Examining Professional Qualifications of Teachers in Pre-elementary Schools near Tehran in 2012-2013 Educational Year

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ABSTRACT

In the recent study, we examined the professional qualifications of teachers in pre-elementary schools in four cities of Tehran province such as qualification, knowledge, skill, and capability. In accordance with the applied goals and research type, this research is survey. Statistical population is 505 teachers and 120 teachers choose as statistical sample. So, 30 teachers choose by the hierarchical random sampling method. For collecting data, a combination of construction questionnaire, observation (rating scale) questionnaire, and interview questionnaire has been used. Validity coefficient of the tools calculated 0.73 for questionnaire and 0.97 for rating scale by using Cronbach’s Alpha method. For collected data classification, we used descriptive and we also used single t statistical model to answer the research questions and its results are capable for answering to this question that how much the how much the pre-elementary teachers have professional qualifications? Hence, it stated that knowledge qualification of the teachers in the field (costumer services, healthcare, education, and Holy Quran teaching) is higher than average level and in the psychological knowledge and Persian language field is lower than average level. Skill qualification and capability qualification of the teachers is also lower than average level.

INTRODUCTION

Human and point of view to him is one of the critical issues of education. The correct education of human is the ultimate goal and education is the best way to reach ultimate human dignity. Cont, the well-known philosopher of 18th century, believed “human could reach the ultimate level of humanity by education and human is nothing but the education. So, education is the most critical issue that human faced with” [8].

In the recent social changes, strong tendency to education is important because the today world considers the child educationas his primary needs [6].

On the other side, child needs intellectual discipline for having complete elementary grade education which is not provided usually by the family. So, the skilled pre-elementary teachers create the intellectual discipline in children through different activities and educational programs knowingly and they run them accurately. Once the teachers have more skills, the possible problems of children will reduce. The correct teachings of the skilled teachers caused the cognition development, social development, moral development, mental development, mind development, and physical development in the pre-elementary children.

By increasing the demands of the parents of children for their pre-elementary participation, they expect the teachers to prepare the children for educational success in school. They should train the children as social people and adopted with different cultural society. They should teach the children to overcome the environment limitations and use their emotional intellect to face with the stressful situation of the changeable world. This issue will be reached through the knowledge about the children and its suitable aspects for developing them [7].

Peter Draker’s said that the skilled workforces are the primary reason for developing, not the fund, field, and productions. According to Peter Draker, skilled workforce and using them in suitable situations are the critical reasons for developing the society to independency and nothing could replace it [11].

Pre-elementary education is one of the education grades in our country since a long time ago. But the environmental and economical limitations caused that the officials pay not enough attention to this important

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issue and isolated actions took place by the government and private section in this field but there is no usual planning and it’s operated willingly in every part of our country. The studies in the pre-elementary education field in Iran emphasized on the importance of this period and its effect on the education development, intelligence development, social development, and emotional adaptation [3].

According to the children education which is future human force of our country, the important issue of any country is the children education which should be handed to skilled and qualified teachers. These teachers should have knowledge, moral, education, and teaching education, and also education skills, ability, and capability.

It seems that it’s easy to do activities in kindergartens and pre-elementary centers because of dealing with children. It can be said that 75% of a child’s brain formed in the first 6 years of his life and almost 90% of the child’s abilities tended in this period. So ignoring the children education caused critical problems. Because the house environment is not enough for experiencing, then creating a rich environment with suitable methods could guarantee the children’s education [1].

We should consider that pre-elementary period has positive effect on children education but this critical period is not mandatory yet because of different reason of education in Iran [10].

Beside the other effective factors in educating the children in pre-elementary centers, the teacher is the most important factor and this factor will justify the importance of training professional and skilled teachers in the pre-elementary centers. The ultimate goal is to train teachers for understanding the goals, schedules, and suitable methods for developing physical, social, moral, and religious of the children. According to the importance of this period, teachers need information and new usable findings to have a suitable action about the children. Lack of skilled and trained teachers is the base of critical problems in our country [1].

Every desirable education system has professional teachers. In the education system, teachers are the most important factor and they are responsible for the children education, according to their society needs [3].

According to the critical role of the teacher, we should state that qualification is necessary for a teacher. The one who is not qualified, he can’t train the others well. On general, the one who is has the ability to do something, we can say that he is qualified [5].

It should be mentioned that the pre-elementary centers hardly employ skilled teachers and it’s common to employ freelance teachers in the sub-centers which are deprived from the education qualification based on indirect training. In addition to lack of special training for human workforce, the teachers of these centers do not pass the academic education in this field and they are deprived from the training within duty and this will cause the objections of the most pre-elementary teachers. The teachers should be introduced to educational programs and basic programs related to pre-elementary centers and we should use their intelligence to develop individual intelligence and mental development [9].

We emphasize on the knowledge, skill, and ability about the professional qualification. About the teachers’ qualification for employment in the pre-elementary centers, we should look in the three critical aspects:

- Knowledge acquisition and adequate information about the education, language system, psychology, customer services, and public safety
- Skill acquisition in social understanding field, active listening, speaking to effective information transformation, learning strategies, and teaching work method to others
- Ability in speaking, verbal understanding, oral expression, oral understanding, and written understanding (O*NET website)

These properties are interdependent and triple qualifications result effective qualification on students which is the ultimate goal [5].

The studies showed that correct investment in the pre-elementary grade education is the most important executive factor which is directly deal with children especially in the selection, employment, training, and pre-elementary teachers’ development and it’s not only increase the educational skills in all aspects of the children but also has positive effect on the future of the society people.

A low literate teacher could decrease his intellectual influence even though he was a good person in case of moral and humanity. Lack of intellectual influence could affect the other qualifications of a teacher or eliminate them. Familiarity to the education secrets is one of the teachers’ responsibilities and an old saying is “every scientist is not a teacher”. There are a lot of qualified people in moral and knowledge but they are weak in training and teaching because of technical problems [6].

The most important way for validity and effectiveness of the pre-elementary centers is to employ the teachers who are qualified in their field. Capability is divided into two aspects. In knowledge field, the teacher should know the important basics related to their job and they should also have the ability to apply this information. A teacher should use his knowledge and convert it into a skill [1].

Different studies in this field [3,9] showed that if the pre-elementary teachers have more abilities and qualifications in training the children, they can provide the base of the important experiences and they also can be an important factor in teaching positive ethics to the children.
Hence, the pre-elementary grade is the most important and effective grade in teaching the children and the most theorists believed that it’s base of education and teachers have critical rule in pre-elementary grade, but it’s not a mandatory grade in our education system and there is no standard instruction about the teachers’ employment. The researcher follows this goal that he should consider the professional qualifications of the teachers in the four cities of the Tehran province and it should be determine that how much the teachers have knowledge, capability, and ability and how much they are far from the desirable condition. Hence, this research can provide a picture about the conditions of the teachers in case of knowledge, capability, and ability in teaching and help the education practitioners of this age in recognizing the advantages and disadvantages. We hope that there will be a way to develop the necessary standards to employ the pre-elementary teachers with emphasize on the necessary qualifications. According to the importance of this issue, the researcher looking for answering to this main question “how much do the pre-elementary teachers have professional qualifications?”

According to the professional qualifications which took place in three aspects of knowledge, skill, and ability, there are some sub-questions which are listed in the following:

- How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have knowledge qualification?
- How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have skill qualification?
- How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have ability qualification?

**Methodology:**

Research method is survey descriptive. In psychology science, survey considered as a sub type of descriptive researches which tried to describe the facts without manipulating the values or factors [4].

The aim of survey research is description of recent condition. Survey researcher describes the issue as it is and he pays attention to the conditions, relations, recent processes, outstanding effects, or developing procedures. Gaining widespread information about the big sample of society is one of the benefits of survey research [11].

According to the aim of research, this research is functional because the aim is to reach to basics and principles which work in the real conditions and help the performance of the executive procedures.

In recent research, professional qualification knows as three factors: knowledge, skill, and capability. Questions and different factors have been gathered about the professional qualifications and its three factors such as knowledge, skill, and capability by using valid resources and books. Hence, we used research-made and grading scale observation for controlling the knowledge qualification and we used observation (grading scale) and interview to control the skill qualification and ability qualification.

Measurement tools should be looked neat and attractive to attract the respondents. There is a short text in the test which explains the answering procedure clearly and understandably. The teachers can be sure that these answers are secret and without name and they’re only use for research aim. In recent study, we used interview and evaluation data. For collecting data about teachers’ demography and evaluating the qualifications related to skill and capability of the teachers in the teaching pre-elementary grade, we should consider all the interview qualifications related to the professional skill and capability which have system and construction.

First, we present the measurement tools to the supervisors and the measurement tools adjusted after the studies and redundancy. Finally, revised measurement tools presented to other supervisors and theorists to determine validity and the interview and evaluation data designed by considering the revised opinions and using valid references. The questionnaire included 20 questions and each question is multiple choice and they designed for exact choice of the respondents. Each interview and evaluation data included 77 factors. Four answer choices considered for exact choice such as very suitable, moderately suitable, moderately unsuitable, and very unsuitable.

In interview, we used rating scale and the considered elements in the form of questions designed in other way in the same meeting and in order to increase the validity of respondents’ answers.

We used content validity and surface validity in order to determine validity. Questionnaire and adjusted rating scale presented to some qualified professors (especially supervisors) and the considered tool designed by considering their revised opinions and using the valid books and references.

We used Alpha Cronbach method to determine validity of the measurement tool. We execute 30 questionnaires and interview and evaluation data randomly about the teachers of 10 pre-elementary centers and the validity is 0.73 for 20 multiple choice questions questionnaire. It equals 0.97 for rating scale which included 77 factors. As a result, alpha coefficient was acceptable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alpha Cronbach</th>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Rating scale factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Professional qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Knowledge qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Skill qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Capability qualification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the recent study, statistical population is all pre-elementary teachers of the four cities of Tehran province which includes 2nd zone of Baharestan, Eslamshahr, Chahar Dangeh, and Robatkarim. The total number of teachers is 505 and the number of teachers in each city is listed in the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cities</th>
<th>Teacher No.</th>
<th>All teachers in four cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robatkarim</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd zone of Baharestan</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eslamshahr</td>
<td>235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChaharDangeh</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recent study is survey type and the sample should be 120 pre-elementary teachers at least. Hence, we choose 30 teachers from four cities by using equal hierarchy random method in order to increase the accuracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2nd zone of Baharestan</th>
<th>Robatkarim</th>
<th>ChaharDangeh</th>
<th>Eslamshahr</th>
<th>Population No.</th>
<th>Sample No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>505</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the observation, testing, and interview for categorizing, summarizing, describing, and interpretation of the gathered data, we used descriptive statistic to calculate mean, variance, standard derivation, and other statistical factors. View, median, and mean considered as primary factors. Variation range, variance, and standard derivation considered as distribution factors. Standard error, error coefficient, and elongation factor also considered as distribution factors. We used inferential statistic and Li Hei method to categorize the factors related to each scale and factors divided into four fields: very strong, strong, weak, and very weak. Finally, we used t-single group statistical model (in order to control the knowledge, skill, and capability) to analyze the data and answering to research questions.

Findings:

**Table 1**: t-single group in order to control observation and interview factors of the pre-elementary teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>-35/22</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table and with emphasize on $\alpha=0.01$, it can be stated that there is significant relationship in t between the theoretical mean and empirical mean in the professional qualification of the pre-elementary teachers (in observation and interview factors). According to the lower level of empirical mean than theoretical mean, it stated that professional qualifications level of the pre-elementary teachers (psychology science of children clinical growth, Persian language knowledge, abilities, and skills) is lower than average level.

**Table 2**: t-single group in order to control knowledge professional qualification level of the pre-elementary teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0/50</td>
<td>0/54</td>
<td>3/03</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table and with emphasize on $\alpha=0.01$, it can be stated that there is significant relationship in t between the theoretical mean and empirical mean in the knowledge qualification of the pre-elementary teachers. According to the higher level of empirical mean (in multiple choice question of the tool) than theoretical mean, it stated that knowledge qualifications level in the customer services, healthcare, education and training, and teaching Holy Quran is higher than average level.

**Table 3**: T-single group in order to control knowledge qualification factors of the pre-elementary teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0/50</td>
<td>0/54</td>
<td>3/03</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table and with emphasize on $\alpha=0.01$, it can be stated that there is significant relationship in t between the theoretical mean and empirical mean in the knowledge qualification of the pre-elementary teachers. According to the higher level of empirical mean than theoretical mean, it stated that knowledge qualifications level in the customer services, healthcare, education and training, and teaching Holy Quran of the pre-elementary teachers is higher than average level.

**Table 4**: T-single group in order to control knowledge qualification factors (psychology and Persian language) of the pre-elementary teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>1/35</td>
<td>-34/46</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the above table and with emphasize on \( \alpha=0.01 \), it can be stated that there is significant relationship in t between the theoretical mean and empirical mean in the knowledge qualification (psychology science of children clinical growth, Persian language knowledge, abilities, and skills) of the pre-elementary teachers. According to the higher level of empirical mean than theoretical mean, it stated that knowledge qualifications level in the psychology science of children clinical growth and Persian language of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>1/72</td>
<td>-17/95</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0/001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table and with emphasize on \( \alpha=0.01 \), it can be stated that there is significant relationship in t between the theoretical mean and empirical mean in the skill qualification of the pre-elementary teachers. According to the higher level of empirical mean than theoretical mean, it stated that skill qualifications level of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical mean</th>
<th>Empirical mean</th>
<th>T rate</th>
<th>Free rate</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>-38/73</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0/001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion and conclusion:

Pre-elementary teachers have a critical rule in children education or pre-school period. So, the pre-elementary teachers should be considered and the teachers’ qualifications should take into consideration. According to the importance of this issue, researcher tried to control knowledge, ability, and capability of the pre-elementary teachers in 4 cities of the Tehran province in educational years (91-92) and discover their level of professional qualifications by the total of the knowledge, ability, capability qualifications of the teachers. Hence, following findings gathered by using the statistical analyses for finding the answer for research questions:

Main question: how much do the pre-elementary teachers have professional qualifications?

We used t-single group test to achieve the answer of the above question. By emphasizing on the t values (-35.22), we can say that there is a significant relationship in \( \alpha=0.01 \) between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in professional qualification (except customer service, healthcare, education science, and teaching Holy Quran). So, the empirical mean is lower than theoretical mean (1.30 < 2.5) and we can say that professional qualifications of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level. According to emphasize on the t values (3.03), we can say that there is significant relationship in \( \alpha=0.01 \) between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in the professional qualifications (including customer service, healthcare, education science, and teaching Holy Quran). According to the higher level of empirical mean than theoretical mean (0.54<0.50), it stated that knowledge qualifications level of the pre-elementary teachers is higher than average level.

It should be mentioned here that Hamidpour et al (1388) run a research known as the rule of pre-elementary education in learning mental, movement, and social adaptation. The findings showed that there is no significant relationship between the trained group and untrained group in learning mental, movement, and social adaptation factors and we can’t send the children to pre-elementary school grade just because of the positive effects on learning mental, movement, and social adaptation factors. The quality of the program, teacher’s characterizations, environment of the center, and work experience of a teacher is important in this field.

Haji Aghaei (1370) executed a research about the considering the pre-elementary education rule in students’ education development in the first grade and the findings showed that pre-elementary education has positive and outstanding effects on the students’ education development. Findings show the difference between the two subject groups and indicate that the children who directly go to school have differences in actions and learning level in compared to the children who pass the pre-elementary grade. Kindergarten has the most effects on the children’s social and mind changes and the education development is important.

Agonga presented nine sections as the needs of educational qualifications of the teachers in 1993: development schedules, human development, effective thoughts, knowledge and techniques, communications, researches, evaluations, education process, organizations, and social systems.

In the researches about the intelligence development and children’s primary experiences, Bloom (1964) said that almost 50% of the intelligence formed between the born and 4 years, almost 30% between 4 years and 8
years old, and the rest 20% formed until the 17 years old. The findings showed the importance of the first suitable experiences in the first ages and the effects of environment on the children’s intelligence. He believed that the positive effects of environment will reduce by the age increase. The more the child age, the less he gathers effect from the outside environment. So, it’s necessary to have effective experience for intelligence development because two third of the children ability formed by the 6 years old and the beginning of official education. Hence, the rich education environment included qualified teachers, has a critical rule in children’s growth.

1st sub-question: How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have knowledge qualification?

We used t-single group test to achieve the answer of the above question. By emphasizing on the t values (3.03), we can say that there is a significant relationship in α=0.01 between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in knowledge qualification (means customer service, healthcare, education science, and teaching Holy Quran). So, the empirical mean is lower than theoretical mean (0.54>0.50) and we can say that knowledge qualifications of the pre-elementary teachers is higher than average level.

According to emphasize on the t values (-34.46), we can say that there is significant relationship in α=0.01 between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in the knowledge qualifications (including psychology and Persian language) of the pre-elementary teachers. According to the lower level of empirical mean than theoretical mean (1.35 < 2.5), it stated that knowledge qualifications (psychology and Persian language) level of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level.

It should be mentioned that Daneshpajouh & Farzad (1385) performed a research known as the pre-elementary teachers’ professional qualifications’ evaluation and the results showed that elementary school teachers have some lacks in the important issues of teaching except the general teaching. The results showed that the teachers didn’t pay enough attention to the psychology and psychological elements in their active teaching methods. They used teacher-based method rather than student-based method. In other words, they don’t pay enough attention to the active teaching methods which require excitation of the students and they are not successful in achieving the skill goals.

Shamshiri & Nozari (1390) performed a research known as the injuries of the religious education of children from the point of view of teachers, psychologists, religion experts, children literature experts, and pre-elementary teachers. The results showed that the most known religious injuries in this research included lack of attention to the religion basics, lack of attention to the individual religion experience, ignoring the base of nature, lack of the religion-based in education programs, lack of freedom in education programs, lack of balance, and finally lack of using imagination and art language.

According to the studies based on the quality of the pre-elementary classes, Cassidy & Bual (2001) found that teachers have university degree in high quality class and they pay more attention to the children and they have less negative actions such as irritability.

2nd sub-question: How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have skill qualification?

We used t-single group test to achieve the answer of the above question. By emphasizing on the t values (-17.95), we can say that there is a significant relationship in α=0.01 between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in ability qualification. So, the empirical mean is lower than theoretical mean (1.72 < 2.5) and we can say that skill qualifications of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level.

It should be mentioned that Moghadam Salimi (1375) performed a research known as the controlling the educational methods of pre-elementary period of the Tehran’s kindergartens. The results showed that the pre-elementary teachers teach mathematical through the direct observation, visual observation, and games. Empirical concepts will be taught through the direct observation, visual observation, experiments, and paintings. We used stories for teaching social concepts and we also used poetry for teaching health tips. We used playing dough for creativity development and exercises for muscles’ strength.

Azimi (1370) pointed to a study that a kindergarten teacher chooses 6 children who have lack of confidence. This teacher teaches special issues to these children which cause the increase of their personal security. These teachings include the solution for three issues that the other children didn’t know. After a while, teacher observed that the self-confidence of these children increase significantly. Therefore, the teacher can change the children behaviors in his favor.

Spare (1987) performed a research in South California University known as the controlling the main qualifications in organization development and he found that all practitioners of the organization development need skills and basic information (individual, social, and consulting) for the more efficiency of their work.

Rudez & Hennesey (2000) examined the 120 hours of the skill training on the behavior and performance of teachers and found that when the teachers pass these trainings, the class quality will increase. The students of the skilled teacher are higher in the social growth and cognitive level in compared to the students of unskilled teachers.
3rd sub-question: How much the pre-elementary teachers of the Tehran province cities have ability qualification?

We used t-single group test to achieve the answer of the above question. By emphasizing on the t values (-38.73), we can say that there is a significant relationship in α=0.01 between the empirical mean and theoretical mean in ability qualification. So, the empirical mean is lower than theoretical mean (1.27 < 2.5) and we can say that ability qualifications of the pre-elementary teachers is lower than average level.

- We should mentioned here that Afshan (1389) executed a research known as the controlling the relationship between multiple intelligences of the teachers and social skills development of the children (5-6 years old) in the Bojnourd and Shirvan. The results showed that there is significant relationship between the master teachers’ intelligences (verbal, language, musical, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, physical-movement, naturalism, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and intelligence) and social skills of the pre-elementary children.
- Sifert (1969) performed a comparison between two educational programs in pre-elementary grade in case of verbal interaction. He believed that these programs were not desirable in case of verbal interaction. The educational experience is more than the interaction between teacher and student in the class and the method of a teacher or other elements of a program can settle. Therefore, we should pay attention to the changes that each teacher will do in their method more than the program problems.

REFERENCES