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## **IDENTIFY THE COMPONENTS OF HAPPY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims at identifying the components of happy school at primary level. The research is descriptive (survey) in terms of data collection and is applied according to the objective. The statistical population of research consists of all students' teachers and parents equal to 4717 and 62094 subjects at female primary schools in nineteen districts of Tehran City during the school year of 2013-14. The sample size is estimated equal to 354 teachers and 38 parents based on "Morgan" table. The sampling has stratified and cluster random type. The researcher-made questionnaire at five-point Likert Scale with alpha coefficient of 0.93 is the data collection tool in this research. The factor analysis, Friedman test, one sample t test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Tukey post hoc test are utilized for data analysis. The obtained results indicate that that: 1- From the perspective of studied teachers and parents, the physical, educational, social and cultural, organizational and economic factors are among the factors which create the happy schools. 2- From the perspective of teachers, the order of importance for each component of happy primary school in creation of these schools is as follows: The social and cultural, physical, educational, organizational and economic factors; and from the perspective of parents: educational, physical, social and cultural, economic and organizational factors. 3- From the perspective of both studied population (teachers and parents), the current status of primary schools is less than the average in terms of utilizing the components of happy schools. 4- There is a significant difference between the teachers' views in terms of economic factors and also between the parents' views in terms of educational factors as the components of happy schools.

**Keywords:** *Happy School, Elementary School*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Undoubtedly, the attention to education and its relevant issues are among the fundamental measures to move towards the progress and honor of country (Arefnia, 2007). According to the basis of education in this century, "we should teach the students about the joy of life", thus we should believe that our stable growth rely on the stable happiness and this happiness should be created and managed at schools because a happy school can Craze grant the joy of life to students and play the important role in the framework of his mental and social life (Izadi *et al.*, 2012). Learning along with the joy can exist at schools if we create the infrastructure for happiness. Creating a happy school requires the application of several factors which are utilized along with each other. According to Miller (2008), the successful schools have three basic components to create a happy school. They create a place wherein the children are with their friends, learn new knowledge and skills to have the dream, develop and plan; and also the pleasant and desirable physical environment is very important in building a healthy school (Wolk, 2009). In a research on "Identification of critical components in a successful education system", the promotion and public entrepreneurship group (2010) has considered nine components, namely, the standards, assessment, accountability, professional development, independence and autonomy of school, parents' participation, readiness for learning, technology and safety, and discipline, essential to establish a successful educational system (Farshbaf, 2010). Copola and Konoros (2008) have introduced the vital components of a successful school as follows: positive school climate, specific curriculum, students' achievement control, administrative leadership, parents' membership in forums, creating the opportunities for students' participation and responsibilities, the rewards and incentives for top students and staff, order, safety and discipline. Identifying the components of capable schools from the perspective of teachers, Sharifi and Eslamieh (2013) have found that eight characteristics including the attention to dimensions of students' personality, creativity-orientation, emphasis on lifelong learning, the ability of school to be upgraded and

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updated, the attention to teaching the students about the life and citizenship skills, fighting against the factors which make the school repellent to students, the constructive interaction with parents, and taking the advantage of combined education in teaching-learning process are the main components of powerful schools. Considering the fact that the today's schools have the joy, which is one of the basic human needs and requirement of life, and according to great Prophet of Islam, as he said that play and be happy and certainly I'm sad that the fatigue and sadness are seen in your religion (Imani, 2012), the appropriate training for students, who are the future creators of country, paves the way to achieve the global position and alignment with changes and leads to the progress of country at the international level. The initial components of a happy school are identified by investigating the current theoretical and practical principles and conducting the exploratory studies, and then the conceptual model of research developed (Figure 1). In this study, the following questions are raised and examined based on this model.

- 1- What are the components for creation of happy schools?
- 2- How are the identified components prioritized for happy schools?
- 3- How is the status of primary schools in Tehran based on each of the identified components?
- 4- What is the difference between the teachers and parents' views in different districts according to the primary schools' utilization of happy school components?
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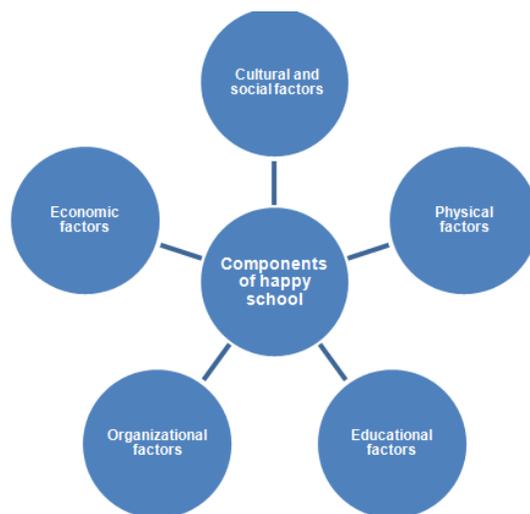


Figure 1: Conceptual model of research

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is applied in terms of objective and has descriptive-survey type according to data collection method. The statistical population consists of all teachers and parents at female primary schools of nineteen districts of Tehran during the school year of 2013-14. On this basis, the number of teachers is equal to 4717 and the parents 62094.

The sample size is determined equal to 354 teachers and 381 parents according to "Morgan" Table and these subjects are selected from statistical population by random cluster and stratified sampling. The researcher-made questionnaire is the measurement tool in this research, and thus the library research is conducted, and the investigation is done on research subject and introduced theories by experts in the field of creating a happy school. The reliability of questionnaire is obtained equal to 0.83 according to the calculation of Cronbach's alpha. The factor analysis test, Friedman test, one-sample t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Tukey post hoc test are utilized to analyze data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Question 1: What are the components for creation of happy schools?

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**Table 1: Factor loadings of factors affecting the creation of happy schools after replacing the factors and the portion of each one**

Factor	Factor loading	Item	Eigenvalues	Explained variance (%)	Percentage of all factors (%)
Physical factors	0.522	Building the green space and applying the cheerful and attractive colors at school (classroom, library, pray room, hallway, etc.)	33.65	33.65	45
	0.501	The circular arrangement of desks and chairs in classroom			
	0.512	Air conditioning of classroom in terms of heating and cooling systems			
	0.628	Students, teachers and administrative staff clothing at school			
	0.506	The use of fresheners in spaces where are used for groups			
	0.510	Clean and tidy pray room, library, workshop and ...			
	0.617	Utilizing the teaching aid facilities for teachers			
	0.606	Utilizing the installations, laboratories, libraries and sports facilities			
	0.560	The teacher's use of modern teaching techniques in education			
	0.505	Clarifying the curriculum goals for students			
	0.553	The use of teaching aid tools (computer, Internet, PowerPoint, etc) in teaching			
	0.600	Relevance of course content with life			
	Social and cultural factors	0.554			
0.512		Creating the positive thinking in students			
0.669		Choosing the appropriate evaluation method of students			
0.621		Involving the students in teaching-learning process			
0.547		Dynamic and positive relationships along with mutual respect between teacher and students			
0.646		Holding the laughing program in morning ceremonies or feasts			
0.613	Creating the bulletin board as "laughing station" (including the	57.60	11.20	15	

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	poetry and informative cheerful jokes)			
	0.583 Using the cheerful health messages on the bulletin board of school			
	0.712 Holding the ceremonies for different occasions			
	0.705 Play relaxing music in hours of recreation			
	0.629 Holding the exhibition for students' scientific and artistic works			
	0.661 Providing the religious concepts and points by attractive methods			
	0.646 Using the educational excursions			
	0.351 The lack of dispute between the students' parents			
	0.547 Creating the sport teams for teachers and competition with students			
	0.611 Introducing the appropriate scientific, sport, and cultural examples to students			
	0.376 Encouraging the student by giving the appreciation card			
	0.702 Creating the reward station at school			
	0.709 School management style			
	0.623 Creating the emotional and informal climate between colleagues			
	0.510 Existence of policy to deal with organizational conflicts properly			
Organizational factors	0.617 Attention and respect to every person's characteristics and abilities	66.46	8.86	12
	0.618 Division of labor and devolution			
	0.694 Proper use of reward and punishment			
	0.633 The priority of joy in developing the programs			
Economic factors	0.526 Creating the ways to earn money in order to improve the economic status of school			
	0.517 Financial support of poor students	74.35	7.88	11
	0.328 Equality of students in terms of financial status			
	0.673 Producing and distributing the daily same and free food for students			
Sum		--	74.35	100

As shown in Table 1, 3 out of 38 items (The lack of dispute between the students' parents with factor loading of 0.351, Encouraging the student by giving the appreciation card with factor loading of 0.376

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and Equality of students in terms of financial status with 0.328) are removed from the factor analysis process because their factor loadings are less than 0.5. Among the remaining 35 items, five factors are identified as the effective factors of creating the happy schools from the perspective of teachers and parents, and the overall impact of these factors is equal to 74.35%, so that this value is equal to 45% in physical factors, 17% in educational factors, 15% in social and cultural factors, 12% in organizational factors, and 11% in economic factors.

Question 2: How are the identified components prioritized for happy schools?

**Table 2: Friedman test for ranking each of the effective factors in creation of happy schools**

View	Component	Mean rank	Chi-Square	Degree of freedom	Significance level
Teachers	Physical factors	3	12	4	0.017
	Educational factors	3			
	Organizational factors	2.92			
	Economic factors	2.80			
	Social and cultural factors	3.19			
Parents	Physical factors	3	11	4	0.018
	Educational factors	3.22			
	Organizational factors	2.87			
	Economic factors	2.90			
	Social and cultural factors	3			

As shown in the table, the results of Friedman test for ranking each factor indicates that from the perspective of studied teachers, the social and cultural factors with a mean rating of 3.19 have higher contribution than other components in creation of happy primary schools, and then the physical and educational factors with a mean rank of 3, the organizational factors with mean rank of 2.92, and economic factors with 2.80, respectively. However, from the perspective of studied parents, the importance rank of each component of happy primary schools in creation of such these schools is as follows: The educational factors with a mean rank of 3.22, the physical and social and cultural factors with mean ranks of 3, the economic factors with 2.90, and finally the organizational factors with 2.87.

Question 3: How is the status of primary schools in Tehran based on each of the identified components?

**Table 3: One-sample t-test for comparing the mean difference between the sample and population**

Population mean = 3

Component	Views	No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	Sig
Physical factors	Teachers	354	2.91	0.323	-4.69	353	0.000
	Parents	381	2.66	0.419	-15.54	380	0.000
Educational factors	Teachers	354	2.92	0.346	-4.17	353	0.000
	Parents	381	2.69	0.422	-14.29	380	0.000
Organizational factors	Teachers	354	2.90	0.350	-4.97	353	0.000
	Parents	381	2.62	0.376	-19.25	380	0.000
Economic factors	Teachers	354	2.85	0.391	-7	353	0.000
	Parents	381	2.63	0.404	-17.47	380	0.000
Social and cultural factors	Teachers	354	2.94	0.311	-3.32	353	0.001
	Parents	381	2.60	0.565	-13.68	380	0.000

As shown in the table, since the calculated t with degrees of freedom of 353 for teachers and 380 for parents is higher than the critical t-value (1.96) at the level of 0.05 for tests of two ranges, the null hypothesis based on the lack of difference between the observed and population mean (3) is rejected and

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it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the observed and population mean, but as the calculated values are negative for both ts, the mean of both samples is smaller than the population mean, thus it can be concluded with confidence of 95% that from the perspective of both studied populations (teachers and parents), the current status of primary schools is less than average in terms of utilizing the components of happy schools.

Question 4: What is the difference between the teachers and parents' views in different districts according to the primary schools' utilization of happy school components?

**Table 4: ANOVA for comparison of mean difference from the perspective of teachers according to primary school utilization of happy school components based on geographical region**

Source of changes		Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Physical factors	Inter-groups	0.649	4	0.162	1.55	0.185
	Intra-groups	36.310	349	0.104		
	Sum	36.959	353			
Educational factors	Inter-groups	0.563	4	0.141	1.17	0.322
	Intra-groups	41.827	349	0.120		
	Sum	42.390	353			
Organizational factors	Inter-groups	0.752	4	0.188	1.54	0.190
	Intra-groups	42.609	349	0.122		
	Sum	43.361	353			
Economic factors	Inter-groups	3.752	4	0.938	6.51	0.000
	Intra-groups	50.235	349	0.144		
	Sum	53.987	353			
Social and cultural factors	Inter-groups	0.796	4	0.199	2	0.084
	Intra-groups	33.491	349	0.096		
	Sum	34.287	353			

According to the Table, since the calculated Fs in physical factors (1.55), educational factors (1.17), organizational factors (1.54), and social and cultural factors (2) with degrees of freedom of 353 are lower than the critical F-value in table (2.60) at the level of 0.05 for comparing the obtained mean scores based on the geographical region, the null hypothesis based on the lack of difference between the subjects' mean scores is confirmed and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the studied teachers' views on primary school utilization of four mentioned factors as the components of happy schools in terms of geographical region, but as calculated F values in economic factors (6.51) with degree of freedom of 353 at the level of 0.05 are higher than the critical values of F in table (2.60) for comparing the obtained mean scores in terms of geographical region, the null hypothesis based on the lack of difference between the subjects' mean scores is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the teachers' views on primary school utilization of economic factors as one of the components of happy schools in terms of geographical region.

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**Table 5: Tukey post hoc test for observing the real difference between the mean of groups (Teachers' views and geographical region)**

Component	District I	District J	Mean difference I - J	Standard error	Sig
Economic factors	1	5	0.17578 *	0.05808	0.022
		12	0.22131 *	0.06976	0.014
	5	1	-0.17578 *	0.05808	0.022
		19	-0.23475 *	0.05870	0.001
	12	1	-0.22131 *	0.06976	0.014
		19	-0.28028 *	0.07028	0.001
	19	5	0.23475 *	0.05870	0.001
		12	0.28028 *	0.07028	0.001

According to the table, there is a significant difference between the teachers working in district 1 and those in districts 5 and 12; teachers in district 5 and those in districts 1 and 19; teachers in district 12 with those in districts 1 and 19, and teachers in district 19 with those in districts 5 and 12 in terms of primary schools' utilization of economic factors as one of the components of happy schools at the significance level of 0.05, but there is no significant difference in other comparisons.

**Table 6: ANOVA for comparison of mean difference in parents' views on primary school utilization of happy school components based on geographical region**

Source of changes		Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Physical factors	Inter-groups	0.566	4	0.142	0.803	0.524
	Intra-groups	66.247	376	0.176		
	Sum	66.813	380			
Educational factors	Inter-groups	2.348	4	0.587	3.36	0.010
	Intra-groups	65.606	376	0.174		
	Sum	67.954	380			
Organizational factors	Inter-groups	0.527	4	0.132	0.928	0.447
	Intra-groups	53.406	376	0.142		
	Sum	53.934	380			
Economic factors	Inter-groups	0.401	4	0.100	0.610	0.655
	Intra-groups	61.775	376	0.164		
	Sum	62.176	380			
Social and cultural factors	Inter-groups	0.260	4	0.065	0.202	0.937
	Intra-groups	121.117	376	0.322		
	Sum	121.377	380			

According to the Table, since the calculated Fs in physical factors (0.803), educational factors (0.928), organizational factors (0.610), and social and cultural factors (0.202) with degrees of freedom of 380 are lower than the critical F-value in table (2.60) at the level of 0.05 for comparing the obtained mean scores based on the geographical region, the null hypothesis based on the lack of difference between the subjects' mean scores is confirmed and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the studied parents' views on primary school utilization of four mentioned factors as the components of happy schools in terms of geographical region, but as calculated F values in economic factors (3.36) with degree of freedom of 380 at the level of 0.05 are higher than the critical values of F in table (2.60) for comparing the obtained mean scores in terms of geographical region, the null hypothesis based on the lack of difference between the subjects' mean scores is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant

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difference between the parents' views on primary school utilization of economic factors as one of the components of happy schools in terms of geographical region.

**Table 7: Tukey post hoc test for observing the real difference between the mean of groups (parents' views and geographical region)**

Component	District I	District J	Mean difference I - J	Standard error	Sig
Educational factors	5	19	-0.22076 *	0.063	0.005
	19	5	0.22076 *	0.063	0.005

According to the table, there is a significant difference between the parents in Districts 5 and 19 and vice versa in terms of primary schools' utilization of educational factors as one of components of happy schools at the significance level of 0.05, but there is no significant difference in other comparisons.

**Discussion**

According to the results of investigating the first question and from the perspective of studied subjects (teachers and parents), the physical, educational, social and cultural, organizational and economic factors are among the factors which are effective in creating the happy schools. Therefore, the obtained result is consistent with the results of research by Sharifi and Eslamieh (2013) who have found that the potential of school in self-upgrading and updating and paying attention to teaching the life and citizenship skills to student are the important components of powerful schools. Izadi *et al.*, (2012) have argued that their studied students and school authorities have considered the educational, physical, social-cultural and organizational factors effective at happy schools. According to the results of investigating the second question, the importance of each happy primary school component in creating such these schools from the perspective of teachers are as follows: Social and cultural, physical, educational, organizational and economic factors; and also from the perspective parents as follows: Educational, physical, social and cultural, economic, and organizational factors. This result is consistent with the findings of research by Izadi *et al.*, (2012) who have found that the physical factors have high impact on making the school happy from the perspective of parents. According to Samouei *et al.*, (2011), holding the tours inside and outside the province affects the students' happiness.

According to Jafari and Talebzadeh (2010), the physical factors are the as effective factors in creating the happiness at primary schools of Tehran from the perspective of teachers and principals. The results of investigating the third and fourth questions indicate that the current status of primary schools of Tehran is lower than the average in terms of physical, educational, social and cultural, economic and organizational factors as the components of happy schools from the perspective of both studied population (teachers and parents). Furthermore, there is a significant difference between the teachers' views in terms of economic factors and between the parents' views in terms of educational factors. This result is consistent with the research by Jafari and Talebzadeh (2010) who have argued that the emotional, social, physical, personal and educational factors are less taken into account in investigating the current status of female primary schools in Tehran City.

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