



An Induction of Schools' Managerial Problems in IRAN

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to induction school management problems in Iran. The research was a descriptive correlational study of structural equations type. Participants in this study were all successful school principals in the country. Using purposive sampling method, 500 principals as final sample were invited to collaborate. A 30-item scale was used to collect data. Content value of the scale was estimated by investigation of the knowledgeable experts and reliability of the scale was assessed based on Cronbach's Alpha (0.86). Factorial analysis and structural equations methods were used to analyze the data. According to the achieved results, 6 problems were extracted entitling under topics of organizational problem (10 components), administrative problem (6 components), environmental-motivational problem (5 components), financial problem (5 components), structural problem (2 components) and individual problem (2 components) as schools' main managerial problems. Also, the structural relations of these problems were explained and fitted. Based on the findings, school principals are expected to try to develop the necessary competencies to play the role of organizational pathologist of schools.

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Introduction

Despite complicate changes and transformations of the contemporary world and appearance of new social institutions, there exist experts who continue to believe in schools' potency in social and cultural reconstruction of the society. (Bahmaee, Marashi, Pakseresht & Safaei Moghadam, 2016) No doubt, share of schools' principals to objectify this expectation is unavoidable. They are central to our way of seeing the social world (Blustein & Goldschmidt, 2021), and generally emphasize the positive organizational behaviors of teachers, students, the school and themselves (Göksoy, 2021). But, shortage of resources, increasing competition, diversity of demand, changes in technology, rules and social changes which have environmental origins impose a breakable pressure on the schools' principals continuously in order to secure beneficiary groups' consent and achieve aims.

In fact, principals, while confronting with their own schools, are faced with a problematic phenomenon. That what, why, how and when something turns into a problem in a school is the main foundation in order to perceive a problematic phenomenon. In position of one principal, if one school is to be imagined as a problematic phenomenon, problem finding ability and problemology skill of school principal is regarded as his/her most significant professional qualification in such condition. In fact, how principal to confront with problems influences the school's performance (Mokhtari, 2013 & Mirkamali, 2010). In one of the educational modules published by the educational, scientific and cultural organization of the United Nations, diagnosis of the problems in the educational systems has been defined to be equal to critical study of situation, function and results of the educational systems. (UNESCO, 2010) Yet, for the purpose of enrichment of quality in principals who confront with school problems, it is required that they, intelligently, induce their own problems repeatedly. It is on these conditions that credibility level of the principals' decisions is to be promoted and a clear perspective established so that schools' principals become more professional (Alagheband, 2010; Imani, 2007 & Khorshide, 2013).

Researchers such as Mirkamali (2010) and Smith (2007) believe that one of the most fundamental responsibilities of the schools' principals is problemology and ability of recognizing the nature of school problems. Problems are the realities which appear on the way of individuals or organizations and challenge them to reach their goals or supply their needs. In their own daily occupational living, schools' principals are ever solving problem and making decisions. Hence, it is expect that schools' principals try to develop the required qualifications in themselves in order to play a role as organizational pathologist. (Rezai, 2008) Some researchers of educational systems regard concept of pathology as substructural philosophy of the schools' competitive model. (Behrangi, Abdollahi, NaveEbrahim and Goodarzi, 2015) Organizational diagnosis requires definition and application of one model to perceive organizational problems, collection and analysis of data and deduction of results based on findings aiming at establishment of necessary changes and probable corrections (Hamid, 2011). Historically, some models have been suggested for organizational diagnosis (Zarei Chaghooee & Ghapanchi, 2014) out of which the most well-known ones are as follows: Force field analysis (1951), Leavitt's model (1965), Likert system analysis model (1967), Wisbord's six-box model (1976), Congruence model for organization analysis (1977), Mckinsey 7s framework model (1982), Tichy's technical, Political and cultural model (1983), High-performance programing model (1984), Diagnosing individual and group behavior model (1987), Bruk-Litwin model of organizational performance and change (1922), Falletta's organizational intelligence model (2008) and Semantic network analysis model (2014). At the same time, Janićijević (2010) comparing the current models of diagnosing organizational and managerial problems, believe that in each diagnostic model it is necessary to embed a combination of components. Especially, schools' principals in IRAN are faced with a massive volume of problems which their mental organizing are vital to develop problem solving capacity and effective decision makings. Therefore, the present research tries

to induce (review) the Iranian schools' managerial problems.

Literature

Numerous research reports have been conducted on the diversity of school management problems. Hajipour (2018) considers the realm of search for school management problems in the areas of goals, structure, and relationship with the environment, leadership, as well as the process of training, selecting, appointing and employing school principals. Shirbagi (2017) introduces the consequences of inappropriate interactions of principals, including destructive effects on teachers' mental and emotional state, decision-making disorders, and classroom priorities in school management issues. In a study conducted by Diba Vajari, Abbasi & Fathi Vajargah (2017), they brought up the subjects, including principals who don't take the teaching seriously, conflict among current activities and functions with what taught in the educational courses and dependence of application of results on necessary resources such as time, money, force and energy spent on running affairs mainly as important realms of studying the schools' managerial problems. Results of the research conducted by Mirza'i & Mirza'i (2016) showed that conceptual, perspective and skill challenges, shortages of resources, structural inefficiency, inefficiency of organization's culture, lack of effectiveness of educational courses, ineffectiveness of organization's higher management, non-specialization of organization's processes and lack of continuation of supervision and evaluation are considered to be the most significant managerial and organizational problems.

Zainabadi & Ahmadianfar (2013) found that being worried about entrusting authority to teachers, little ability in establishment of effective interaction, lack of specialty and insufficient experience in financial management, low information regarding new methods of evaluation, little collaboration and support on the behalf of parents and external institutions are the most significant problems in each dimension, respectively. Generally, results of this research put emphasis on importance of identification of problems and, also, necessity for guidance of the novice

principals. Concerning schools' managerial damages, Khorshidi (2013) emphasizes the organizational, motivational and structural factors as well as human skills. Ahmadianfar (2011) classifies novice principals' problems in dimensions of psychological problems, interpersonal problems, generally, lack of skill and specialty in school management, lack of skill and specialization in the affairs related to teaching and lack of support. In their own research, Pakmehr, Dehghanian & Jafari Sani (2010) have reported that, from viewpoint of teachers, appointment of principals is not to be accomplished on the basis of meritocracy; therefore, the problems established in the Ministry of Education are not related to the managerial rules dominating over it, but principals are not of a required competence sufficiency in all levels, and determination and appointment of principals in various levels is not to be performed according to the administrative regulations. Sadeghzadeh and Ahmadifar (2008) believe that several reasons have been led to appearance of damages in the scholastic management out of which are lack of new ideas, winning of individual activities over collective ones, lack strategic planning and lack of awareness of desirability of execution plans counted as the most significant reasons. While investigating into school principals' behaviors, Uzun and Ayik (2017) assert that continuous usage of unavoidable and obliged methods/procedures disables the principals in confrontation with new-appeared problems.

Moindi, Changeiy Wo and Sang (2016) regard the weakness in group works as a strategic managerial and organizational problem in schools. Researches of Pech, Sirinbanpitak & Sumettikoon (2015) showed that today schools require the principals with very high characteristics, abilities and skills for the purpose of school's guidance according to existing conditions, and only role of administering the executive affairs for schools' principals is not to be confirmed any more. While, according to the reports, more than 25% of schools are involved in mismanagement or weak management. Also, Ayeni and Olusola (2013) introduce factors of quality and performance loss in schools as following ones: Low ability and capacity of principals, little experience and knowledge of principals in the policy making, lack of

sufficient motivation due to lack of government's financial supports, lack of participation in schools and resistance of parents and teachers to innovations of these schools. In their own research, Claver, Zaragoza-Saez, Pertusa-Ortega (2007), through putting emphasis on necessity for principals being problemologist, assert that management is not simple in today organizations, and managers tackle, and get involved in, plentiful problems. Specially, those managers who are beginners and lack management precedent with low recognition of the available complexities. They often embark on some changes firstly which are not to be pleased by employees, and they don't follow them. According to Beasum, Kerry & Kerry (2003), majority of school principals are never placed in the path of professional growth as a result of lack of receiving the effective initial training.

Also, Briar (2010) makes clear that principals are in need of some opportunism

for professional teaching and promotion so that they can progress through this way and play a more effective role in the school's promotion and improvement. In their own researches, Blasé & Blasé (2006) found that behaviors, including lack of diagnosis and praise of teachers for their working activities, intimidation, favoritism, lack of inclination to support the teachers in interaction and problem caused with families and students are the most destructive and the highest repetitive inappropriate interactions of principals, as an example. In the study of Bush & Oduro (2006), financial problems have been listed in vertex of the disabling-maker factors of schools' principals. They believe that, in majority of school systems, one of the important challenges with which principals are faced is promotion and scientific success of students. The table 1 provides a summary review of this literature.

Table 1: summary review of literature about Principal Problems

| Author(s) & Year | Origin | Type of Source | Major themes |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| Hajipour (2018) | Iran | Research | Search for school management problems. |
| Shirbagi (2017) | Iran | Research | Inappropriate interactions of principals. |
| Diba Vajari, Abbasi & Fathi Vajargah (2017) | Iran | Research | To get support from managers for training |
| Mirza'i & Mirza'i (2016) | Iran | Conference paper | Problems and Challenges of Executive Management |
| Zainabadi & Ahmadianfar (2013) | Iran | Research | Problems of School Administrators |
| Khorshidi (2013) | Iran | Research | Pathology of School Management |
| Ahmadianfar (2011) | Iran | Master's thesis | problems and needs of the guidance |
| Pakmehr, Dehghanian & Jafari Sani (2010) | Iran | Conference paper | Management Challenges in Education |
| Sadeghzadeh and Ahmadifar (2008) | Iran | Research | Pathology of Management of the Educational System |
| Uzun and Ayik (2017) | Turkey | Research | Communication Competence and Conflict Management Styles |
| Moindi, Changeiy Wo and Sang (2016) | Slovakia | Research | Principals' Team Work Capabilities and the Adoption of Strategic Management |
| Pech, Sirinbanpitak & Sumettikoon (2015) | Cambodia | Research | Development of A Dual System School Management Model |
| Ayeni and Olusola (2013) | Nigeria | Research | A model for school based management operation and quality assurance |
| Claver, Zaragoza-Saez, Pertusa-Ortega (2007) | Spain | Research | Necessity for principals being problemologist, |
| Beasum, C, Kerry, C. & Kerry, T, (2003) | English(U K) | Book | School principals have lack of receiving the effective initial training. |
| Briar (2010) | English(U K) | Book | Principals need of opportunism for professional promotion and improvement. |
| Blase J & Blase J. (2006) | United States | Research | most destructive and the highest repetitive inappropriate interactions of principals |
| Bush & Oduro (2006) | Africa | Research | School principals face a daunting challenge. |

According to the literature review, although school management issues do not seem to be well known, yet correct and on-time induction of these problems, especially by schools' principal, is of high importance, but investigations show that a tested model to diagnose nature of school problems is not at the disposal of schools' principals; therefore, the present research has been itemized with the aim of the answering the following questions:

In which factors the managerial problems of the Iranian school can be saturated and classified? In what combination the final algorithm of schools' managerial problems can be formulated?

Method

The present research was applied one in terms of goal and quantitative one in terms of data collection and analysis methods being of descriptive-correlational type. Statistical universe consisted of entire country's school principals who were placed in list of the selected principals based on formal evaluations in the past five years. Sample volume was estimated to be 500 individuals minimally on the basis of data analysis model and considering maximum likelihood.

Considering geographical scope of schools, samples in terms of continuation of success and readiness for participation in the research were selected by purposive sampling method. In order to collect data, schools' managerial diagnosis (Dorraj and Khalkhali, 2019) was used. This scale contained 30 components. Content validity was estimated on the basis of knowledgeable experts' consensus and reliability of scale was assessed on the basis of proper Cronbach's Alpha (0.86). In order to analyses data, statistical methods of exploratory factorial analysis and confirmatory structural equations were used.

Findings

After data collection, exploratory factorial analysis was used to induce (review) the schools' main managerial problems. Then, confirmatory factorial analysis was carried out on the extracted essential problems and final combination extracted. On the basis of this analysis, rate of sharing of variables or total variance along with rate of variables' factorial sharing has been reported in table 1. As observed, most rate of sharing is higher than 50%, suggesting ability of the determined factors in explication of the studied variables' variance.

Table 1: Initial and post-extraction of factors for the components included in factor analysis

| Component | Initial | Extraction | Component | Initial | Extraction | Component | Initial | Extraction |
|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| 1 | 1.000 | 0.681 | 11 | 1.000 | 0.623 | 21 | 1.000 | 0.529 |
| 2 | 1.000 | 0.738 | 12 | 1.000 | 0.701 | 22 | 1.000 | 0.634 |
| 3 | 1.000 | 0.598 | 13 | 1.000 | 0.674 | 23 | 1.000 | 0.662 |
| 4 | 1.000 | 0.691 | 14 | 1.000 | 0.782 | 24 | 1.000 | 0.650 |
| 5 | 1.000 | 0.651 | 15 | 1.000 | 0.632 | 25 | 1.000 | 0.451 |
| 6 | 1.000 | 0.600 | 16 | 1.000 | 0.728 | 26 | 1.000 | 0.598 |
| 7 | 1.000 | 0.654 | 17 | 1.000 | 0.729 | 27 | 1.000 | 0.681 |
| 8 | 1.000 | 0.699 | 18 | 1.000 | 0.646 | 28 | 1.000 | 0.652 |
| 9 | 1.000 | 0.736 | 19 | 1.000 | 0.667 | 29 | 1.000 | 0.734 |
| 10 | 1.000 | 0.698 | 20 | 1.000 | 0.689 | 30 | 1.000 | 0.595 |

Also, special value and variance corresponding to factors were estimated. (Table 2) Explicated variance is on the basis

of a percentage of total variance and collective or accumulative percentage.

Table 2: Percentage of variance and special amounts of extractive factors

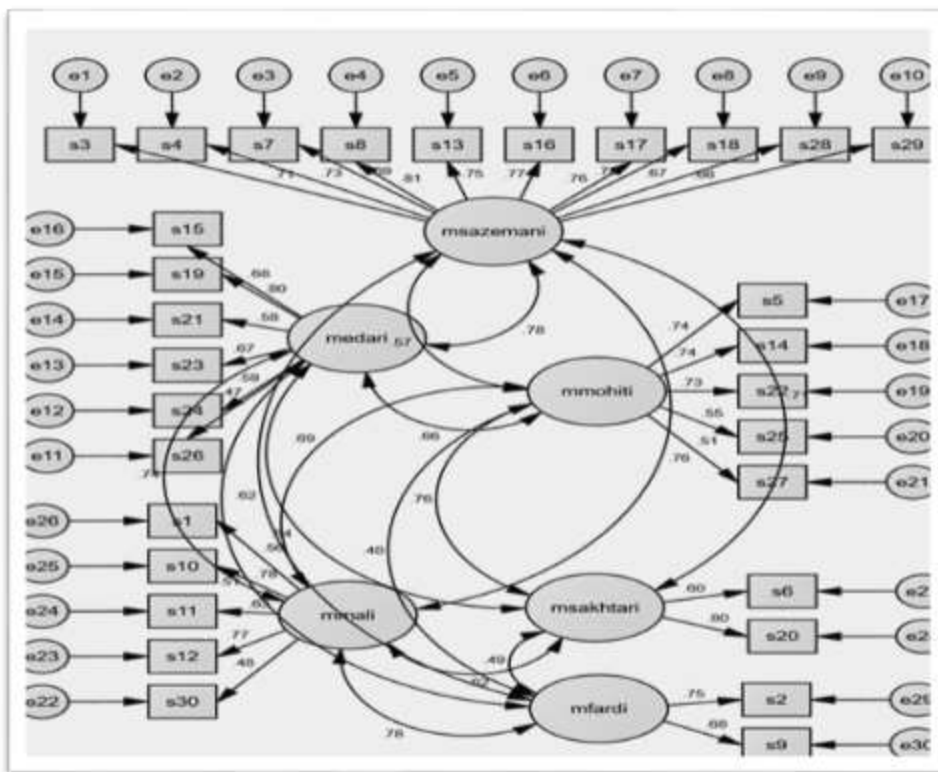
| Amounts of extraction of | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-------|--------------|----------|--------|-----------------|----------|--------|------------|
| Rotation of square loads | | | Square loads | | | Special amounts | | | |
| Accumulated | Variance | Total | Accumulated | Variance | Total | Accumulated | Variance | Total | Components |
| 18.025 | 18.025 | 5.408 | 37.927 | 37.927 | 11.378 | 37.927 | 37.927 | 11.378 | The first |
| 31.206 | 13.181 | 3.954 | 45.549 | 7.622 | 2.287 | 45.549 | 7.622 | 2.287 | The second |
| 41.576 | 10.370 | 3.111 | 52.658 | 7.109 | 2.133 | 52.658 | 7.109 | 2.133 | The third |
| 50.551 | 8.975 | 2.693 | 58.241 | 5.583 | 1.675 | 58.241 | 5.583 | 1.675 | The fourth |
| 58.704 | 8.153 | 2.446 | 62.738 | 4.497 | 1.349 | 62.738 | 4.497 | 1.349 | The fifth |
| 66.549 | 7.845 | 2.353 | 66.549 | 3.811 | 1.143 | 66.549 | 3.811 | 1.143 | The sixth |

As observed in table 2, six factors are capable of explicating the hidden structure. These factors were rotated by Varimax method and observed that they explicate 66.549% of the main structure's variance, namely "schools' managerial problems".

Also, before and after rotation, correlation between factors was estimated. At the end of step of exploratory factorial analysis, identified factors were named on the basis of theoretical foundations and researching literature. In continuation, standard factorial

load was calculated for confirmatory factorial analysis. Results of confirmatory factorial analysis in the representative scale of structure of schools' managerial problems have been shown in diagram 1. For assessment of power of relationship between each factor (Hidden variable) with it's observable variables (Items of questionnaire), standard factorial load of confirmatory factorial analysis was estimated to be higher than 0.3 in all cases according to Kline model. (1994)

Diagram 1: Standard factor load of factor analysis of the scale for measurement of school management problems construct



In order to fit the research's structural model, a number of goodness indexes of fitness were used. Results have been shown in table 3.

Table 3: Results of goodness indicators of model's fitness

| Fitness index | Approximate error variance | Normalized | Comparative | IFI | Absolute | PRATIO | Economical | Economical |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------|-------|----------|--------|------------|------------|
| Acceptance scope | 0.05> | 0.9 < | 0.9 < | 0.9 < | 0.9 < | 0.50< | 0.50< | 0.50< |
| Estimation | 0.047 | 0.93 | 0.94 | 0.92 | 0.95 | 0.82 | 0.77 | 0.80 |

According to Table 3, since all the indicators were in the accepted range, the estimated combination of school management problems was found to have a goodness of fit. The default research model was drawn based on the research variables and criteria of each by adapting the output of AMOS software. Non-standard and standard statistics were used to confirm the results of the final

unmodified model. Regression weights were also used to represent acceptable relationships in structural equations. Significance of factors was also identified. The standard of regression weights, the weights of the default model group, estimates, and corrections in the estimates were modified by improving the model.

Table 4: Default model group's weights

| Problems | Measure ment | Problems | Measure ment | Problems | Measure ment | Problem s | Measure ment |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Administrative | 0.85 | Organizational | 0.808 | Administrative | 0.764 | Financial | 0.782 |
| Structural | 0.759 | Organizational | 0.749 | Administrative | 0.601 | Financial | 0.537 |
| Structural | 0.495 | Organizational | 0.778 | Environmental | 0.734 | Structural | 0.631 |
| Individual | 0.382 | Organizational | 0.759 | Environmental | 0.757 | Structural | 0.764 |
| Administrative | 0.448 | Organizational | 0.780 | Environmental | 0.696 | Individual | 0.724 |
| Environmental | 0.717 | Organizational | 0.666 | Environmental | 0.560 | Individual | 0.696 |
| Financial | 0.929 | Organizational | 0.652 | Environmental | 0.531 | Individual | 0.549 |
| Organizational | 0.688 | Administrative | 0.451 | Financial | 0.482 | | |
| Organizational | 0.721 | Administrative | 0.696 | Financial | 0.789 | | |
| Organizational | 0.690 | Administrative | 0.620 | Financial | 0.605 | | |

Therefore, final and improved model was made according to table 2 in order to

explicate structure of schools' managerial problems.

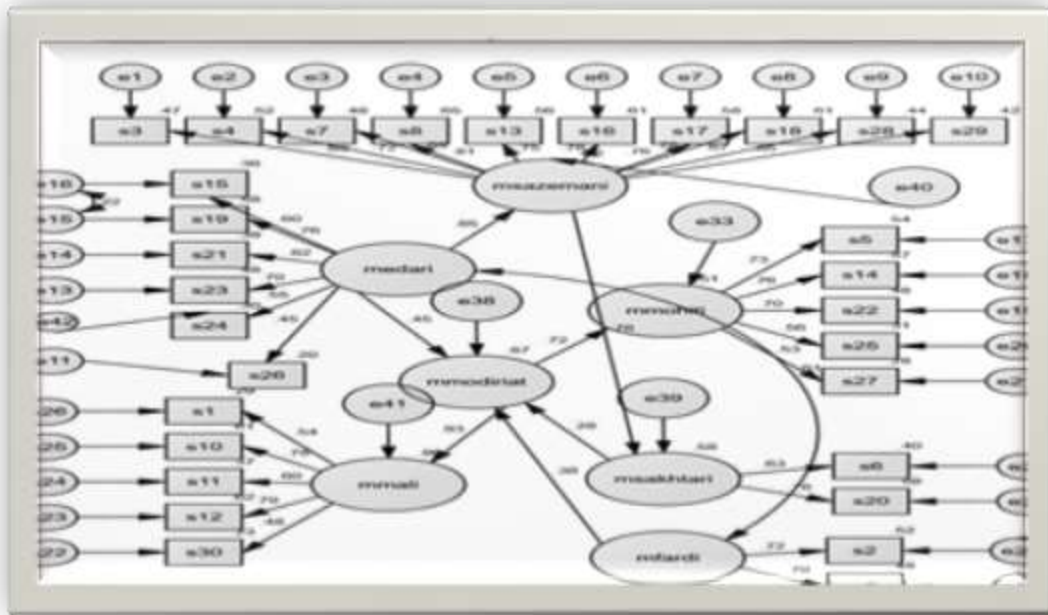


Diagram 2: The final and improved model for explaining the construct of principal' problems

Discussion and conclusion

The research was formulated on the basis of this fundamental default that “schools' principals need a tested model in order to diagnose school problems, especially in dimensions of managerial and organizational problems”. Empirically, 6 factors were identified and named under heading of organizational, structural, administrative, financial, environmental and individual problems, and, according to the confirmatory factorial analysis, these problems were diagnosed to be significant in a structural model.

One of the principal problems identified in schools' management process is **organizational problem**. Components such as incorrect selection of principals based on personal taste and without considering their ability, inexperience of principals, lack of awareness of educational problems, incapability of principals to control the schools, inattention of schools' principal to students' educational achievement, principals' dependence on the institutions out of school and excessive emphasis on extra organizational administrative power were emphasized to explicate this problem. These findings are in the same direction with the researchers reported by Goldring (2006), Briar (2010), Beasum & et al (2003), Claver, Zaragoza Saez, Pertusa-Ortega (2007), Ayeni

& Olusola (2013), Peach, Siribanpitak & Sumettikoon (2015, Pakmehr, Dehghaniand & Jafarisani (2010). The researches focusing on lack of meritocracy in principals' appointment, and in description of lack of enough skill and specialty in the novice principals and, also in analysis of reason for why the principals don't take the teachings seriously.

Administrative problems are regard as one of the other diagnoses cleared in this study. Administrative problems are practical aspect of organizational problems. The problems, including centralization of office system and glance at school from upward direction to downward direction, occupational exhaustion of schools' principals and, also, lack of awarding sufficient power to principals to make decision have been reported as the most important problems of realm of schools' administrative-managerial difficulties. Result of this survey was in alignment with researches of Zainabadi & Ahmadianfar (2013), Mirzai (2016) & Dibavajari & et al (2017). They concern anxiety over authority entrustment, regarding ineffectiveness of organizational culture and under topic of conflict among principal's activities and functions.

The third problem shown by results of this study was **environmental and motivational problems**. The problems such as social

damages, transmission of tension and insecurity of the family environment to school, shortage of facilities in schools and disappointment of students towards job future became the most important known complications (diagnoses) of this conceptualization area. Results of this investigation were in the same direction with researches of Blase & Blasé, Zainabadi & AhmanianFar (2013), Blase & Blasé (2006) and Shirbagi & Moradi (2018), concerning unwillingness for supporting the teachers, concerning families' problems, and with focusing on low awareness of parents regarding new methods of evaluation and students' job future.

Another problem achieved by results of this study is **school financial problems** referring to economic weakness of families, existence of financial problems in schools due to lack of depositing per capita incomes and lack of response of per capita incomes against schools' costs. Results of this research correspond with the studies carried out by Kitavi (1997), Ayeni & Olusola (2013), Ayeni & Olusola (2013), Zainabadi (2013) and Mirzai (2016). They putting emphasis on shortage of financial resources, concerning insufficient experience in financial management, about parents' resistance to award financial aids, regarding government's lack of financial support and concerning costs of schools

In this research, **structural problems**, beyond the referred organizational and administrative problems, were identified as one of the other schools' managerial problems. Structural problems put emphasis on the cases such as cumbersome circulars and managers' continuous psychological stresses inflicted on them through structures and taken power of action freedom from them. Studies conducted by Moindi, Changeiywo & Sang (2016), Uzun & Ayik (2017), Sadeghzadeh & Ahmadifar (2008) and Mirzai(2016) with putting emphasis on structural inefficiency of educational system, overlap one another.

One of the other findings of the present research is schools' managerial **individual problems**. Individual problems put emphasis on the cases such as incorrect relationship with teachers, disease, physical problems and principals' family problems. Results of this

investigation, was in alignment with the research carried out by Ayeni & Olusola (2013), Khorshide (2013), Mirzai (2016) and Hajipour (2017) in connection with principals' personality disorders, individual challenges, principals' low capability in establishment of relationships and interactions with students and concerning principals' lack of enough motivation.

Totally, extractive structural model of the research can be formulated theoretically in literature of organizational growth and maturity. Organizational maturity course specialists usually use organizational diagnosis to analyze organization's functional current level (Langley & Denis, 2006 & Armenakis et al, 1990). In fact, prerequisite for each transformational strategy in organizations is diagnosis. Interventions prescribed and implemented without accurate diagnosis will be followed by destructive consequences (Bloom & Heap, 2002). Thus, it is expected that schools' principals make effort to develop the required qualifications in themselves in order to play role of the schools' organizational pathologist (Hajipourabaie & Abolghasemi, 2018). For this reason, it is suggested that, in the preparation programs for the schools' principals, subject of diagnosis models of schools' managerial problems is to be taken into special consideration certainly. Finding of the research can be a coherent collection to achieve this objective.

Another important issue that should be emphasized in organizational complication diagnosis by principals is the issue of developing a comprehensive set of syndromes and related symptoms, along with etiology and methods of possible intervention in the schools issues. All causal relationships between these syndromes and related signs and symptoms, as well as the proposed interventions, should be pre-modeled with valid quantitative and qualitative methods. This proposed collection will not be unlike pharmacology text book and can be used as a clinical guide in diagnosis and intervention to improve principal's issues. In such circumstances, the level of credibility of the decisions of principals will be improved and a clear prospect for professionalization of this field will be created.

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