organization, in practice, it is not possible to gain a deep understanding and insight into its true role in the emergence of different behaviors. So, in general, it can be said that the importance and design of the management performance improvement model with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in Iran Milk Industry Company (Pegah) in the field of society on the one hand, And a very small number of researches related to it abroad and Iran And the lack of research in the field of designing a management performance improvement model with a mechanism to strengthen interpersonal trust in Iran Milk Industry Company (Pegah) shows the importance and necessity of research despite the great need. Experts have listed various factors for it, and this research, by examining and summarizing them, tries to provide a model for improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in the organization. Therefore, the aim of this research is to design a model for improving managerial performance with a mechanism to strengthen interpersonal trust in the organization. In fact,

the main problem and question of the research is, what factors and components provide the improvement of managerial performance and improve the relationship between the factors of improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in the organization? Finally, to provide a model for improving management performance with a mechanism to strengthen interpersonal trust in the dairy industry, especially in Iran Milk Industries (Pegah).

#### **background research**

Qasim Nejadiani and others (2021) in a research entitled "Comparison of managerial performance of managers in educational centers" investigated and compared the managerial performance of managers educated in the field of management with managers educated in other fields in educational centers of Ilam cities. The research method in this research is a descriptive survey. The statistical population of this research consists of 200 educational staff. Also, the tool for collecting information is a researcher-made questionnaire. Considering that the variables are at the level of intervals, SPSS software was used for data analysis and independent test was used to test the hypotheses. The obtained results showed that managers educated in management fields use collaborative management style more than other managers; Managers educated in management fields have the ability to make necessary changes and innovation more than other managers; Also, managers educated in management fields have higher planning ability than other managers (Gasem Nejadiani and others ,2021). Fathi (2019) in his research entitled "Analysis of factors affecting the improvement of managerial and executive performance of egg-laying chicken units in Kermanshah province" investigated this issue with a descriptive-survey method in Kermanshah city. The statistical population of the research included managers of laying poultry units in Kermanshah city. Data were collected by census method using questionnaires and face-to-face interviews with managers of production units and analyzed using Excel and SPSS software. In order to determine the validity of the questionnaire, the content validity method was used; And reliability was measured by an experimental research and calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results of the analysis showed that the level of education of managers has a significant difference with the performance of poultry farms. Also, the results of comparing the average performance of poultry farms based on the way of providing institutions with the dependent variable of the average performance showed a positive and significant relationship. Participation in training courses by employees has also increased the performance of units. Also, the results of the regression analysis showed that three structural, technical and financial factors explain a total of 69.8% of the changes in the dependent variable of the research (performance of poultry units) (Fathi 2019). Moradi and others (2019) in a research entitled "Effect of transformational leadership style and management control system on the managerial performance of cooperative and private companies" investigated this issue with a descriptive-survey method. In this research, a questionnaire with questions in the form of a Likert scale was used to test the hypotheses. The statistical population of the research was the collection of managers and supervisors of cooperative and private companies located in Malayer city in Hamedan province in three sectors: services, agriculture, industry and mining. The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Also, confirmatory factor analysis was used to check the validity of the construct using Lisrel software, and the path analysis model was used to analyze the findings, and Sebel's test was used to analyze the mediating variable. The results showed that transformational leadership and three design paths of management control systems can have a positive and meaningful effect on management performance directly and indirectly. Also, the comprehensive performance measurement system, the reward system and the wide range of accounting information play the role of a mediating variable in the relationship between other variables (Moradi et al. 2019). Su and others (2021) in a research entitled "Controllability of performance measures and managerial performance: the mediating role of justice" Investigated the mediating role of the fairness of the performance evaluation system on the relationship between the controllability of financial and non-financial actions and managerial performance. In this research, data was collected from middle and low level managers in Australian manufacturing organizations using an online survey questionnaire. Covariance-based structural equation modeling was used for data analysis using Amos software. Also, Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach with confirmatory factor analysis was used to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement model before implementing the structural model. The results showed that the influence of managers' controllability of performance criteria on managerial performance is applied through their perception of justice; And the influence of controllability of financial (non-financial) measures on managerial performance is applied through managers' perception of distributive (interpersonal) justice. In general, the results show that the controllability of financial and non-financial performance measures is positively related to management performance and through managers' perception (Su and others 2021). Jamadi (2021) in his research entitled "Interaction or Sustainability: Management Performance" investigated this issue with the aim of increasing management performance using budget participation and comprehensive quality management as influential factors. This research was conducted by three construction companies in Makassar, Indonesia. The research data collection

tool was a questionnaire distributed among 68 respondents. The samples were selected using Slovin's formula. Multiple linear regression and Spias software were used for data analysis. The results showed that when the dominant variable was budgeting participation, two independent variables had a positive relationship and a significant impact on management performance. The research results generally showed that participation in budgeting has a significant impact on management performance (Jamadi 2021). Pengribwan (2021) in his research entitled "Implementation of comprehensive quality management, performance measurement system, reward system and organizational commitment to managerial performance" Investigated the effect of total quality management, performance measurement system, reward system and organizational commitment on managerial performance. The purpose of this research on organizations is to improve management performance. The statistical population of this research included managers, assistants and administrative staff in Tangerang region of Indonesia. The sampling method used in this research was purposive sampling, and the data collection tool used in the research was a questionnaire based on a Likert scale. Multiple linear regression analysis and SPSS software were used to analyze the data. The results showed that four research variables affect management performance. In this research, based on the results, it was stated that the performance measurement system provides important information as an input in improving the managerial performance measurement system to have consequences for increasing the added value of the organization. A good reward system is one of the models of employee motivation. Providing incentives internally can increase the work motivation of employees to improve the management performance of the relevant organization. Also, organizational commitment is one of the indicators that can increase managerial performance in an organization (Pangribavan 2021). Rahim (2020) in his research entitled "Interpersonal skills and the influence of managerial performance through organizational commitments" Investigated the effect of interpersonal skills on managerial performance, the effect of commitment on managerial performance and the effect of interpersonal skills on managerial performance through organizational commitment. The statistical population of the research was all BAMEDS managers in Taklar region in Indonesia. The analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaire was done with the help of structural equation model and Amos software. Also, confirmatory factor analysis was used to measure the validity of the research structure. The obtained results showed that there is a positive and significant effect between interpersonal skills and variables of organizational commitment and managerial performance. Also, the results showed that the value of the direct effect of interpersonal skills variables on managerial performance is greater than its indirect effect through organizational commitment variables; Therefore, it can be said that organizational commitment is not an accurate variable to mediate the correlation between interpersonal skills and managerial performance (Rahim 2020). Kosmoriyanto and others (2020) in a research entitled "Improving managerial performance through budget participation with adjustment variables in public companies" investigated the effect of budgeting participation on managerial performance directly and indirectly through the culture of organizational achievements, leadership style, environmental uncertainty and organizational commitment as mediating variables. The statistical population of this research was managers and heads of service departments of state-owned companies in Central Java. A questionnaire was used to collect data, which was randomly sent to the participants. Path analysis method and Amos software were used for data analysis. The results showed that there were 12 analyzes of direct and indirect or total effects. In the analysis, the highest coefficient of total effect on the direction of causality is leadership style, budget participation and organizational culture. While the lowest total effect coefficient is in the direction of environmental uncertainty causality towards budget participation and organizational culture (Cosmoriyanto and others 2020). Eve and Suryaningrom (2019) in a research entitled "The impact of total quality management on managerial performance" investigated and analyzed managerial performance with two elements of comprehensive quality management, namely training and organizational commitment to improve performance. The statistical population of this research was all managers of the Indonesian Railway Company. Sampling was done by non-probability sampling and purposive sampling. Data collection was done by questionnaire. The analytical model used to test the presented hypothesis is multiple linear regression, and F-test and T-test were used to determine its effect. The research results indicate that training has a positive effect on managerial performance. Also, organizational commitment has a positive effect on managerial performance. Therefore, maintaining and increasing training is necessary to improve the managerial performance of the organization (Eve and Suryaningrom 2019).

#### **Research Methods**

In this research, the fuzzy Delphi method will be used to collect part of the information from the questionnaire and to analyze the collected data. Therefore, a preliminary questionnaire was designed, And then after revising the initial questionnaire, Using the opinions of professors and experts, the final version is designed and the research experts are asked to express their opinion regarding the variables of the conceptual model that were identified based on the interview, according to the conditions of Iran Milk Industry Company (Pegah), And also add other possible factors to the list. In the following, one of the most common methods presented for fuzzy Delphi has been tried to be

explained step by step. In fact, all the steps of the fuzzy Delphi method used are exactly the same as the regular Delphi method and they differ only in the data analysis section. In the following, the method of analyzing the questionnaire data in the fuzzy Delphi method is presented (Cheng, Hsu, and Cheng 2011).

**Discussion**

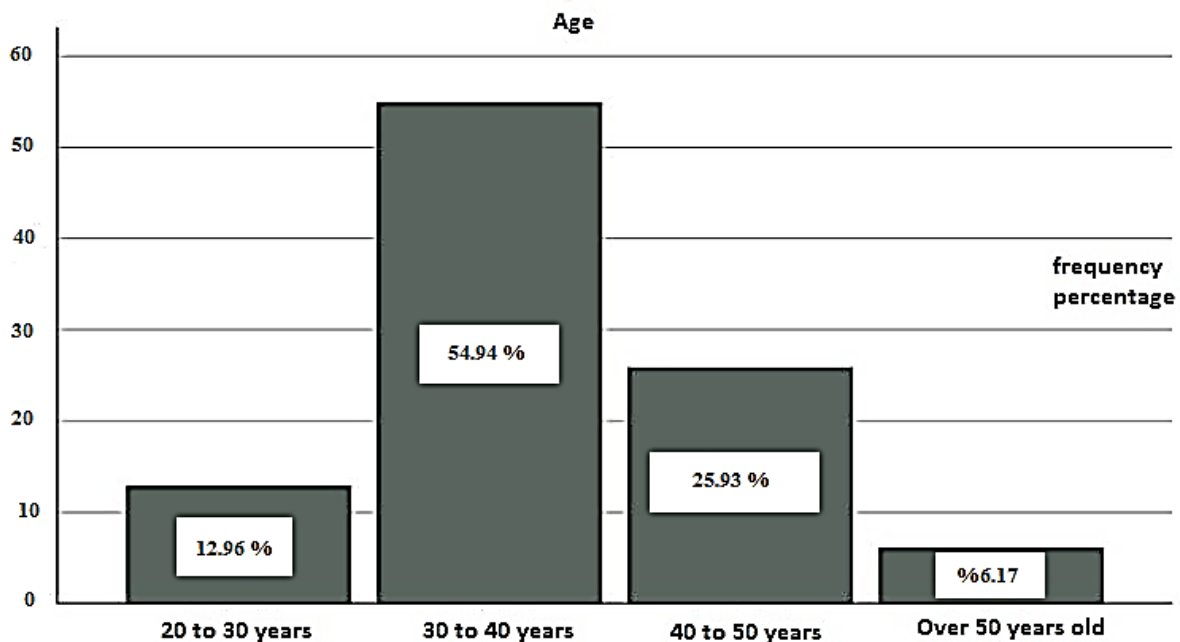
In this part of the statistical analysis, the characteristics of the research respondents (162 people), in terms of variables such as age, gender, education and work history, are examined using SPSS software:

**A) age:**

Age has been among the parameters that seem to affect the quality of the collected data, and the descriptive statistics of this parameter are presented in the table and figure.

**Table 1. Description of the studied sample by age**

Frequency	Number	Age
12.96	21	20 to 30 years
54.94	89	30 to 40 years
25.93	42	40 to 50 years
6.17	10	Over 50 years old
100	162	Total



**figure 1. Status of the studied sample by age**

**b) Gender:**

Gender has been among the parameters that seem to affect the quality of the collected data, and the descriptive statistics of this parameter are presented in the table and figure.

**Table 2. Description of the studied sample by gender**

frequency percentage	frequency	gender
80.96	131	Man
19.14	31	Women
100	162	Total

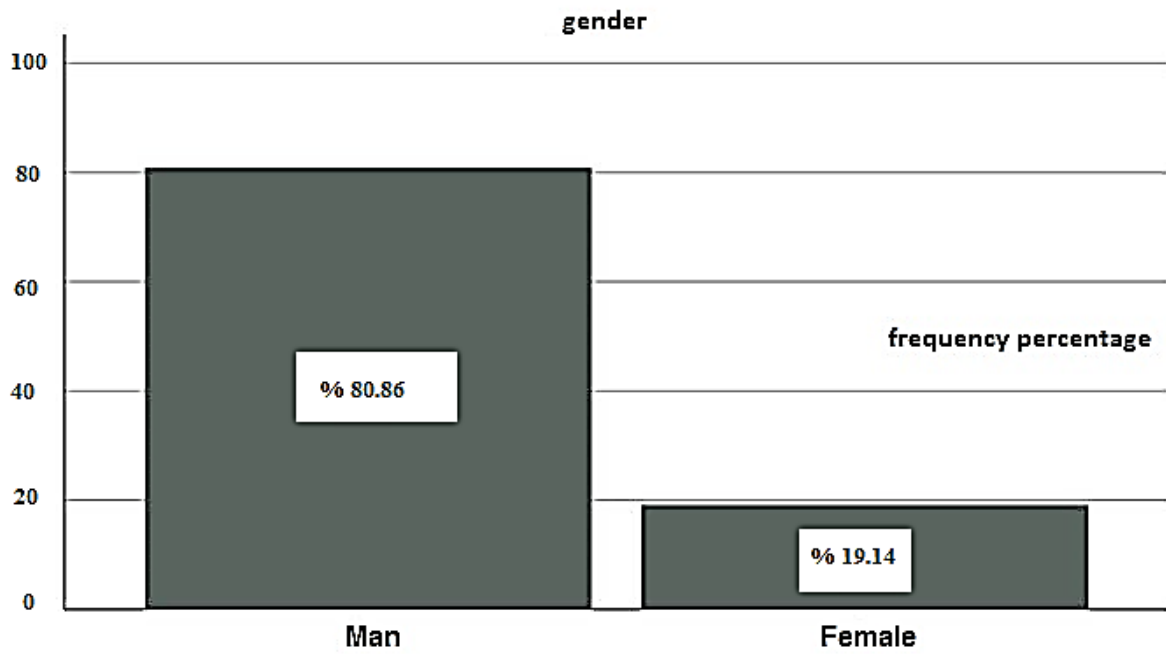


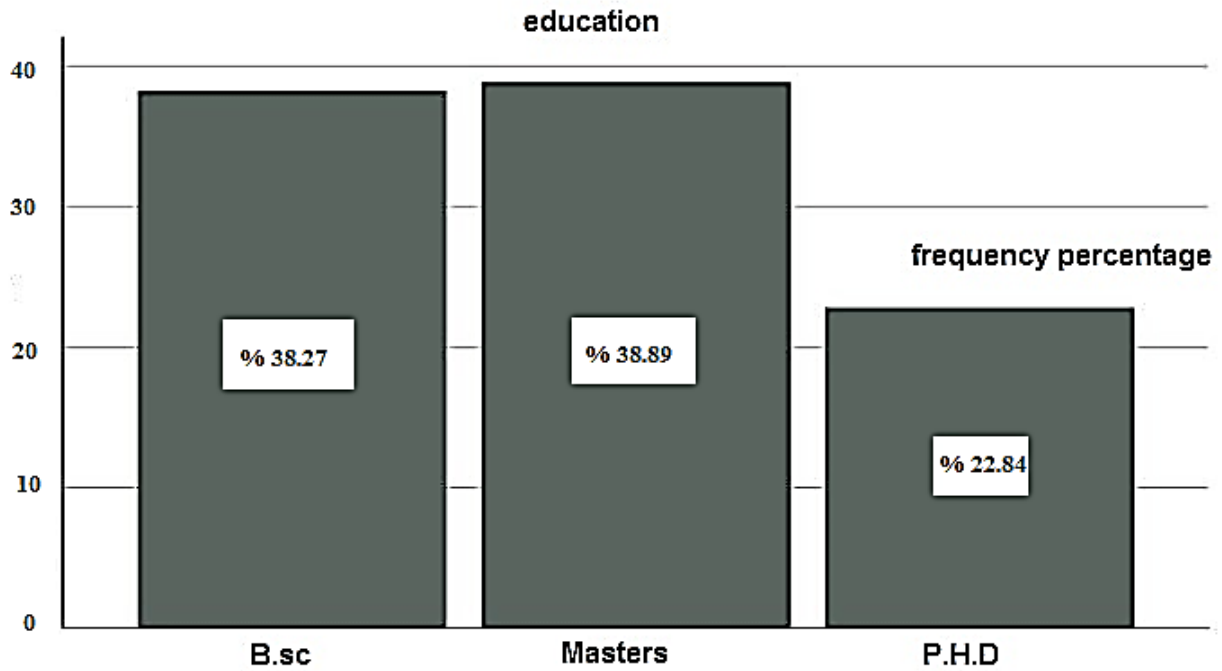
Figure 2. Status of the studied sample by gender

**C) Education:**

Education has been among the parameters that seem to affect the quality of the collected data, and the descriptive statistics of this parameter are presented in the table and figure.

Table 3. Description of the studied sample according to education

frequency percentage	frequency	education
38.27	62	B.sc
38.89	63	M.sc
22.84	37	Phd
100	162	Total



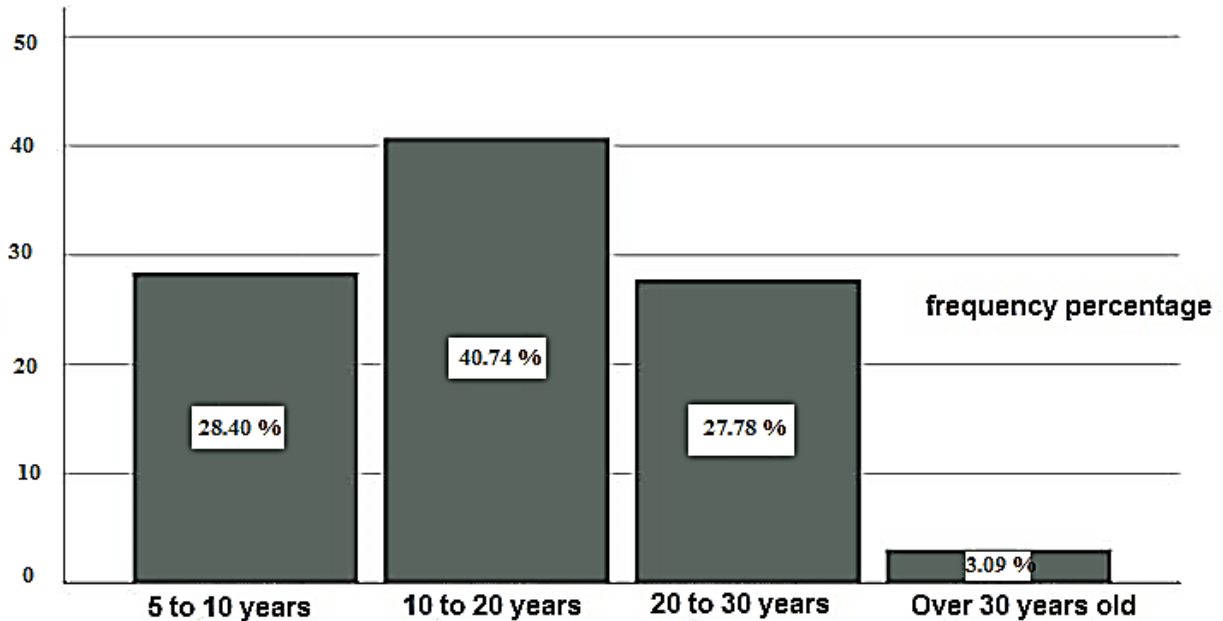
**Figure 3. Status of the studied sample according to education**

**D) Status of employees' work history:**

The status of the employees' work history is among other parameters that seem to affect the quality of the collected data. The descriptive statistics of this parameter are shown in the table and figure.

**Table4. Description of the studied sample according to the status of the employees' work experience**

frequency percentage	frequency	education
28.40	44	5 to 10 years
40.74	66	10 to 20 years
27.78	45	20 to 30 years
3.09	5	Over 30 years old
100	162	Total



**Figure4: of the status of the studied sample according to the status of the employees' work history**  
**Screening the components of the research model with the fuzzy Delphi technique**

In this research, in order to collect part of the data in order to screen the components of the model, a questionnaire was used and the fuzzy Delphi method was used to analyze the collected data. Therefore, a preliminary questionnaire was designed, And then, after revising the initial questionnaire using the opinions of professors and experts, The final version was designed and the research experts were asked to express their opinion regarding the variables of the research model that were identified based on the interview and also add other possible factors to the list. At this stage, first, the questionnaires distributed among the experts were collected. After collecting the completed questionnaires, which were 15 questionnaires, the summation and de-phased value of each question was calculated, And then, based on the calculations, we analyzed the Delphi questionnaire. How to perform calculations related to finding the fuzzy value of each of the questions and its de-phased value along with their relationships are presented in the third chapter. Therefore, in the first step, experts' opinions were gathered for each question in the questionnaire. The following table summarizes the opinions of 15 experts for the Delphi questionnaire:



**Table 5:Expert opinion aggregation table for Delphi questionnaire**

Number of experts	Range of importance						Research questions (components)	Dimensions	NO
	very much	Much	Relatively much	Relatively little	Low	very little			
15	10	3	2				Planning for employee participation in data collection	Planning based on strengthening interpersonal trust	1
15	9	5	1				Planning for employee participation in data collection		2
15	11	2	1				Planning for employee participation in data analysis		3
15	11	1	2	1			Planning for the participation of employees in determining the prioritization of goals		4
15	12	3					Applying transparent and effective work methods in organization	Organization based on strengthening interpersonal trust	5
15	1	12	2				Designing and creating rich careers in organizing		6
15	2	11	2				Emphasis on decentralized power in organization		7
15	13	1	1				Formation and use of specialized teams in organizing		8
15	11	3	1				Effective communication between the manager and employees in the organization's leadership process	Leadership based on strengthening interpersonal trust	9
15	13	2	1				Motivating employees in the organization's leadership process		10
15	12	2	1				Creating a positive career attitude in the leadership process of the organization		11
15	12	2					Effective change management in the leadership process of the organization		12
15	14	1	1				Control aimed at employee development	Control based on strengthening interpersonal trust	13
15	13	1					Control with the aim of psychological empowerment		14
15	14	1					Detailed information in organizational control		15

The Cronbach's alpha value of the Delphi questionnaire was also obtained as follows. As can be seen, the Cronbach's alpha value of the questionnaire (0.87) is higher than the value of 7, and this means confirming the reliability of the questionnaire:

**Table 6. Cronbach's alpha of the Delphi questionnaire**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.87	15

Next, the fuzzy value of each research question was calculated. The results are presented in the table.

**Table 7. Fuzzy value and difuzzy value of Delphi questionnaire questions and abbreviations in research**

The status of each question	Diphasy	Fuzzy value of each question			Research questions (components)	Dimensions	No
		U	M	L			
Confirmed	0.842	1	0.934	0.5	Planning for employee participation in decision making	Planning based on strengthening interpersonal trust	1
Confirmed	0.846	1	0.934	0.5	Planning for employee participation in data collection		2
Confirmed	0.845	1	0.940	0.5	Planning for employee participation in data analysis		3
Confirmed	0.777	1	0.904	0.3	Planning for the participation of employees in determining the prioritization of goals		4
Confirmed	0.915	1	0.797	0.7	Applying transparent and effective work methods in organization	Organization based on strengthening interpersonal trust	5
Confirmed	0.813	1	0.876	0.5	Designing and creating rich careers in organizing		6
Confirmed	0.816	1	0.883	0.5	Emphasis on decentralized power in organization		7
Confirmed	0.860	1	0.970	0.5	Formation and use of specialized teams in organizing		8
Confirmed	0.853	1	0.956	0.5	Effective communication between the manager and employees in the organization's leadership process	Leadership based on strengthening interpersonal trust	9
Confirmed	0.918	1	0.986	0.7	Motivating employees in the organization's leadership process		10
Confirmed	0.856	1	0.963	0.5	Creating a positive career attitude in the leadership process of the organization		11
Confirmed	0.856	1	0.963	0.5	Effective change management in the leadership process of the organization		12
Confirmed	0.922	1	0.993	0.7	Control aimed at employee development	Control based on strengthening interpersonal trust	13
Confirmed	0.860	1	0.970	0.5	Control with the aim of psychological empowerment		14
Confirmed	0.922	1	0.993	0.7	Detailed information in organizational control		15

The results of Delphi questionnaire calculations are presented in the table. As can be seen, the fuzzy value of all research questions is higher than the threshold value (0.7 value), Therefore, all 15 components or questions of the Delphi questionnaire were approved by the research experts and no new variable was proposed. As a result, the Delphi process ended.

## Conclusion

The world has changed over the past decades. Therefore, organizations need new business models to solve current organizational challenges. On the other hand, human and social capital are the cornerstones of the prosperity of nations, so it is very important to support the growth of intangible capital and the full use of knowledge. The areas that have the most challenges in work environments usually do not involve knowledge issues, but involve cooperation, how people work together. Trust can be seen as the backbone of cooperation. Trust must be addressed and strengthened so that organizational members can fully focus on the core tasks of the collaboration. Building trust can be seen as one of the key areas in management performance. Therefore, it is important to highlight the responsibility and effects of the actions of each member of the organization, including the manager of the organization. It is also important to focus on how to build trust and how to maintain it in the workplace when we are faced with the challenges of collaboration. Interpersonal trust as well as management performance are very broad research areas, but there are still some gaps in these areas that deserve deeper exploration. In fact, little is known about how to achieve or promote a certain level of trust. Therefore, the current research presented a model for improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations in order to solve the aforementioned gap. The components of the mentioned model were identified based on previous studies and the analysis of the results of the interviews using the method of theme analysis and then using Delphi phase methods. Therefore, in order to explain the mentioned results, the following are mentioned:

- Planning is one of the factors that affects the improvement of management performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations. In this regard, Samri et al. (2019) and Esmaili and Azizinnejad (2019) point out that involving employees in decisions has a valuable symmetry in conveying a sense of trust to employees. While the researches of Poz et al. (2021), Bolinska-Stangerka and Baginska (2019) and Mahakhari et al. (2015) also confirmed this case. Organization is another factor that is effective in improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations.
- The organizational function of management includes several activities that are directly or indirectly related to the allocation of resources in ways that support the achievement of goals and plans that are established in the planning function (Long and Kleiner 2004).
- Leadership is another factor that is effective in improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations. Van Wart (2012) acknowledges that the role of trust has been explained in a variety of leadership theories and the value and importance of trust cannot be ignored regardless of the leadership style or philosophy of the leader. Authentic theories of leadership, such as transformational leadership, support trust as an essential management concept for leaders (Keza et al. 2021). Leadership is a multidimensional process that involves motivating and influencing employees. As part of this process of motivation and influence, successful leaders usually have good communication skills (Fayaz et al. 2017). Communication quality, in turn, is positively related to trust (Siakur et al. 2020). However, the opposite may also be true of ineffective communication leading to trust erosion (Spengenburg 2012). Therefore, in the field of leadership, trust plays a valuable role in the job attitudes displayed by employees in the workplace. Previous research shows that different aspects of trust are associated with higher levels of many of these job attitudes, which includes perceived organizational support (Shatari and Hayat 2020), effective organizational commitment (Darsen 2015), organizational citizenship behaviors and job satisfaction (Roberts and Dovid 2020).
- Control is the fourth factor that is effective in improving managerial performance with the mechanism of strengthening interpersonal trust in organizations. Control includes managerial efforts directed toward monitoring organizational and employee performance and progress toward goals (Allen et al. 2015).

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