

## Original Article

## Evaluation of the Factors Affecting the Elementary Teachers' Exhilaration

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate factors affecting exhilaration and their association with happiness of school elementary teachers in Shahrekord, Iran. The study population consisted of all elementary school teachers in Shahre-kord, Iran. 203 elementary teachers were surveyed through random sampling and using Morgan's table. The data were collected by means of the self-made questionnaire covering factors affecting the exhilaration and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. Result of this study indicated that the best predictors of exhilaration are economic factors, gathering, office hours, evaluation, and active teaching methodology. Based on beta coefficient, with 1% increase in teachers' gathering, exhilaration increased by 0.308, office hours by 0.335, evaluation by 0.201, active teaching methodology by 0.202, and economic factors by 0.174. We found that the Ministry of Education should pay special attention to the mentioned items in order to increase the students' self-confidence, efficiency, social and individual skills, and quality of life.

## INTRODUCTION

Exhilaration is essential for mental health; when we are exhilarant in the workplace, we are more motivated and therefore the quality of our life will improve. The existence of exhilaration in the school personnel will increase the school efficiency (1) and contentment and fulfillment in life will cause contentment in occupation. These two variables will increase the organizational efficiency and accountability (2).

The school is a cradle where the personality of students, the main body of the future society and the major part of the current one, is shaped, as next to home, the student will spend most of their time there. School is a society with more students' interactions than home. Therefore, attention to school and its related factors is very important (3). The existence of exhilaration in school is important because When people are involved in trainings and activities that do not make them happy, they do not show enough interest in them (4).

Teachers' emotions are an important part of instructional settings associated to a variety of important outcomes, for

example, classroom efficiency, Learning and performance of students, students' motivation and emotions and teachers' well-being (5-7). In their study, Tentama and Pranungsari concluded that teachers' work motivation and job satisfaction showed significantly positive correlated with their emotional attachment and involvement in the organization and they are always willing to be a member of the organization (8). Jennings and Greenberg found that that teacher-related emotional and social factors, contribute to creating a classroom environment that is more conducive to learning and that promotes positive developmental outcomes among students (9).

The teachers, considering their vital role in students' learning, can help develop a healthy happy ambiance. The exhilarant teachers usually try to create a happy ambiance for their colleagues and students because they believe that the happy ambiance will further the self-confidence and efficiency of themselves and others. At this time, schools are at their most efficient level (10,11).

Considering the mentioned aspects, identifying factors affecting the teachers' exhilaration is of utmost importance the

level of the, and also attempts should be made to introduce these key factors to those involved education. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the factors affecting the teachers' exhilaration and their association with happiness of school elementary teachers. Identifying factors affecting the teachers' exhilaration will pave the way for positive changes in the education and training quality and guide the relevant attempts. The scientific specification of the efficiency of these factors in increasing exhilaration will help the educational planners to improve their plans. The accurate identification of these factors will facilitate the distinction of the fact that how efficiently the educational centers can lay the grounds for future generation.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Participants and Procedure

This was a cross-sectional study. The study population consisted of all elementary school teachers (n=444) in Shahrekord, Iran. The required sample size was 203 teachers calculated using Morgan's table. The data were obtained through random sampling, and then the questionnaires were distributed among the participants based the size sample .

### Instruments

#### *The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ)*

The scale contains 29 items, based on a four-point rating scale, constructed to reflect incremental steps defined as: unhappy or mildly depressed, a low level of happiness, a high level of happiness, and mania. High scores obtained from the scale indicate high happiness. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.78 and a Cronbach coefficient of between 0.64 and 0.87 (12, 13).

#### *Exhilaration questionnaire*

A questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and expert viewpoints to evaluate factors affecting elementary school teachers' exhilaration. The questions below were based on a 5-point Likert scale with 5 answer options, including extremely high, high, approximately, low, and extremely low.

#### *Validation of exhilaration questionnaire*

After the first initial list of questions was prepared, the items were carefully evaluated by a panel of six experts to assess their validity and accuracy. This panel consisted of experts from the field of applied linguistics who had doctoral degrees in questionnaire design. These experts made the decision to remove or add items. After the evaluation, only 36 of the original 60 items were approved. Based on experts' comments, 25 items were removed because of ambiguity, redundancy, irrelevance, and length. A pilot study was then conducted and the study questionnaire was distributed manually to 40 teachers and some items were modified based on the results obtained from the pilot study. Cronbach's coefficient  $\alpha$  was then used to calculate the internal consistency of the

questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha results showed that internal consistency for this questionnaire was estimated to be 0.96.

#### *Items of questionnaire*

The Questionnaire consisted of 36 questions that examined the seven factors including economic status, participative management promotion, teachers' gathering, criterion-referenced performance evaluation, teachers' transfers, office hours' distribution in a week and attention to teaching methodology (active, passive and mixed). The number of questions in each section is given in Table 1.

#### Economic status

Here, a series of questions regarding salary, benefits and incentives as compared with those of other office jobs, tough elementary school environment, the increases in the teachers' benefits and incentives who had mixed students ( normal and slow), and increasing special facilities and services such as medical services, market basket, etc., was raised (14-18).

#### Participative management promotion

In this section, a series of questions regarding teachers' freedom of expressing their personal and group problems to the principal, their active participation in decision-making and educational planning, the principal welcome when teachers give constructive criticism, the principal's efforts to create friendly relationships among teachers and giving importance to new strategies at school affairs were posed (19-22).

#### Teachers' gathering

In this section, some questions regarding establishing elementary school teachers' union, employing prominent professors for holding educational workshops in the teachers' meetings, the establishment of elementary school teachers' 'scientific-cultural associations, inviting officials to respond to teachers' problems in the elementary school teachers' meetings (23-26)

**Table 1.** Seven factors of exhilaration questionnaire of teacher and number of questions in each factors

Factors	Question
Economic status	4
Participative management promotion	5
Teachers' gathering	5
Criterion-reference performance evaluation	5
Teachers' transfers	4
Office hours distribution in a week	4
Active	3
Attention to teaching methodology	
Passive	3
Mixed	3

**Criterion-referenced performance evaluation**

In this section, some questions regarding the teachers' performance evaluation by considering all aspects of their work, taking into account the specific problems of elementary school teachers when evaluating their performance, giving importance to their views as experts when evaluating their performance, evaluating teachers' performance based on objective criteria and promotion of teachers based on a rigorous teacher-evaluation program were raised (19,23,26-29).

**Teachers' transfers**

In this section, a series of questions regarding the teachers' transfers according to the normative criteria, transfer of teachers to the place of residence, transfer of teachers to the place requested, and accelerating their transfer process were posed (26,30).

**Office hours' distribution in a week**

Here, some questions regarding how to distribute the elementary school teachers' working hours and those of other teachers, the reduction of elementary school teachers' working hours per week, and one day off per week were posed (26,31,32).

**Attention to teaching methodology (active, passive and mixed).**

In this section, there were a series of questions regarding students' participation in participation in the teaching and learning process, doing the exercises of the book with the help of the students, and observing all students' participation in class assignments (33-35)

**Data Analysis**

Pearson correlation ANOVA, independent T-test, and LSD test were used to analyze the data. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 19.

**RESULTS**

**The Basic Characteristics**

Of the 203 elementary school teachers, 105 (51.7%) were males and 98(48.3%) females (Table 2).

In this study, the age range of participants was from 28 to 55 years. The distribution of teachers by age group is abbreviated in Table 3 and Figure 1. Results showed that 21.2% of all participants were aged 28–32 years, 25.1% in the age group of 33-39 years, 30.5% in the age group of 40-45 years and 23.2% in in the age group of 46 years or older.

**Correlation between Factors Affecting the Elementary School teachers' Exhilaration and Happiness**

Table 4 presents the correlation between factors affecting elementary school teachers' exhilaration and happiness base on oxford happiness questionnaire.

As shown in Table 4, teachers' happiness showed the statistically significant correlations with Economic status ( $r=0.19$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), participative management promotion ( $r=0.17$ ,  $P<0.05$ ), teachers' gathering ( $r=0.22$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), criterion-referenced performance evaluation ( $r=0.22$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), teachers' transfers ( $r=0.15$ ,  $P<0.05$ ), office hours' distribution in a week and exhilaration of teachers ( $r=0.19$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), attention to active teaching methodology ( $r=0.18$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), and mixed teaching methodology ( $r=0.14$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). But there is no statistically significant correlation between passive teaching methodology and teachers' happiness ( $r=-0.15$ ,  $P<0.05$ ).

**Multivariate Correlation Analysis**

The gathered data and information were analyzed in order of the study questions. the multivariate correlation analysis was to determine factors affecting the teacher's happiness. The results are presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, the teachers' gathering accounted for the 7% of total happiness (model 1). By adding the office hours, the variance increased to 14% (model 2); active teaching methodology, to 19% (model 3); evaluation, to 23% (model 4); and economic factors, to 26% (model 4).

**Multiple Regression (step by step) and the Prediction of Exhilaration**

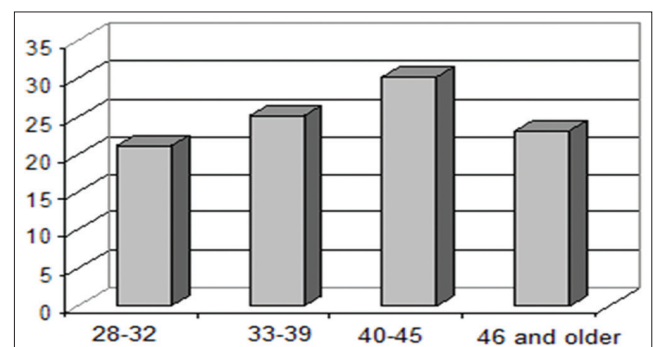
As can be seen from Table 6, From Table 6 it can be seen that the best predictors of happiness are gathering, office hours, evaluation, active teaching methodology, and economic

**Table 2.** The basic characteristics of teachers (n=203)

	Men(105)	Women(98)
Frequency (percent)	48.3	51.7
Age(year)	Mean±Sd	36.09±5.27
		35.19±4.73

**Table 3.** The distribution of teachers by age group

Age group	Frequency	percent
28-32	43	21.2
33-39	51	25.1
40-45	62	30.5
Above 46	47	23.2
Sum	203	100



**Figure 1.** The distribution of teachers by age group

**Table 4.** factors affecting exhilaration (self-made questionnaire) and welfare of elementary teachers base on OHQ (n=203)

Economic status	Pearson correlation	0.190**
	P value	0.007
Participative management promotion	Pearson correlation	0.174*
	P value	0.013
Teachers' gathering	Pearson correlation	0.227**
	P value	0.001
Criterion-referenced performance evaluation	Pearson correlation	0.221**
	P value	0.001
Teachers' transfers	Pearson correlation	0.154*
	P value	0.028
Office hours distribution in a week	Pearson correlation	0.195**
	P value	0.005
Attention to active teaching methodology	Pearson correlation	0.182**
	P value	0.009
Attention to passive teaching methodology	Pearson correlation	-0.154
	P value	0.029
Attention to mix teaching methodology	Pearson correlation	0.147*
	P value	0.036

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).  
 \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 5.** The multivariate correlation analysis of factors affecting the teacher's happiness based on the influential factors

Model	R	Coefficient of determination R2	Ad R2	F	Sig.
1	0.272	0.074	0.069	16.06	0.001
2	0.376	0.141	0.133	16.48	0.001
3	0.445	0.198	0.186	16.34	0.001
4	0.485	0.235	0.220	15.24	0.001
5	0.514	0.264	0.245	14.11	0.001

factors. Based on beta coefficient, with a 1% increase in teachers gathering, exhilaration increased by 0.308, office hours by 0.335, evaluation by 0.201, active teaching methodology by 0.202, and economic factors by 0.174.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This study was conducted on the male and female school elementary teachers of Shahrekord with the aim of evaluating the factors affecting exhilaration. Based on the obtained results, it can be said that there was a significant association between the economic status of the teachers and their happiness; in other words, the better the economic status of teachers, the more happiness they get. This result is consistent with the results of studies conducted by the following researchers:

Boyce et al (2010) showed that an individual's income can predict the general life satisfaction of people (14). Also, in their studies , Knight et al (2011) and Cassedy et al (2013)

found that family income improves the quality of life and happiness of individuals (15, 16). Kavenuke (2013) found that an individual's income in the developing countries is a major factor in retaining qualified teachers. Teachers from low economic status stay in teaching because they need to survive, not because they are satisfied and motivated (17). Anghelache (2014) also have noted that because of the low income of this job, the motivation of young teachers for this job is low (36).

But the results of Easterlin's study (1974) is inconsistent with our results. He showed that despite rising incomes, people have not been happier (37). Fuentes et al (2001) also showed that the relationship between income and welfare is weak (38). Caporale et al (2009) also concluded that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between income and happiness, but this relationship is weakened by reference income (39).

The results reveal that there is a significant correlation between participative management and the teachers' happiness. The examination of the mean of the factors of participative management shows that the teachers considered the following items effective on their exhilaration: the sense of freedom in expressing social and personal problems to the principal, their active participation in educational decision-making and planning, the principal openness to reformatory and constructive criticism of the teachers, the principal's attempt to establish friendly connections among the teachers, and encouraging novel ideas about the running of the school; the mean of the aforementioned items is higher than the average. Generally speaking, there is a relationship between participative management and the teachers' exhilaration, but this is not statistically significant.

The findings of the current study conforms to the results of the studies conducted by Dehnavi et al (2004), and Mitchell et al (2010); They all report the participative management as an affective factor in school exhilaration (19,20). Roberts et al (1998), stated that if individuals feel that their capacities and experience can be utilized in their job environment and that the work environment offers them opportunities and rewards, they would experience satisfaction (21). Therefore, according to the results of these studies, it can be said that the participative management plays a major role in teachers' exhilaration.

The results show that there is a significant correlation between the items of teachers' gathering and their happiness. The examination of these items show that teacher consider important items such as establishing teachers' guild, inviting distinguished professors to the teachers' conferences, and establishing cultural, scientific councils for teachers; the mean of all the mentioned items was more than average. DeNève et al. (1998), believe that group activities will exhilarate the members because they will increase self-confidence and build trust among the members; if there is an agreement between members on the subjects, there will be more exhilaration (23).

In consistent with our results, Haghightatian et al (2011) showed that social resources consisting of social networks, organizational and social involvement, and organization-

**Table 6.** Multiple Regression (step by step) and the prediction of happiness based on the influential factors

		P	t	Standard coefficient	Non-standard coefficients	
				Beta	Standard Error	B
1	Constant coefficient	0.001	18.91		3.22	61.01
	Teachers gathering	0.001	4.00	0.272	0.731	2.93
2	Constant coefficient	0.001	11.78		4.21	49.73
	Teachers gathering	0.001	4.90	0.329	0.722	3.54
	Office hours	0.001	3.96	0.266	0.604	2.39
	Constant coefficient	0.001	6.62		5.46	36.19
	Teachers gathering	0.001	5.55	0.365	0.708	3.93
3	Office hours	0.001	4.28	0.279	0.586	2.51
	Active teaching methodology	0.001	3.73	0.240	0.759	2.83
	Constant coefficient	0.004	2.91		7.21	21.05
4	Teachers gathering	0.001	4.97	0.326	0.706	3.5
	Office hours	0.001	4.76	0.307	0.579	2.76
	Active teaching methodology	0.001	3.65	0.230	0.743	2.72
	Evaluation	0.002	3.12	0.201	1.17	3.67
	Constant coefficient	0.250	1.15		8.24	9.51
	Teachers gathering	0.001	4.74	0.308	0.698	3.31
	Office hours	0.001	5.22	0.335	0.577	3.01
5	Evaluation	0.001	3.19	0.201	0.742	2.37
	Active teaching methodology	0.002	3.18	0.202	1.15	3.67
	Economic factors	0.007	2.75	0.174	1.01	2.79

al commitment showed a significant correlation with job satisfaction (24). Shannon (2004) also show that existence of trust, commitment, and social networking in the organization leads to job satisfaction of the members (25). But the result of Hemmati (2019) is inconsistent with our results. He showed that establishing guild is not related to happiness (40). The reason for this difference may be that in his study, university students and their associations were studied, but in the present study, the elementary school staff personnel are investigated.

There is a positive significant correlation between work assessment method and the teachers' happiness. Also teachers consider the following items effective on their exhilaration: evaluating their work, considering all of their occupational dimensions, considering the specific problems of the teachers when evaluating them, valuing their opinions as experts when evaluating them, evaluating their work based upon objective standards, and promoting them based upon accurate and objective evaluation of their work.

Teachers need to plan their own teaching methods, strategies, and assessments that meet the needs (28). Cooper et al (1992) believe that managers should evaluate their staff fairly and equally, because this will boost their confidence and faith, and they will do their best in response to the fair judgment of the manager. In addition, the evaluation of staff is one the critical tasks of the managers; if a manager evaluates negligently or unfairly, they will guide the organization to doom (23). Atjonen (2014) showed that teachers have a positive attitude toward use of different assessment methods,

encouraging feedback, an interactive approach, and criteria clarification. But they have negative views about weak implemented assessment, improper assessment methods, degree of stringency, and weak grounds for assessment (27). Dehnavi et al (2004) touched upon the importance of principals' evaluation of the teachers, because the teachers are oversensitive about evaluation, and evaluation has a significant effect on teachers' morale (19). Naudé (2010) state that assessment tools and workshops enable the employee to define career goals and aspirations. Appropriate job requirements should be provided for employees to achieve their goals properly (29).

There is also a significant relationship between teachers' transfers and their happiness, i.e. if the transfer is based upon standard criteria, the regions of interest, and service period of time, it will heighten the teachers' happiness; otherwise, it will cause stress and depress for teachers. Similarly, Saari et al (2004) claims that staff personnel of an organization should work in an ambiance which is in compatibility with their mental framework, and so makes them mentally at peace. If the workers are dissatisfied with their workplace, they cannot fulfill their tasks and keep their occupational enthusiasm. Therefore, the ambiance should be paid undivided attention in order to enthuse the workers (30). Shakib et al (2006) stated that one of the factors that created higher levels of stress and lower levels of job satisfaction among employee is difficulty to transfer to regions of interest (26).

Moreover, the results of this study revealed that there was a significant relationship between office hours distribution

in a week with teachers' happiness, i.e. the less distributed the hours, the happier the teachers, and the more distributed the hours, the less happy the teachers would be. This result is consistent with the those of the study of Lackritz (2004) showing that emotional exhaustion was significantly positively correlated with Office Hours and Service Time with (31). However, Mozayan et al (2012) in their study, found no relationship between work hours per week and job burnout (32) but their study sample was different from the present study.

The results showed that there is a significant, positive correlation between the active teaching methodology and the teachers' happiness. Teachers believe that if students participate in the teaching-learning process and doing the exercises of the book with the help of the students, it will happy them. The results indicated that there is no significant correlation between the passive teaching methodology and elementary teacher's happiness; this correlation is inverse, thus the teachers believe if they use passive methods while teaching, they will lose their happiness. According to the results, the relationship there is a significant, positive correlation between the mixed teaching methodology (active and passive) and elementary school teachers' happiness.

Turner et al (2004) believe that teachers become frustrated when students are not actively involved in teaching (35). Guilloteaux et al (2008) also show that motivational state of learners is linked to teachers' motivational practice (33). In addition, Reeve et al (2004) found that students are more welcoming when they are more independent and active in their classroom practice, and that teachers who provide such conditions for students are more motivated for students(34).

All in all, regarding the existence of a direct significant relationship between economic status, participative management promotion, teachers' gathering, attention to active teaching methodology, criterion-referenced performance evaluation, teachers' transfers, office hours distribution in a week, and teachers' happiness, the educational officials are asked to pay special attention to the mentioned items, so the grounds to increase students' self-confidence, efficiency, social and individual skills, and quality of life will be laid.

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