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STUDY OF LEARNING CULTURE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF DISTRICT 18 IN TEHRAN

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate the learning culture in elementary schools of Tehran's 18th district. The study population included 900 elementary school teachers and the sample size was calculated 172 based on Morgan table selected by multistage sampling. In terms of perspective, the study was practical and data was collected by descriptive survey method. Measuring devices in this study is standard questionnaire of Barnett schools learning culture whose validity has been confirmed by experts and professors and its reliability was calculated to be 0.84 by Cronbach's alpha test. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics software in Amos environment was used. The results show that learning culture components in primary schools of district 18 of Tehran are more than average that indicates the existence of learning culture in these schools. Evaluation of significance factors associated with T in all items was significant. In other words, components related to learning culture reflect the variable really well. On average rank, education excellence component equal to 3.91 out of 5 with the highest average was in the first place; and assistance and attention component equal to 1.74 out of 5 with the lowest average ranked last. The above results focus on the need to preserve and promote the culture of learning. Focus and assistance from managers on learning is the main factor that should be emphasized more.

Keywords: *Learning - Motivation - Learning Culture - Education & Training*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays more than any other time, education & training is considered as the linchpin of the development of social, cultural and economic community as well as the most powerful tool to form the future and is a way to understand and master the changes, stability and continuity of history and culture. Certainly, the relationship between a teacher and student in the advanced countries will undergo many changes in the coming decades. Due to the active participation of students in independent learning process and with respect to their creativity, the autonomous relationship between the teacher and student will gradually disappear and as Franyer says; the teacher's power won't be spent on educational illiteracy of student but will be spent on participating academic progress of the student with his involvement. Therefore, the teacher is not an encyclopedia or a data bank to serve the student. A Creative teacher is someone who helps the students in the rapid development of independent learning and help him learn how to deal with the vast amount of information. In fact, the teacher is considered as an advisor and consultant instead of a tool for knowledge transfer. In today's era of rapid development, the teacher should appear as a thoughtful guide or agent in training and teaching process. In accordance, he should benefit from the ability and suitability to create, support and have the determination, dedication, desire and motivation in students learning (Safikhani, 1394).

Human life itself is a continuous process of formal learning, informal and casual learning (Watterston, 2001; Farmahini, 1378). Continuous learning or lifelong learning has a wholeness that encompasses all levels and stages of age and seeks to link out-of-school learning environments and within school learning environment together and eliminate artificial boundaries of learning (Ebrahimzadeh, 1373). From Stauble's (2005) point of view, the lifelong learning aspects consist of 1. Learner recognition or self-awareness, 2. Planning for learning or self- management, 3. Learning how to learn or ultra-learning, 4.

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Learning assessment or self-regulation (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, quoted by Asadinejad, 1390). The role of the teacher is to provide experimental possibilities of practical and significant methods based on exploration, teamwork, improvement of useful value systems and provide opportunities for creativity and continuous assessment and make modification of individual criteria, called "self-learning" possible. So, presence of a wise teacher in democratic and disciplined education & training that puts emphasis on "self – education", "self – learning" and "Learning how to learn" is of great value (Safikhani, 1394). Learning is one of the main and foremost obligations of school. But where is its place in school? Is learning for students and the teacher's and manager's contribution is only to teach and manage? Now, many researchers have noted the new concept of learning culture in which learning is the focus of school system as a common and basic objective. This means that teachers, managers, and staff learning should be put in serious consideration along with students' learning (Sadeghi, 1388).

Learning culture is a term developed from learning organization and means the kind of culture that is combined with learning (Batis & Kasavne, 2005). In such a context, learning culture and creativity is improved by encouragement and support strategies. Development of schools depends on valuing learning and creating learning environments in school. With regard to this concept, all the components of curriculum, training behavior of teacher and learner interacting with each other in a learning environment is influenced by the cultural context of that environment. Learning culture plays two important roles in schools. First, by integration of the behavior of people teaches them how to communicate with each other. And secondly, helps them with adaptation to the extrinsic environment (Ghorbanizadeh, 1390).

To identify factors affecting the culture of learning, Barnett (2001) investigated the learning culture in schools where he focuses on intrinsic motivation components to learn, extrinsic motivation for learning and excellence in school education, attention and assistance to learn and personal expectations of teachers on the ability to teach (Moghimi, 1390). One of the important components of the learning process is motivation. Learning should be known as the process that lightens and continues with the torch of interest and motivation. Some education experts believe that motivating students is a fundamental task in teaching. Motivation is the intrinsic state of a person that drives and directs behavior. Research shows that people's behavior is due to the stronger performance of one of the two types of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to this classification, sometimes the motivation comes from within the individual and it is the inner satisfaction that gets them to work. Sometimes, they turn to a certain behavior because of extrinsic conditions and rewards that they receive from their environment (Lotfabadi, 1391). Excellence in teaching is another component that is emphasized in the culture of learning. Excellence tendency in humans, suggests the fact that there are potentials and talents in man which can achieve excellence; meaning that the tendency to excellence is because of the possibility in human nature. Since, the pull is due to the possibility that lies within human nature.

Another critical component in learning is a teacher's expectation of his own teaching ability. Most successful people are aware of their own know-hows in learning, extending learning tools and control over learning progress. In other words, instead of passive reaction to the environment, they expand their "administrative control" on learning approaches (Joyce *et al.*, 2004, translated by Behrangi). Another important component in creating a culture of learning in the school is the assistance and attention toward school staff learning. Progress and learning in school does not spread spontaneously. In reviewing schools that have created a strong learning culture, it was found that the managers of these schools have followed specific steps to create it (Govern & Kate, 2014). Administrators have led their school teachers to achieve competence and self-esteem in the pursuit of knowledge and learning (Andrata, 2015). It should be said that the existence of a learning culture in schools and during the service has many advantages including:

1. Increased commitment to work
2. Creating developed mentality
3. Increase creativity and innovation
4. Improved motivation
5. Keeping pace with rapid technological change
6. Promoting leadership and emotional intelligence (Andrata, 2015).

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There are six steps to creating a culture of learning in the school system as follows:

1. All employees should learn to be proud of learning. It happens every day whether we know it or not. In a school with a culture of learning, learning isn't administered as a planned event but an unlimited and always on the rise supply.
2. Learning is to be considered as a value, meaning the personnel should have the sense of security to risk learning more.
3. Learning should be easy and accessible. Employees are empowered to express questions and answers. Psychologists believe that this type of learning has much longer effect than employees being told what to do.
4. To increase strategy, blended learning should be used. Only one type of learning is not suitable for all individuals and locations. For example, in personal learning, people should be allowed to interfere in manuals. The structure and objectives should be determined in teamwork.
5. Managers should encourage and guide their employees to learn and lead them to achieve the competencies and increase confidence by answering their questions and needs.
6. Evaluation of staff and their performance should be conducted on the basis of learning. New performance management models indicate that measuring learning along with performance increases both of them in the end (Andrata, 2015).

Others also have researched the culture of learning. Syasar, (1393) has reviewed the "relationship between learning culture and self-efficacy of Birjand teachers". The results showed that there is a significant relationship between components of learning culture and personal and collective self-efficacy of teachers. There is no significant relationship between learning culture component of "attention" and teachers self-efficacy.

Hedayati (1393) in his review titled "the impact of learning culture on innovation with the mediation of knowledge management" had analyzed the impact of learning culture and the results of his study showed that variables of learning culture, knowledge management and innovation are correlated with each other and through organizational learning culture, organizational innovation is very well predictable

In a research entitled "Study of Relationship between self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation with academic achievement in ordinary and borderline fifth grade students of Gonbad City" Baradyker (1390) concluded that there is a significant relationships between intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy with academic achievement of ordinary and borderline students.

Chateau *et al.*,¹ (2016), in a study entitled "evaluation of your school in terms of learning and learning culture", pointed out that managers and education leaders play important roles in promoting science and learning in school. Daniel Carpenter (2015) in his study on "school culture and professional leadership" aimed to discover the supporting structure of leadership in schools which is a function of learning culture, came to the conclusion that school principals should provide a support joint structure in order to create a culture of learning for all teachers.

Cross *et al.*,² (2013) in a research titled "the culture of missing link of teaching and learning" studied the school culture and compared the learning culture in business and education environment and concluded that learning culture creates high-performance and improves student learning and has long-standing effect on the learning life of students.

Nowadays, schools that have been able to build a culture where both teachers and students grow are known as greenhouse schools. In these schools, there is no difference in the number of students or educational facilities.

Managers try to create a clear vision of training and help teachers maximize their ability to contribute in class (Gorin & Keith, 2014). Learning culture can be expressed as a requirement in the educational system and it appears necessary to evaluate this culture.

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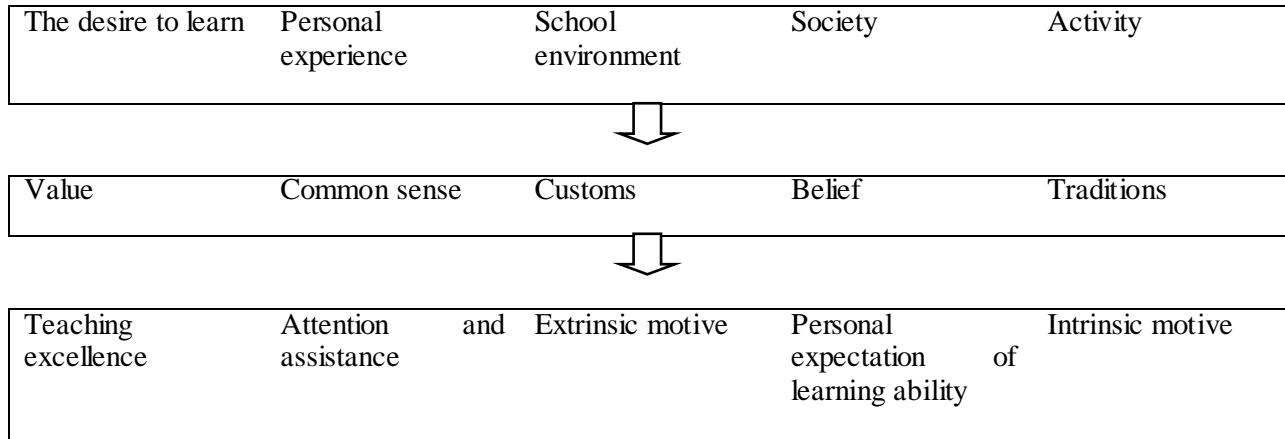


Figure 1: Conceptual Research Model

Research Method

Since the objective of this research is to develop applied knowledge in the field of learning culture, it is applicable.

Also, according to the method of obtaining the required data and because it describes the evaluated situation in a certain period of time, it is a descriptive survey.

Study Population

The study population of research is 900 teachers from elementary schools of district 18 in Tehran. Based on Morgan table, 172 of them were selected as study sample using multistage sampling.

Data Collection Tools

To collect the data, the standard Barnet (2001) questionnaire for learning culture of school with a total of 23 items in a scale of 5 order Likert was used. The validity of the questionnaires content was obtained by supervisors and related field professionals and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach's alpha test (0.84).

Analysis Methods

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (one-sample t-test, Friedman test and factor analysis).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study Results

a. Descriptive Data Analysis

First, demographic characteristics are presented.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Teachers

Variable	Age				Gender		Education				Work Experience		
	20-30 Years	30-40 Years	40-50 Years	More than 50 Years	Female	Male	Diploma	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree	Higher	Less than 10 Years	10-20 Years	20-30 Years
Percent age	14	22	60	4	83	17	5.8	29.1	53.5	8.1	18	32	50

School learning culture variable consists of five components that are described as follows.

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Table 2: Descriptive Findings of School Learning Culture Questionnaire

Component	Average	Standard Deviation	Ske wness	Elongation
Intrinsic motivation evaluation in school	80.82	14.208	-0.986	0.732
Attention and assistance evaluation	61.95	21.420	-0.402	0.57
Personal expectation from teaching ability	79.09	17.757	-0.659	0.26
Extrinsic motivation evaluation in school	81.05	14.780	-0.776	0.685
Teaching excellence evaluation	86.71	14.339	-0.932	0.126

b. Review of the Survey Questions

The main question: How high is the culture of learning in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran?

Table 3: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Learning Culture Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Learning culture	76.15	10.80	31.740	

The results shown in the table above indicates that learning culture variable equals to 76 from 100 and the average value is higher than the standard average (50). According to one-sample t-test results, we can say that the difference between learning culture mean values and standard mean values were significant and applicable to the target population. Therefore, it can be said that learning culture change in elementary schools of district 18 is more than average.

The first question: How high is the intrinsic motivation creation variable in primary schools in district 18 in Tehran?

Table 4: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Intrinsic Motivation Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Intrinsic motivation creation	80.82	14.20	28.445	0.000

The second question: How high is the attention and assistance variable in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran.

Table 5: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Attention and Assistance Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Assistance and attention to learning	61.95	21.42	7.234	0.000

The third question: How high is the teacher's personal expectations variable in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran.

Table 6: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Teacher's Personal Expectations to Teach Students Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Personal expectations to teach students	79.09	17.76	21.236	0.000

The fourth question: how high is the extrinsic motivation for learning variable in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran.

Table 6: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Extrinsic Motivation for Learning Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Extrinsic motivation for learning	81.05	14.780	27.232	0.000

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The fifth question: How high is the teaching excellence variable in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran.

Table 7: Results of One-Sample T-Test for Evaluation of Teaching Excellence Variable

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	T	Significance
Teaching excellence	86.71	14.34	33.179	0.000

The sixth question: How high are the learning culture variables in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran.

Table 8: Results of Friedman Test for Evaluation of Learning Culture Variables

Components	Average Rank (1-5)	Test Result	Significance
Teaching excellence	3.91		
Extrinsic motivation for learning	3.21		
Intrinsic motivation creation	3.09	180.621	0.000
Personal expectations to teach students	3.06		
Assistance and attention	1.74		

As seen in the table above, teaching excellence average value is equal to 3.91 of 5 which rank first in learning culture variables in elementary schools of district 18 in Tehran. After that, extrinsic motivation variable places second with an average of 3.21. Variables of teaching ability, intrinsic motivation for learning, assistance and attention for learning are next.

Friedman test results show a significant difference between the averages of the ranks.

Factor Analysis

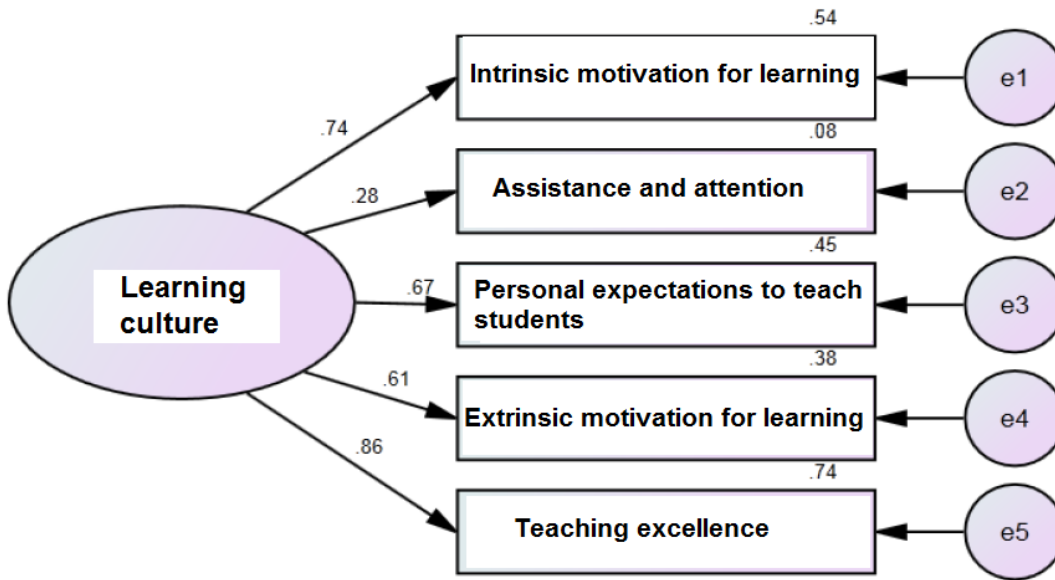
A). Learning Culture Variable (with Regard to the Questionnaire as a Significant Variable)

Item	Factor load (Lambda coefficient)	C.R.(t)	Significance	defined variance
q1	0.685	---	---	0.469
q2	0.489	5.920	0.000	0.239
q3	0.668	8.016	0.000	0.446
q4	0.575	6.965	0.000	0.331
q5	0.598	7.224	0.000	0.357
q6	0.230	1.796	0.040	0.021
q7	0.703	8.430	0.000	0.494
q8	0.701	8.412	0.000	0.492
q9	0.246	3.011	0.003	0.061
q10	0.650	7.762	0.000	0.422
q11	0.235	1.780	0.040	0.030
q12	0.233	1.777	0.040	0.030
q13	0.594	7.156	0.000	0.353
q14	0.567	6.847	0.000	0.321
q15	0.430	5.249	0.000	0.185
q16	0.474	5.749	0.000	0.225
q17	0.479	5.810	0.000	0.229
q18	0.527	6.390	0.000	0.278
q19	0.391	4.766	0.000	0.153
q20	0.551	6.624	0.000	0.304
q21	0.597	7.174	0.000	0.356
q22	0.561	6.781	0.000	0.315
q23	0.725	8.616	0.000	0.526

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In the above table, factor loads (Lambda coefficients) and the amount of defined variance is observed. As can be seen, associated significance with T is significant in all items and in other words, all the items related to learning culture reflect this variable very well.

B) Learning Culture Variable (Taking into Account the Variables as a Significant Variable)



Item	Factor Load (Lambda Coefficient)	C.R.(t)	Significance	Defined Variance
Intrinsic motivation	0.735	---	---	0.541
Assistance and attention	0.276	3.286	0.001	0.076
Personal expectations to teach students	0.671	7.968	***	0.451
Extrinsic motivation for learning	0.614	7.295	***	0.376
Teaching excellence	0.862	9.289	***	0.744

In the above table, factor loads (Lambda coefficients) and the amount of defined variance is observed. As can be seen, associated significance with T is significant in all items and in other words, all the items related to learning culture reflect this variable very well.

Discussion and Conclusion

Due to the increasing development of information and technology, today’s human life is a continuous process of learning and education and education & training organization is one of the most important organizations where learning happens. Continuous learning, seeks to eliminate artificial boundaries of learning and thereby create a dynamic culture combined with learning that creates growth, creativity and innovation. It is the educational system’s responsibility to enlighten a teacher’s path and to identify its goals by consider the needs. Recognition of these needs will require the use of research and evaluations that their results will be a light on the path of the planners and practitioners.

How High is the Learning Culture in Primary Schools of District 18 in Tehran?

Based on our findings, learning culture variable in primary schools of district 18 of Tehran is desirable. In order to verify the structure and to evaluate the weight of factor, first learning culture and then components are considered as the significant variable. Results indicate that the variables related to learning culture reflect this variable very well. Excellence in learning and assistance and attention have

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the highest and lowest factor load. This research is in accordance with Syasar (1393). Learning culture is an important and affecting factor in development of education and training. To reach a favorable degree of growth depends on motivated and hard-working teachers and providing educational services to students.

Such conditions can be the result of positive attitude of this district's authorities and those working in education field toward learning. High motivation level of teachers is a good platform that officials can use for improving the knowledge and abilities of teachers. Given the existence of such a culture in the elementary schools of district 18, planning maintain and expand it appears to be essential. Also in the present study, learning culture variables are examined separately and results showed that all components are desirable and consistent with research results of Alhoyi (1391), Hedayati (1390) and Asadinejad (1390).

In ranking learning culture components in primary schools of district 18 in Tehran, teaching excellence ranks first and then extrinsic motivation for learning, intrinsic motivation for learning, personal expectations from teaching ability and assistance and attention to learning come after. It seems like existence of motivational factors (teaching excellence, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation) in higher ranks represent a fertile ground for progress and in line with the rhythm of increasing evolution among teachers. On the other hand, given the ranking of assistance and attention component as the latest, indicates a need for managers to further organize, plan and support learning.

According the present study, it is suggested to:

- Assess learning culture of other education and training organizations
- Evaluate learning culture for other academic courses
- Investigate the reasons for the lack of attention of some of the managers toward organizational learning
- Assess teachers' knowledge of their teaching ability in other studies

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