JOURNAL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Vol 9, No 3, Autumn 2021

ISSN: 2538-4724

University of Kurdistan

Primary school principals' lived experiences of professional development and the factors affecting it

Esmat Elzami[1], Abbas Abbas Pour*[2], Ali Khorsandi[3], Javad Pour Karimi[4], Hamid Rahimian[5]

ARTICLE INFO
Article history:

Received: 03/11/2020

Accepted: 16/06/2021

Available online: Autumn 2021

Keyword:

Professional development, school principals, primary school, Phenomenology

Abstract

The present study is a qualitative research with a phenomenological approach that has been conducted to identify the dimensions and components of professional development of primary school principals and to develop its framework. The statistical population of the study was the principals of public primary schools in Tehran in the academic year of 2019-2020. In two stages of sampling, samples were selected by quota and then purposive sampling methods. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The interview continued until the data exploration and data collection process reached a theoretical saturation point after interviewing 14 people. Data were analyzed by open and axial coding steps. Two methods of verifying the interviewees and verifying an external expert were used to control the validity. Two methods of verifying the interviewees and verifying an external expert were used to control the validity. To determine the reliability, two methods of reviewing the writings and also the method of recoding were used. The agreement was calculated in the coding homogeneity and the agreement coefficient was 86%. Findings showed that the professional development framework for primary school principals has 3 dimensions, 14 components with 117 indicators Which includes : the content dimension of professional development (with components of general management knowledge, specialized management knowledge, interactive skills, resource management skills, professional skills, personal inclinations, managerial attitude, physical and mental ability and intellectual ability), the dimension of professional development process (with the components of self-development actions and developer relations) and the dimension of organizational requirements (with the components of knowledge acquisition and acquisition of skills, modification of selection and appointment methods of managers, improvement of organizational structure and processes).

Elzami, E., Abbas Pour, A., Khorsandi, A., Pour Karimi, J., & Rahimian, H (2021). Primary school principals' lived experiences of professional development and the factors affecting it, 9 (3), 130-149

1. PhD Student in Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iram
2. Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran
* Corresponding author Email:abbaspour1386@gmail.com
3. Assistant Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran
4. Assistant Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran
5. Associate Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran

Introduction

One of the most important courses of any educational system in the world is the elementary course. A period that has a great impact on the development, upbringing and development of children's personality .The elementary course is the basis for education in later courses, and education in this course is the foundation of development. One of the important factors is the improvement and effectiveness of schools of leadership and educational management. Researcher has been widely demonstrated that successful schools are ones that run by successful leaders. Current principals must have special capabilities and develop their capabilities to be able to respond to environmental demands.

The importance of the principal in the effectiveness of the school has increased to the point that some researchers, such as Leithwood et al.(2008), Have claimed that among the factors within the school, after the teacher, the principal is the second most important factor influencing students' academic achievement. Also, the role of the school principal in the professional development of the teacher is very vital and often decisive. The school principal has a unique position in the school that can affect the professional development of the teacher (Bredeson, 2000 cited by Chalikias, 2020).

Therefore, the principal needs professional development, so that he/she can accept the role of educational leadership and be aware of new educational research and strategies that help improve student learning. The fact is that principals need to participate in continuous professional development in order to strengthen their efforts to improve learning (Harper, 2008). Principals participating in professional development programs update and develop their knowledge and improve their job performance by applying new knowledge and skills to implement best teaching practices in schools (Şenol, 2019). Professional development is the process by which managers can learn what they have not learned in training programs and other programs (Larry,2006) And includes any activity designed to improve and enhance the professional competencies of managers (Bizzell,2011). However, the results of numerous researches indicate that principals do not have full professional qualifications. The American Research Organization states that principals have not received the necessary training to meet the complex needs of today's schools (Larry,2006) and (O, Dell Garris,2020) and universities have not been able to fully prepare principals for these positions (Ibrahim,2011). Schleicher (2012) also notes that despite the availability of education in all OECD countries, school principals in these countries often report that they have not received sufficient training to take on the role of school administrator. Although most candidates for school management positions have a teaching background, they are not necessarily qualified in educational innovation, financial management, or human resources and do not meet minimum leadership standards.

Studies in Iran also show that education in this field is facing problems. School principals are less likely to appear in their role as effective agents in school and spend more time on logistics and administration. Situations can refer to policies and actions before appointment. One of the reasons for this situation is the policies and actions before the appointment. Some experts believe that determining the criteria for selecting and appointing principals and approving it in the Higher Education Council relies more on the personal views and experiences of experts and council members than research data and comparative studies (Safi, 2005 cited by Isfahani et al., 2019). On the other hand, there are no coherent professional standards for their professional preparation and development. Therefore, it seems necessary to develop and recreate the role of school leadership with knowledge, skills and adaptation to new situations in the education system. According to Ghanbari and Mohammadi (2016), school principals with the desired professional qualifications will be able to lead schools in a way that provides the groundwork for the development of the education system.

Therefore, professional development and empowerment of school leaders is a program of many countries in the world and some research has been done in this field. In 2001 with the unveiling of the law “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB), the need for new responsibilities to be accepted by the principal in the school was demonstrated and research on the characteristics of the principal was carried out in accordance with the new needs of the schools. Including in 2006 the “Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development” (OECD) launched international projects called "Improving School Leadership" in which 22 countries were actively involved (Zeinabadi & Abdolhusseini, 2017). Some of the most important findings of this redefining the duties and responsibilities of principals to enhance student learning is emphasizing on distributed leadership to encourage and support different elements and members of the school to play managerial roles, improve effective management skills and make profession of school management more attractive (Pont et al., 2008).

In his research, Ibrahim (2011) considers the most important factors facilitating the professional development of high school principals, including resources and finances, programs and principals' support, availability of in-service training, stakeholder support, principal's role as educational leader, and daily challenges and issues. Naiker & Naidoo (2014) conducted a qualitative study on the professional development of school principals and concluded that creating learning opportunities, teamwork, social communication, and improving participatory leadership skills are effective in the professional development of school principals. Ng & Chan (2014) found that in the professional development program of school principals, items such as interpersonal skills, crisis management, proper resource management, and knowledge of training regulations are priority, and suggested that principal' learning programs should focus on the specific needs of principals, the content needs, and the multidimensionality of the approach. Vidal-Butler (2017) examined the knowledge and professional development of bilingual school principals. Principals emphasized that very few career growth opportunities (focusing on bilingual programs) were available to them. Most principals were relied heavily on knowledge gained from past professional experience and self-learning opportunities to grow their careers. In a phenomenological study, Ramirez (2020) also examined the importance of leadership behaviors of principals' in professional learning associations. Findings showed that the implementation of professional learning programs for principals leads to better formation of the principal's relationship with teachers, creating motivation, capacity and trust in teachers. In her research, Khumalo (2021) examined the leadership role of primary school principals in promoting sustainability by motivating teachers and concluded that in cases where there is motivation in teachers, the managerial and leadership practices of principals have been significantly affected.

Afshari et al. (2014) in a comparative study of professional qualifications and competencies of primary school principals in Iran with Japan, Australia and the United States found that the criteria, indicators and standards for determining the competency of primary school principals in Iran is determined generally compared to Japan, Australia and the United States and in cases such as determining the competency test for selecting school principals, providing a basic and advanced certificate for principals' competence, upgrading the minimum level of experience and successful educational background and degree for principals, passing the minimum age requirements and having scientific and research works of school principals in Iran has been weak compared to the studied countries. Hayat et al. (2015) concluded in their research that the professional development needs of high school principals include the five main categories: educational leadership, organizational management and leadership, ethical leadership, social participation, and technology; and

professional career development methods include attending workshops, seminars, lectures, and national and regional conferences, college courses, counseling, principal brainstorming sessions, coaching, visiting other schools, and internships. In their research, Nasiri et al.(2016) explored the growth of school principals and concluded that the principals' growth framework includes causal conditions, pivotal phenomena (participatory growth program), strategies (establishment of growth centers in education departments, direct and indirect implementation methods) , context, intervening conditions (rules and regulations that facilitate teacher competence) and consequences. In another study, Mard et al. (2018), as the name of indicators of a successful educational leader, found from a phenomenological study that successful educational guidance for high schools in Tehran has 5 categories including direction, culture and organizational management, educational monitoring and evaluation, management of teaching processes and learning in school and professional growth and development. Isfahani et al. (2019) in their research examined the factors affecting the professional development of school principals and concluded that the factors affecting the professional development of principals have eight main categories: technology, religion, culture, individual, social, economic, political and organizational.

In the researches, more attention has been paid to the methods of professional development and the characteristics of the leader and the principal, and also the researches have not been done only for the primary school principals, and if they have been related to the primary school principals, it does not fully addresses the content of professional development and its effective factors or from the point of view of school principals, this issue has not been investigated. But since the primary school is the starting point and the most important stage of education, and the role of primary school principals and teachers due to intellectual characteristics and the mentality of students in this course is very important, Because any action in this period can have a great impact on the fate and life of the student.

On the other hand, in the primary school, due to its unique characteristics and the many differences that exist with high school in terms of student characteristics, curriculum structure and academic evaluation, and the characteristics and competencies of teachers, principals must also be capable in accordance with the characteristics of this course and be professionally promoted. But the problem is, in what fields should the principal improve him/herself in order to achieve an appropriate level of professional development? And what factors affect the professional development process of principals? Therefore, it is necessary to study the experiences of successful principals to identify the content of professional development that is appropriate to the characteristics of primary school management to be a guide for school principals.. Also, by identifying the factors affecting it from inside and outside the organization, the senior and middle managers of the Ministry of Education should consider it and facilitate the necessary conditions for the implementation of the professional development process of school principals. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the components and factors affecting the professional development of primary school principals from the perspective of school principals.

Research method

This research is a Phenomenological research method. Because it is a research strategy by which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by the participants in the research. Understanding living experiences is a hallmark of phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method (Moustakas, 1994). In the present study, the experiences of a group of successful primary school principals - who are the most relevant and consistent people in the field of primary school management - were collected on professional development and the framework, dimensions and components of

professional development were identified and analyzed and new themes emerged.

Primary school principals in Tehran were considered as a statistical population. In order to conduct the interview in the whole city of Tehran and not to focus on a specific point, in the first stage, using Quota sampling, the city of Tehran was divided into five regions: north, south, east, west and center. The size and number of areas, 1 to 3 areas were selected. In the second step, Purposive sampling method was used to collect qualitative data. Because the basic idea of qualitative research is the selection of participants who help the researcher to understand the research problem and question in the best way (Creswell,2013), therefore, in order to purposefully select the principals for the interview, based on the principal's work experience, school success in education and training, and the level of satisfaction of parents and students, principals were selected through the undergraduate unit of education departments in selected areas.

Interview tools were used to collect data because it can be used to understand the historical information and experiences of the participants. Variety of interviews, semi-structured interviews (because it is possible to exchange views and opinions and the discussion topic of the interview can be directed towards achieving research goals) were used emphasizing the exploratory approach and with the aim of identifying tangible and new ideas from school principals view on professional development.

Interviews with school principals continued until the process of data exploration and collection reached a theoretical saturation point after interviewing 14 people. Then qualitative content analysis method was used to analyze qualitative data. After organizing and preparing the data, the process of open coding and axial coding was done to develop our themes and categories. Code was assigned to each sentence or phrase related to professional development and themes were extracted, and in the next step, the codes were named according to their closeness and reinforcing similarities. Naming was done based on research background and specialized literature terms. In the next stage of coding, primary and secondary categories were obtained and finally the secondary categories were placed in the more general categories based on thematic proximity as the final category.

To determine the qualitative reliability, which shows that the researcher's approach is the same with other researchers as well as in other projects (Gibbs, 2007), the method of reviewing the writings was used to ensure that no mistakes were made when implementing the data, and the recoding method was used as well. For this purpose, three interviews were coded by an expert and then the agreement on the similarity of the coding was calculated and the agreement coefficient of %86 was obtained, which is a good reliability coefficient. The results of the three recoding are shown in Table (1):

Table 1- Calculation of agreement between two coders

Interview code	Total number of codes	Number of agreements	Agree on coding similarity
1	71	32	%90
4	53	22	%83
13	78	33	%84
Total	202	87	**%86**

Also, for qualitative validity, two methods of reviewing the findings and themes were used by the participants and the method of reviewing the whole project by an external expert evaluator was used. Therefore, the confirmation of the interviewees and an external expert were used to control the validity.

Research Findings

Demographic findings (Table 2) showed that high level of work and management experience of the interviewees, which indicates the high level of experience of the interviewees in school-related issues and its management.

Table 2 - Demographic information of the interviewees

	1 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	21 to 25 years	26 to 30 years	Over 30 years
Work experience	-	-	-	2	6	**6**
Management experience	3	6	2	2	1	-

Accurate analysis of the interviews content, vision and experiences of principals and their coding and conversion of sentences into categories and themes, 592 concepts in open coding and 9 categories in pivotal coding were extracted which led to the identification of “the Components of Professional Development " and" Factors Affecting the Professional Development Process ".

1- Content components of professional development: This dimension deals with what knowledge, skills and abilities a principal need in the path of professional development and what attitudes he/she should have in order to have the necessary professional capabilities. According to the analysis, the content of professional development has 4 components and 21 subcomponents.

1-1- Knowledge Development: The principal must have knowledge and awareness related to his / her job field that Part of which is knowledge of management science such as participatory management, educational leadership, change management, rules and regulations, crisis management, systems thinking and resource management and organizational behavior and the other part is specialized knowledge in issues related to the field of managerial management, which is the school. The principal needs to acquire knowledge in areas such as the Fundamental Transformation Document, job information, elementary school courses and topics, teaching skills, a variety of teaching methods, and the financial laws of education. This component has 6 sub-components.

According to a number of principals interviewed: "If I will not involve my colleague and accept his/him plan, tomorrow I will not be able to implement this plan because he did not feel the need." "Mastery of the rules can be one of the hallmarks of a principal's ability. In my opinion, a principal today should be a master of fundamental change." "The principal should be expert in the textbook and issues. If my teacher was failed on one of the issues like math and it is not possible for him to solve it, I must solve it when he/she asked me a question in the math."

1-2- Skills Development: One of the important components of professional development is the skills that the principal must acquire and strengthen the necessary skills.The school principal is in contact with many people, including superiors, local institutions, parents, students and teachers, and the interactive skill deals with how the principal relates to these people. The principal should interact and learn from others, communicate effectively with parents and students, interact with local institutions and be able to attract financial contributions from parents and donors, as well as respect parents, teachers and students, and make a relaxed

atmosphere in the school space. One of the features of a developed principal is proper resource management, including human resources and equipment available in the school. The principal must identify and use the capacity of his / her human resources and make optimal use of the available equipment. The principal must have skills in the field of school management, such as action based on the transformation document and the six areas of education, planning based on the program of excellence school management and planning work with computers, headquarters and social media, proper use of encouragement and punishment, indirect teaching of religious and educational issues and being a role model for others.

Part of interviews with several principals:

"I was going to visit the principal of other regions and talk to them saying "what did you do?" "One of the characteristics that everyone enters the school and realizes is the calm I have established. " I try to use experts, that is, if my workforce does not have enough expertise in that field, I try to hire a skilled and technical person." "I have identified the capacities of the parents. A lot of work is done by the parents themselves." "I do the work sends to office by myself, because I have a computer professional degree from Technical and Vocational Training Organization."

1-3- Attitude Development: This component deals with the characteristics, attitudes and tendencies that are in line with the professional development of the school principal. Some personality and Individual traits help the principal perform better and fulfill his or her role as a reliable manager. Some tendencies and attitudes also principal should have to facilitate the managerial role. Belief in collective participation and wisdom, cooperation and collaboration, updating knowledge in the field of science and profession are among these tendencies.

Comments of a number of interviewees:

"One of the characteristics, I think, is to be patient, and I am patient in the first stage." "let's try to be humble. "" I mean, I really lost my life because of my job because I really loved it." "I have infinite faith in God and I believe that every action has a reaction." "It's not that the vice chancellor just has to do the educational work and we all help each other" "Asking a lot helped me everywhere I went I saw beautiful ideas."

1-4- Ability Development: According to the participants, one of the components of professional development is ability. In order to play his/her role better, the principal must be physically healthy so that he/she can be active and dynamic in doing things with teachers and students, and also have mental health so that she / he can solve problems in critical situations by mastering herself. Also the principal must be open-minded and have the ability to self-awareness through self-evaluation by others as well as recognizing his weaknesses and accepting it. Also be far-sighted and realistic and have critical thinking and accept the evaluation of others.

The opinion of participating principals:

"Physically, the principal must have mobility and be able to be with the children. "" A principal who is calm, has no family problems and is self-made can definitely have a good and strong team." "If I say that my work is right, you can be 100% sure that my work has problems. I say that I have tried so far and I still must do other things to reach my goal." "I do not have to worry about the evaluations made by others and my co-workers."

Table (3) shows the components, sub-components and indicators of the content of the professional development of primary school principals:

Table 3 - Content of professional development of primary school principals

Components	Subcomponents	Concepts (Markers)
knowledge development	Management knowledge	Participatory management Participatory management, educational leadership, change management, evaluation, familiarity with rules and instructions, crisis management
	Systemic knowledge	identifying threats and opportunities, identifying issues within and outside the organization
	Knowledge of organizational behavior	how to communicate well and properly, Awareness of the importance of human relationships and motivation
	Professional knowledge	Awareness to the Fundamental Transformation document, being up-to-date and a leader in obtaining information and getting acquainted with all matters of school management knowledge, knowledge of child and adolescent psychology
	Teaching Knowledge	getting acquainted with primary courses and topics, getting acquainted with teaching methods and lesson plans, getting acquainted teaching skills
	Financial knowledge	Full knowledge of financial rules, transparency of costs incurred, providing the best tools and equipment
Skill development	Communication skills	Interaction and learning from others, Communicate effectively with parents and students, creating a suitable platform for solving problems and communicating and direct communication, Determination at the expiration time, interaction with local institutions, power of expression and convince, attracting financial contributions from parents and benefactors
Human relations skills		respecting parents and teachers, understanding teachers, creating solidarity between teachers, establishing friendly relationship, recognizing human resources and treating each person appropriately, create calm atmosphere
Absorption and application skills		Using the capacity of parents, teachers and local institutions, identifying fields of parents study and services and applying it
Resource and equipment management		recognize the characteristics of human resources and delegate, optimal use of equipment, strengthen the capacity of human resources

	Specialized skills	Survey of school plans and programs, acting on the basis of the transformation document and areas of education, strong field of supervision, planning based on the program of excellence, support for familiarize families with school performance
	Technological skills	working with computers and S.A.N.A.D and virtual social networks
	Nurturing skills	being a role model for others, proper use of encouragement and appreciation, consistent and act according to, indirect teaching of religious and educational issues
Attitude development	Personality trait	Humility, positive attitude, interest in the job, Appearance and dressing at the managerial level, patience and diligence
	Religious and Nurturing attitude	strengthen faith, considering god, Being ethical, to be fair and be honest
	Managerial attitude	Taking responsibility, believe in participation and collective wisdom, prioritize students, determination, cooperation
	Enhancing knowledge attitude	seeking to learn, be up to date in the fields of science and career, asking while not knowing, specialized study of internal and external sources
Ability development	Physical health	Physical health, active and dynamic in doing things
	Mental health	Mental health, self-control, emotional intelligence
	Self-awareness	Measuring himself/herself by others, identifying her / his weaknesses and accepting it
	Logical thinking	accepting others' measures, , far-sightedness, Being realistic , decision-making power

2- Factors affecting professional development: In order principals to step in the process of professional development, there are factors that can facilitate the situation and principals can be promoted in different dimensions with more motivation and satisfaction. Most of these factors are within the organization, meaning that the Ministry of Education can influence professional development and of course, there are also external factors and it is related to social, educational and research institutions. According to the analysis of the participants, these factors fall into 5 categories.

2-1- Managerial factors: In order to help school principals, senior and middle principals must create the conditions and take measures such as not creating negative competition, using effective methods of encouragement and motivation, honoring and supporting principals, following up on their problems at school, effective visits to schools for counseling and assistance.

Comments of a number of interviewees:

"The visitor should not seek to object instead of talking to me and telling me about the lack of work". "Encouragement is an incentive for an education

department to leave for its principals, which can be letters of appreciation or day camps." "I think they support principals." "principals should be financially supported in the financial debate."

2-2- Creating a context for individual development and developer relationships: In education the way for the acquisition of knowledge and skills including the allocation of time, appropriate space, efficient manpower, equipment budget, and making the necessary coordination must be provide to pave the path for development, and principals to use the provided platforms to promote themselves through self-development strategies and developer relationships. Self-development actions are methods of acquiring knowledge and gaining skills and abilities and creating attitudes that each manager uses and promotes according to her/his own desires and circumstances. Developer relationships are managers' group strategies and their relationship with each other to enhance professional competencies.

Comments from a number of participating principals:

"Workshops and work discussions will definitely help."" I think reading and connecting with different sites will help a lot in this regard." "The principal must be careful in schools and interact with others on an internship basis "I used the good experiences of my colleagues well and shared them with each other, and it had very good results." "It must be series of conferences affiliated with universities and a series of research organizations that for principals". "In whatever way the authorities may be able to provide these times, which are meetings or courses, colleagues can share their experiences." "Visiting other schools, schools in other regions, other cities, even other countries."

2-3- Organizational processes: Some organizational considerations directly or indirectly affect the process of professional development of principals in the education system. Failure to apply some methods and rules by superiors and the development of mechanisms as well as the necessary support can affect the professional development of school principals.

Comments of some participants:

"Merit in the selection of the minister and the officials under them is down to the bottom, and I think the first officials should be chosen correctly." "They can connect with universities and take courses and offer equivalent master's and doctoral degrees." ""If you want the principal to be successful, the superiors must have less power and will leave more to the principals." "School is central. We really call it a school-centric and not practical."

2-4- Methods of selection and appointment of principals: Some incorrect methods of selecting and appointing principals and lack of comprehensiveness will make the situation difficult in addition to the problems it creates for deputies, teachers and students due to lack of basic qualifications.

Part of the interview with the participants:

"There is definitely a reconsideration in the selection and appointment of principals and taking a theory test does not create a good understanding of who wants to be a principal." "In my opinion, sending the teacher directly from the classroom to management position is the worst thing that can happen".

2-5- Extra-organizational factors: In addition to intra-organizational factors, other factors outside the education system can affect the professional development process of school principals. Interaction of principals with some social, educational and research institutions and the actions of these institutions in this field such as holding courses and workshops by universities and presenting degrees, holding related conferences by universities and research organizations, facilitating continuing education of principals by universities Impact It has a lot.

The opinion of participating principals:

It would be great if they had a quota at the university for principals who could continue their

education". "It was a conference for research week and it was affiliated with universities and research organizations that I attended. It was great." "This space should be created by the authorities with universities that can hold workshops with modern science."

Table (4) shows the factors affecting the professional development of primary school principals.

Table 4- Factors affecting professional development

Components	Concepts (markers)
Managerial factors	Avoiding negative competition and using effective and motivational methods, supporting principals and following up on their problems in school, effective school visits for counseling and assistance
context for individual development and developer relationships	Holding in-service courses with appropriate practical content and using experienced professors, providing a platform and lay the groundwork for brainstorming sessions and transferring principals' experiences with each other, creating a context for using the experiences of experienced principals for novice principals, the possibility of principals visiting different and successful schools, holding internships for novice principals
Organizational processes	giving more authority to principals and influencing authority and being school-centered, , Equivalence the relevant training of principals with degrees and facilitate their further education, transparency of expectations from principals and the existence of facilitator laws and finally meritocracy in all fields of education management
Methods of selection and appointment of principals	Having practical experience of different school positions, especially educational assistant, not appointing a teacher who has no executive work experience to management position, paying attention to managerial characteristics and attitudes of individuals during the selection and appointment process (test and interview)
Extra-organizational factors	Interaction of principals with social and cultural institutions, holding courses and workshops by universities and presenting degrees, holding related conferences by universities and research organizations, facilitating continuing education of managers by universities

As a result, according to the findings and identification of components and effective factors, the professional development model of primary school principals was adjusted, which is shown in Figure (1).

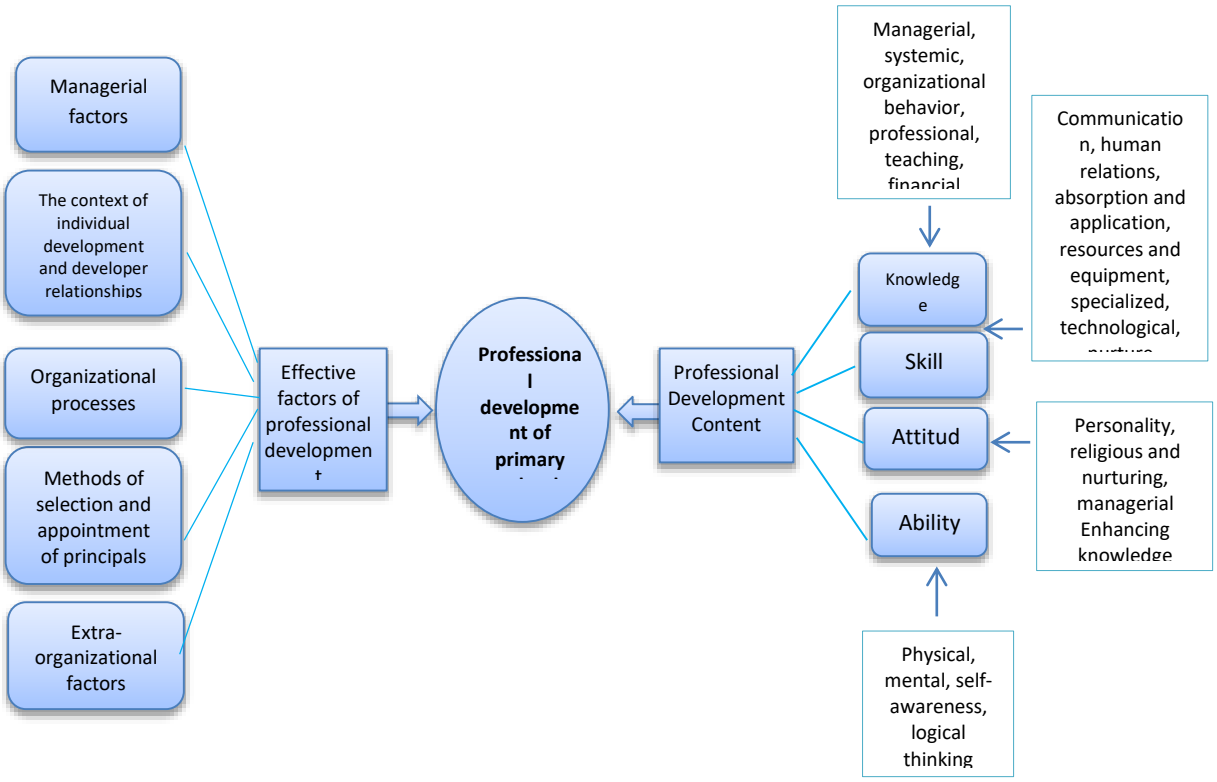

Figure 1- Content and factors affecting the professional development of primary school principals

Discussion and conclusion

The present study was conducted with a phenomenological approach and with the aim of presenting the components of professional development of primary school principals and identifying the factors affecting it. Using a semi-structured interview, 14 successful school principals in Tehran were interviewed. The analysis and findings of the interview showed that professional development for primary school principals includes 4 main components and 21 sub-components of professional development content and 5 components of effective factors.

Based on the results, in this dimension, the required content and the areas principals should improve themselves and acquire knowledge and skills are addressed. This is how it is addressed. Professionally developed principals have the necessary knowledge and awareness in 6 areas of Managerial knowledge, system knowledge, Knowledge of organizational behavior, specialized knowledge, teaching knowledge and financial knowledge. Schleicher (2012)), Ng & Chan (2014), Hayat & et al (2015), Pour Karimi & et al (2016), Mard & et al (2017), Pir Hayati & et al (2020) emphasized on managerial skill, crisis management, Principles of management, organizational leadership, ethical leadership, management of organizational culture and atmosphere, and participatory leadership. According to the participants, the principal must have sufficient knowledge and insight in the field of participatory management, which plays an important role in the development of the principal

and the realization of school goals. The principal must be an educational leader, accepting change and be able to manage it well, knows and executes the evaluation of his / her performance and the implementation of plans and programs in one academic year, be aware of how to manage in critical times, be familiar enough with the rules and instructions and be able to use them correctly, have a systemic view to be able to identify and manage challenges and opportunities, and also has knowledge of organizational behavior such as how to establish human relationships and motivation methods, as well as how to communicate effectively and interact with the workforces inside and outside the school.

Also, researchers such as Ng & Chan (2014), Mard & et al (2017) and Isfahani & et al (2019) noted the professional and specialized knowledge, knowledge of educational regulations, educational monitoring and evaluation, learning and teaching process management, accounting, finance and development management of teachers and staff. According to the findings of this study, in addition to acquiring management knowledge, the school principal should also acquire the necessary specialized knowledge in school management which is his/him job context. The capable principal should be familiar with the fundamental transformation document as a reference document, or be familiar with the education and training areas, complete and update his / her job information such as child and adolescent psychology and having knowledge about all positions within the school and all duties and abilities for that positions. The principal must be a reference for teachers in the field of teacher knowledge such as primary school courses and topics, various teaching methods, lesson plans, action research and lesson research. Also, the principal must be fully aware of the financial laws of education and know the methods of transparency of expenses and provision of necessary tools and equipment according to the financial conditions of the school.

The second component is skill development. It can be said that having skills is one of the most important elements of principals' professional development because the more the principal acquires the required skills, the more power and tools he will have for quality and effective management. In the field of communication skills and human relations, Naiker & Naidoo (2014), Ng & Chan (2014), Hayat & et al (2015), Pour Karimi & et al (2016), Pir Hayati & et al (2020) have emphasized this subcomponents in their research. According to the participants, the principal with communication skills can interact well with others and thus increase his learning, can communicate well with employees, parents and students and provide a good platform for problem solving, have the ability to interact with local institutions and donors to use their capacities in school and with the power of expression and persuasion can participate parents and receive donors in finance and services. The principal with human relations skill provides a relaxed atmosphere in the workplace, an environment in which parents and students are respected, a friendly relationship is established between the principal and others, or each person behaves according to his or her personality traits and can build solidarity among teachers to achieve school goals.

Also, after identifying the educational and service fields of the parents, the principal can use their capacities in different matters of the school with the ability to recruit and employ workforces. He/she can take advantage of capacity of teachers as well as local institutions in promoting school plans and programs, and can bring the most services to the school and students at the lowest cost. Also, by acquiring resource and equipment management skills, they recognize the characteristics and capabilities of human resources and strengthen this capability, and then delegate authority in proportion to each individual's capability and he / she makes optimal use of school-based equipment; which is consistent with the results of research by Ng & Chan

(2014), Pour Karimi & et al (2016) and Gholami & et al (2013).

Mard & et al. (2017) and Isfahani & et al. (2019) consider the specialized skills of school management important for the professional development of the principal. In order to move towards professional development, the principal needs specialized skills to achieve specific goals, plans and programs of the school environment. Goal setting and moving ahead must be done based on fundamental transformation document and the implementation of the six structures and areas of education. Planning should be done based on the school management excellence model and planning scheme, staff should be surveyed before the implementation of plans and programs, and technical and continuous monitoring should be done during the implementation of plans and programs. The principal should be able to inform families the school performance and be accountable. Another requirement of the principal is technological skills. As the tasks in school is done by computer, and because of systems such as office and administration automation, smartization the classrooms and extensive communication through cyberspace, as well as virtual and distance learning, the principal must be technologically up-to-date and acquire the necessary skills. In addition to the educational dimension, the school also has a pedagogical and nurturing dimension. The professional principal knows that he is a role model for students in primary school and even for parents and teachers. So principal tries to instead of teaching directly, teach religious and educational issues indirectly. A successful principal knows that his/her words and actions must be the same and he/she must use different incentive methods.

Managerial attitudes and inclinations are other areas of professional development content that principals need to create and reinforce these attitudes, and are attitudes that contribute to professional development. Gholami & et al (2013), Pour Karimi & et al (2016) and Sadeghi niya & et al (2018) have also pointed out this issue in their research. The manager's attitude and inclinations have four sub-components: personality traits, religious and educational attitude, managerial attitude and enhancing knowledge attitude. In order to be an effective principal and to be able to manage well in different positions and to be accepted by others, the principal must be humble to deal with problems with perseverance and hard work, be interested in his / her work and have a positive attitude. To avoid any disturbance or deviation in his/her performance, the principal should strengthen his faith and consider God as the supervisor of his actions and try to treat others with care and safety, and ethics should be the top priority of his/her activities.

Attitudes that help principal to have a better management and performance are managerial attitudes. Managerial responsibility, having determination and maintaining the discipline of management both in terms of behavior and coverage are some qualities that principals must have. It should also be noted that students are the first priority in all planning, decision-making and expenses. The principal should has cooperation and belief in participation and collective wisdom and does not have an autocratic attitude. Also, with a knowledge-based attitude, which is a very important component in the professional development of principals, and according to McCrcken (2017) active learning puts participants in the field of professional development. The principal is constantly looking for learning and tries to study internal and external and internet resources and update herself/himself in the field of work.

Another component of professional development for primary school principals is ability. In addition to the knowledge, skill and attitude required for being professional, the principal should has abilities that have a significant impact on the optimal performance of the him/her. Physical ability, and mental ability, self-awareness and logical thinking are its sub-components. According to the participants, the principal should has the physical and mental ability so that with a

healthy body and mind he can be active and dynamic with other employees, and to be with students and spend time with them, to be able to control himself in critical situations or can act appropriate behavior with upset teacher and parents by his/her emotional intelligence, because the disease increases the possibility of error in the activities or behavior of the principal. The principal must have the ability of self-awareness and know her/his strengths and weaknesses in order to be able to eliminate or reduce her / his weaknesses. He / she must have the spirit to ask others to evaluate him / her in order to help him / her self- awareness. He / she also accepts critics and accept the evaluation of others. He/ she is far-sighted and realistic at the same time, and his expectations should be based on the strength of the human resources, the geographical and local location of the school, and the parents and students. And finally has the power to decide in different situations. This component has not been studied in previous researches and only a few concepts have been mentioned in detail and in this research it has been studied for the first time.

Obviously, the role of the education system as an organization that principal is member of it, is very effective in the way of development of school principals, because by developing mechanisms, it can facilitate the process of professional development of principals. Therefore, factors affecting professional development were identified, which were divided into five categories. The first component is managerial factors; Senior and middle managers must create the conditions and take steps to ensure that highly motivated school principals develop their careers. If there is no negative competition between principals from the organizational point of view and instead material and spiritual incentive and motivational methods are used, if effective visits are made to advise and assist the principal, not just to find fault, if principals are supported and honored and their problems are followed up in schools, They can help principals to increase their capabilities. As Joodaki & et al (2017), expressed support for senior managers of the organization and use the methods of encouragement and persuasion of principals; Mohammadi & et al (2018), respect, support and trust school principals, Rostami (2019) material and spiritual support of principals and Narimani & et al. (2021) as motivation and Positive amplifiers as effective factors in professional development.

Another effective category in the professional development of managers is creating a platform for individual development and developer relationships. The self-development component includes any activity that the principal do to increase his/her capability and the developer relationships are relationships that are created between the principal and his/her peers, consultants or experienced principals. In order for principals to be better involved in the professional development process, the education departments at the national, provincial and regional levels should hold seminars and transfer experiences as one of the most important methods of professional development. In-service training courses must be held in person (in attendance) or provide appropriate and practical content with experienced professors for both novice and experienced principals to get knowledge about new scientific, educational, training and job findings. skill workshops required by principals must be hold after needs assessment to learn these skills in a practical and applied way, the possibility of visiting other international and national successful schools coherently is a must, a specialized working group of principals in each area as required should be established, and the process of organizing meetings and actions taken must be followed actively, hold internships for novice principals, and implement the method of educational counseling are necessary as well. In this regard, Joodaki & et al (2017), Rostami (2019), Norad Sedigh & et al(2017) and Nasiri& et al (2016) noticed establish growth centers in education departments and to create opportunities for personal and professional development, Also Sadeghi Nia & et al (2018), Joodaki & et al (2017), Rostami(2019), Hassanzadeh & et al (2019),

Hemmat Yar & et al (2019) pointed out hold in-service courses; Kanokorn & et al. (2014), Hemmat Yar & et al(2019) and Sadeghi Nia & et al (2018) have pointed out the possibility of laying the groundwork for sharing experiences and actions taken and periodic meetings.

Organizational processes are another effective factor in the professional development of school principals. If some organizational considerations and rules are improved or amended, they can make things easier for principals. According to the participating principals, if more trust is given to principals and more authority is given to them and the school based planning is implemented in the full sense ,if expectations from principals are articulated and facilitator rules are enacted instead of restrictive ones, if the training that principals receive in reputable centers outside of education department is equivalent and their further education is facilitated and finally, if meritocracy takes place in all management levels in education department, all these factors can put principals on the path of professional development as much as possible. As Joodaki & et el (2017), expressed the existence of facilitator rules, Sabzian Pour & Islam Panah (2019) also consider assign more authority to principals, Rostami(2019) in other side pointed to facilitator work rules and finally Arefnezhad (2017) and Rahimi (2019) consider the institutionalizing meritocracy in the organization as the factors affecting professional development.

Another component is the modification of methods for selecting and appointing principals. Because with the right methods of selecting principals and required characteristics, the principals will be selected that have the necessary background for school management and tend to increase their capabilities, so professional development will be easier. Rahimi(2019) also consider the inappropriate methods of selecting principals as barriers to professionalism. Khanifar & et al (2019) also pointed to weaknesses in the system of recruitment, selection and appointment of principals. Therefore, according to the participants, management candidates should go through different positions in the school and have sufficient familiarity, especially with the position of school assistant, which provides the necessary experience and teachers are not assigned to higher positions the at once without a background of executive activities. It should be reconsideration about the test and interview content as well as selection. Managerial, attitudinal and psychological characteristics of principals should be measured which is consistent with the researches of Isfahani & et al.(2019), Joodaki & et al.(2017) and Sabzian Pour & Islam Panah (2019), Rahimi(2019) and Hemmat Yar & et al.(2019) Also, Mestry & Singh (2007), Ibrahim(2011) and Schleicher(2012) have emphasized on the need for deputy and assistance experience in principal appointment.

The last component of factors affecting the professional development of principals is extra-organizational factors. In addition to effective factors within the organization, there are other factors outside the education system that can affect the process of professional development of school principals, which is related to the cultural and social responsibility of existing institutions in society. Interacting with cultural, scientific and religious institutions such as Kanoon Parvaresh Fekri, mosques, research institutes with principals, holding courses and workshops with new content related to the role of school management by universities and Jihad Daneshgahi and providing a valid and credible degree Acceptance in education, holding related conferences by universities and research organizations, as well as considering facilities for continuing education of principals by universities have a significant impact on the professional development of principals Which is in line with the results of the research of Yousefi & et al.(2020) and Hayat & et al.(2015).

Overall, according to the mentioned cases, when the principal considering the factors affecting professional development and the components of each dimension and can solve his / her problems in any field that does not have a proper performance,

he / she is on the path of professional development. And can, as a leader of the school, according to the characteristics of the elementary school, have a positive and direct impact on the implementation of the school's goal and mission, activities within the school and the performance of teachers and in addition to self-promotion, put your human resources on the path of professional development. As a result, the desired educational performance is achieved in the school, the final result of which is students with educational progress and the satisfaction of parents.

Ethical considerations

During the implementation of this research and the preparation of the article, all national laws and principles of professional ethics related to the subject of research, including the rights of statistical community, organizations and institutions, as well as authors and writers have been observed. Adherence to the principles of research ethics in the present study was observed and consent forms were consciously completed by all statistical community.

Sponsorship

The present study was funded by the authors of the article.

Conflict of interest

According to the authors of the present article, there was no conflict of interest. This article has not been previously published in any journal, whether domestic or foreign, and has been sent to the School Administration Quarterly for review and publication only.

Acknowledgment

Thank you to all the school principals who participated in this study and I would also like to thank the education departments of Tehran.

References

Afshari M., Kazemian H., & Omrani L. (2014) Comparative Study of Professional Competencies and Competency of Primary School Directors of the Iranian Education System with the Countries of Japan, America, Australia, Scientific Conference on Educational Sciences and Psychology of Social and Cultural Dangers in Iran. [In Persian]

Arefnezhad M. (2017), Identifying and Prioritizing Elements of Principals' Competencies with an Emphasis on Islamic Management. School Administration, 2(1), 151–172. [In Persian]

Bizzell, B. E. (2011), Professional Development of School Principals in the Rural Appalachian Region of Virginia, Unpublished PHD thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Chalikias, M., Raftopoulou, I., Sidiropoulos, G., Kyriakopoulos, G.I., & Zakopoulos, v. (2020). The school principal's role as a leader in teachers' professional development: the case of public secondary education in Athens, Problems and Perspectives in Management, 18(4), 461-474.

Creswell J. (2013). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Combined Approaches, Alireza Kiamanesh & Maryam Danaye Toos, 3 nd edition, Tehran: Jihad Daneshgahi [In Persian]

Ghanbari, S., & Mohammadi, B. (2016), Providing a Model for the Professional Development of High School Principals: A Qualitative Study. School Administration, 4 (2), 321-341 [In Persian]

Gholami, Kh., Shirbeygi, N., & Sayadi, Y. (2013), Study the characteristics of successful educational managers from the viewpoint of teachers: Efforts to build a standard scale for stydying the success of school management features, New Approach in Educational Management, 4 (3), 45-61 [In Persian]

Gibbs G.R. (2007), Analyzing Qualitative data. In U. Flick (ED).The sage Qualitative research kit. London: sage

Harper R.E. (2008) An Investigation into the Professional Development Needs of Urban Principals and Their Perceptions of the Potential

of Online Professional Development, Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Hasan Zadeh F., Ali Esmaeili A., & Fallah V. (2019). Presenting professional development scenarios for school principals in Mazandaran province. Educational Leadership and Management, 13(3), 57-76. [In Persian]

Hayat, A. A., Abdollahi, B., Zeinabadi, H. R., & Arasteh, H. R. (2015). Quaitative Study of needs and methods for professional development of school principals, Learning and Educatinal Studies, 7 (2), 43-64 [In Persian]

Hemmat Yar Z., Abdollahi B., Naveh Ibrahim A., & Zein Abadi H.R. (2019) Identifying the Dimensions and Behavioral Components of Insightful Educational Leaders in Primary Schools, Qualitative and Phenomenological Research. School Administration, 3(7), 143-160. [In Persian]

Ibrahim, N. (2011) Preparation and development of public secondary schools Principals in Kenya, Humanities and Social Science.1 (9).22-36

Isfahani, K., Solimani, N., Torani, H., & Sabahi, P. (2019 Factors Affecting the Professional Development of School Managers at 1404 Horizons, school administration, 7 (4), 210-241 [In Persian].

Joodaki. A., Mohammadkhani. K., & Mohammad Davodi, A. H. (2017) Presenting the Model of Professional Development of High School Principals: A theory based on data. School Administration, 2(7), 251-272. [In Persian]

Kanokorn, S., Pongtorn, P., & Ngang, T.K. (2014) Collaborative action professional development of school principals, Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 116(1), 77-93.

Khanifar H., Naderi Nabi N., Ibrahimi S., Fayazi M., & Rahmati M.H. (2019) Identify the competence of school principals for use in the assessment center. Educational Management Quarterly, 7(1), 105-125. [In Persian]

Khumalo, S.S. (2021). A Descriptive Analysis of the Leadership Practices of Primary School Principals in Promoting Sustainability Through Motivating Teachers, Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education ,12(1), 42-54 .

Larry, K. B. (2006). Principal perceptions of the relationship between Professional development designs and the qualities, Proficiencies, and leadership skills required of West Virginia principals, PHD, Marshall University

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008) Seven strong claims about successful school leadership, School Leadership & Management, 28(1), 27-42.

Mard, S.M., Zinabady, H. R., & Arasteh, H.R. (2018) Indexes of a successful educational leader; Findings of a phenomenological study, School Administration, 6 (2), 204 - 223 [In Persian]

McCracken, N. A. (2017). Principal perceptions of professional Development, PHD, University of Pittsburgh

Mestry R., & Singh P. (2007) Continuing professional development for principals: a South African perspective, South African Journal of Education,27(3), 477–490.

Mohammadi M., Fadavi M., & Farhadi H. (2018) Provide a model for empowering primary school principals. School Administration, 6(2), 204-223. [In Persian]

Moustakas, c. (1994) Phenomenological research methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: sage

Naicker, I., & Naidoo, S. V. (2014). Is the Whole More than the Sum of Its Parts? A Community of Practice Approach to Leadership Development of School Principals, Kamla-Raj, Int J Edu Sci, (7)2, 289-298.

Narimani, B., Mehrdad, H., & Jalili, R. (2021), Designing a model for improving the performance of primary school principals: A qualitative study, Psychological sciences, 20(99), 471-484 [In Persian]

Nasiri F., Ghanbari S., & Sarchahani Z. (2016) Exploring the maturity of school principals is a data theory. New Approach in Educational Management, 7(4), 1-26. [In Persian]

Ng, S., & Chan, T. M. K. (2014), Continuing professional development for middle leaders in primary schools in Hong Kong, Educational Administration, 52 (6). 869 - 886.

Norad Sedigh M., Naveh Ibrahim A., Arasteh H., & Zein Abadi H. (2017) Identifying the components of professional development of talented principals in non-governmental schools is a mixed research. Educational Management of Organizations, 6(2), 183-224. [In Persian]

O, Dell Garris R. (2020), The Role of the Secondary School Principal: Examining the Evolution and Current Dynamics of the Role of the Secondary Principals, PhD thesis, Robert Morris University.

Pirhayati, S., Salehi, K., Farzad, V., Moghaddamzadeh, A., & Hakimzadeh, R. (2020), Representation of factors, criteria and indicators of effective primary schools; A qualitative study, School Administration, 8 (1), 162-190 [in Persian]

Pont B., Nushe, D., & Moorman, H. (2008), Improving School Leadership, Volume 1: Policy and Practice, Paris: OECD.

Pourkarimi, J., Farzaneh, M., & Norouzi, M. (2016), Analysis of professional competencies of school principals, Findings of a combined study, School Administration, 4 (1), 1-25 [In Persian]

Rahimi R. (2019), Dimensions and requirements for professionalism of school teachers in high schools in Mashhad, Master Thesis in Educational Sciences and Psychology, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. [In Persian]

Ramirez J.A. (2020) High School Professional Learning Communities in California High Schools: The Significance of the Principal's Leadership Behaviors, PHD, University of La Verne' California.

Rostami T. (2019) Identifying and prioritizing management skills for the professional development of city school principals in the primary school of Meshkinshahr, Master Thesis in Management, Islamic Azad University of Ardabil Branch. [In Persian]

Sabzian Pour Z., & Islam Panah M. (2019) Return to management: Designing and explaining the new model of competencies of educational managers by content analysis method. School Administration, 7(1), 229-251. [In Persian]

Sadeghi Nia, Z., Salehi, K., & Moghaddamzadeh, A. (2018), A phenomenological approach in identifying the effective factors in evaluating the performance of primary school principals, School Administration, 6 (2), 1-21 [In Persian]

Schleicher, A. (2012). Preparing Teachers and Developing School Leaders for the 21st Century: Lessons from around the World, OECD Publishing

Şenol, H. (2019), Professional Development of Educational Leaders, Educational Leadership, Retrived, from,https://www.intechopen.com/online-first/professional-development-of-educational-leaders.

Vidal-Butler, S. (2017). Knowledge and professional development for principals leading linguistic communities in schools, PHD, California State University, East Bay

Yusefi, A., Maleki, A.S., & Talebi, B. (2020), Designing a professional development model for school principals on the horizon of 1404 with an approach based on grounded theory, Management on Training Organizations, 9(1), 12-51 [In Persian]

Zeinabadi, H. R., & Abdolhusseini, B. (2017), Successful School, Successful Principal: A Comparative Study of the Findings of the International Successful School Principal (ISSPP) project. Educational Innovation, 16 (61), 21- 42 [In Persian]

Author 1 Name: Esmat Elzami
Email: eelzami20@gmail.com
PHD Student in Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran

Author 2 Name: Abbas Abbas Pour (Corresponding author).
Email: abbaspour1386@gmail.com
Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran

Author 3 Name: Ali Khorsandi Taskooh
Email: khorsandi444@gmail.con
Assistant Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran.

Author 4 Name: Javad Pourkarimi
Email:jpkarimi@gmail.com
Assistant Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Education, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

Author 5 Name: Hamid Rahimian
Email: hamrahimian@yahoo.com
Associate Professor of Educational Management, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran.