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### Investigation of the effectiveness of family education planning on the parent's of primary school's students of Malekan city in 2007-2008

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#### ABSTRACT

Family is the most primary and the most important organ of human community, and plays a great role in social processes and mental health of individuals as well as society. The role of family in Iranian culture is very outstanding to the point that family is considered the most important element of Iranian community. Today we witness wonderful changes of human community in various dimensions, which has made our children to be trained beyond our decision and will. Therefore, we as adults should consider a great sense of responsibility. The evolutionary mechanism of human in the dimensions like mental, social, political, technological, etc seem to progress towards weakening the role of parents, we as adults must take family training so seriously, develop it qualitatively and quantitatively, and consider effective attempts and progress so that we will have aware and helpful parents who are going to train the children of an Islamic community. There has been a change in the program of holding family education classes, the purpose of which is to make educational and training methods of parents and instructions almost the same, and finally making some changes in their behaviors.

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### INTRODUCTION

Family is the most primary and the most important organ of human community, and plays a great role in social processes and mental health of individuals as well as society. The role of family in Iranian culture is very outstanding to the point that family is considered the most important element of Iranian community. Therefore, one can say that family is actually a place in which human behavior is shaped. Today we witness wonderful changes of human community in various dimensions, which has made our children to be trained beyond our decision and will. Therefore, we as adults should consider a great sense of responsibility. Unless we act consciously and actively, we witness a lot of mental crises in our children. The evolutionary mechanism of human in the dimensions like mental, social, political, technological, etc seem to progress towards weakening the role of parents, we as adults must take family training so seriously, develop it qualitatively and quantitatively, and consider effective attempts and progress so that we will have aware and helpful parents who are going to train the children of an Islamic community. There has been a change in the program of holding family education classes, the purpose of which is to make educational and training methods of parents and instructions almost the same, and finally making some changes in their behaviors

#### Describing problem:

As an important social organ, family has various duties and functions, one of which includes training the children. Family is like a system, all members of which affect one another and any disorder in the functioning of each element will result in malfunctioning in the whole system. The problem rises when parents who does not have enough knowledge about their duties in training children and providing a safe relationship for creating a secure and peaceful environment, or their children get into trouble for various reasons. There are several educational services for removing the problems of the kind mentioned above. Among these services is the training of parents. Because of the role and importance of these classes in improving functioning level, knowledge and views of parents in religious, moral, social, passionate and sexual fields of children, these sessions must be evaluated sufficiently and completely, so that the real effectiveness of the classes on student parents should be studied. Therefore, the present research tries to answer the following questions: Have family education classes had real effects, and the goals of family education programs been met. Have these classes resulted in a change and improvement of parents knowledge and views?

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*Research background and theoretical basis:*

The theoretical framework used in understanding the above – mentioned issue is derived from conceptual attempt and theory which Simpson carried out to understand educational theories in adults. Simpson has divided the theories present in teaching and learning in adults to three groups: theories based on adults` characteristics, theories based on adults` living conditions, and theories based on transformation in awareness or consciousness:

*Theories based on adults` characteristics:*

Andragogy theory or adult education provided by Nolz is one of the theories based on characteristics of adults. In this theory, the following characteristics are taken into consideration: Self sufficiency and self – prosperity of adults, adults` experiences in various social roles, intentions and requirements of adults to learn, and the fact that the purpose of learning is to meet the urgent needs not the future needs ( Bula, 1994). Nolz is known as the father of andragogy. Nolz reckons that there are major differences between children and adult learning. These differences lie in the changes of self – image or the individual`s concept, experience, being ready to learn, taking sides in learning, learning stimulus require knowledge. According to Nolz, adults have a vast range of different experiences which can be used a rich learning source ( Tight, 2002). Krajnc is another theoretician in this field. He believes that adult education is an " open theory ", meaning that education is flexible and dynamic, is interacting with social roles, learning methods are chosen on the basis of adults` urgent needs, and the content of lessons and the number of lessons can be on the basis of adults` selection. Cross theory called " CAL theory " is the theory which is based on characteristics, too. He makes distinction between children and adults based on individual and situation. According to this theory, education for children is compulsory and adult education is noncompulsory and voluntary ( Bula, 1994).

*Theories based on adults` living conditions:*

Although this series of theories are based on adults` living conditions, they consider the characteristics of adults indirectly. The theories of two people are worth considering in this field: one is the theory of " Mc Clusky " which is called " margin of life ", and the other one is the theory of " Knox " called " sufficiency ". In 1970 Mc Clusky defined the concept of adult education on the basis of adults` living conditions. He stated that adults have special energies which are used to satisfy their needs: one of them is " the need to acquire knowledge", and the other one is " the need to take part in living conditions"; however, since adults` power is limited, they can just learn in one aspect of the living conditions. Knox believes that adult education is the result of the difference between the real sufficiency and the sufficiency required to take important social roles. " Human`s social desires" give him the power to find more knowledge, sufficiency and sufficiency as well ( Bula, 1994).

*Awareness theories:*

The bases of this theory can be found in the surveys of Berger, Luckman and Habermas. Of all these theories, two theories are taken into consideration. The theory " Changing the view " that belongs to Mezirow, and " educating the oppressed" that belongs to "Paulo Freire". The main point in the theory " changing the view" of Mezirow is that learning new knowledge is not unless and extra for adults, rather it is combined with all of an adults` knowledge resulting in a change in his view and consciousness structure. Another theory in this group of theories is Freire`s " educating the oppressed" theory which is thought as one of the most popular theories among these theories. This theory is based on the relationship between an adult learner and an instructor. He believes that this relationship should be like a reciprocal conversation. Also, educational activity should be performed on the part of the adults and instructor as well, rather than being directed from an instructor to an adult. Developing " awareness" or conscious criticism in adult is the ultimate goal of this kind of education. So that he can respond to human challenge. i.e. he can muse and find reality and make an effort to change them. Freire`s view on conscious criticism links adult education with the issue concerning defending the rights of the oppressed for according to this theory adult education has a major role in strengthening the poor ( Bula, 1994).

Some researches have been carried out concerning this survey both inside and outside our country. Which can be an appropriate basis for this study and also an important source to make a conclusion. Tabrizi (2006) has carried out a study regarding the role of family education classes in changing the parents` behavior, as well as solving student`s educational, cultural and training problems. In this study, the pre-exam program has been implemented. The junior high school students studying in the seven regions of mashhad formed the statistical group in this study, of which 1000 students were randomly selected and later divided to two 500 – student groups. One of this groups included those students whose parents participated the educational classes, and the other group included those whose parents didn`t participate in those classes. T-test was used for analyzing information. The results indicate that expect the effect of family education classes on the level of student`s training, the parents` participation in family education classes is considered an effective variable in all cases like the training methods applied by parents, parents` cultural level, the level of parents` involvement in their children`s educational affairs, student`s academic progress, students cultural asset.

Mehri Najad (2003) has studied the level of effectiveness of family education classes on family's behavior change. A sample group including 524 mothers was used in order to achieve this goal. Since the study was performed when the family education classes had already been held for a few sessions, the researcher implemented a post-exam program to study that group. Following the study, it was found that the level of effectiveness of family education classes with regard to mothers' approaches in eliminating unpleasant behaviors and establishing optimum behavior concerning the mothers participating for more than five sessions was more effective than other mothers, and also the effectiveness of the above – mentioned classes in case of mothers with higher education was more than other mothers.

Parent education program evaluated by Muller and Marshar in Minnesota. 409 families with low income participated in this program. The findings of this study are as follows: 1. Parents felt that a positive difference had actually occurred in their view concerning becoming a parent, parents-children relationship and children's behavior, which was as a result of applying ECFE program ( Early Childhood Family Education); 2. After six to ten months, parents said that there was a positive difference in their understanding and awareness concerning children and their growth, their self-confidence as parents as well as their feelings with regard to social support and confirmation; 3. Seventy two percent reported that they had progress in how to have communication with their children; 4. Parents reported that there had been changes in their children's behavior, which include increased independency, modifying the use of language and communication skills, and improvement in relations with other kids and increased self-confidence as well; 5. In the experts' evaluation carried out in interviews, the progress in parents knowledge concerning the behavior and understanding parents' role was shown from very beginning of the course to the end (Muller and Marshar, 1998).

A study entitled adults' participation barriers in educational classes was carried out. This research was performed in 1987 in the "social education center" of Florida in the form of a measurement. In this study, the participation barriers of adult learners in educational classes both in urban regions and north-west America were dealt with. The most important barriers found in this field involved family, social supports. These barriers include existence of repeated programs in educational classes, geographical positions, costs concerning educational classes and unavailability of information on adult education programs (Mc Daniel, 1987).

#### *Research questions:*

1. Are family education programs effective in enhancing the level of parents knowledge concerning children's affairs?
2. Are family education programs effective in changing parents' towards their children?
3. Is there a significant difference between the level of effectiveness of family education programs on parents' knowledge and view with regard to gender, age, career, degree and their level of income?
4. What is the necessity of holding family education classes in parents' point of view?
5. What do parents think the problems and barriers present in family education are?
6. What are parents suggestions concerning the improvement of family education classes?

#### *Methodology:*

Research methods in behavioral sciences can be classified considering the two criteria of goal and data collecting approach. The present research is a functional research. Furthermore, considering the second criteria, that is, data collecting approach, the method implemented would be empirical research (pre-exam, post-exam with the control group).

#### *Statistical society of research:*

Parents society having children studying in primary schools of Malekan; 2034 children.

#### *Sample and Sampling Method:*

In this research, random grape sampling method was used for the selection of sample. Of 15 schools in Malekan, 7 schools were selected through random grape sampling method. And then, 3 schools were considered for selecting the sample of control group, in which family education classes were not held until handing out the questionnaires, then 40 parents were chosen completely randomly. The other 4 schools were also considered for selecting the samples of empirical group. Another random sampling was also carried out among those participating in classes, and 10 people were selected from each school (sum: 40) as the samples of the empirical group.

#### *Method and Means of Collecting Information:*

In this research, information collection was performed according to two following stages:

Stage 1: Information concerning research literature was collected through articles, theses, scientific books relevant to the subject and other library and computer source.

Stage 2 : This stage includes a field study through two structured questionnaires.

- a) Questionnaire for measuring parents' knowledge with regard to children's training issues.  
 b) Questionnaire for studying parents' view with regard to children's training issues.

#### Determining authorization and credit:

As it was mentioned earlier, both questionnaires used in this research were structured. Supervisor and advisor observed both questionnaires to determine authorization (approval) of both, study parents' knowledge and also study parents' view concerning children's training issues. And after their confirmation, the questionnaires were distributed among them. First, 30 questionnaires were distributed randomly among samples to evaluate credit of both questionnaires, and after collecting and transferring the data to the software SPSS, kronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for both questionnaires. Level of alpha in the questionnaire concerning parents' knowledge in children's training issues: Alpha=0.842

Level of alpha in the questionnaire concerning parents' view in children's training issues: Alpha=0.830

#### Results:

##### Data analysis method:

Descriptive statistics (frequency distribution, frequency percentage, mean, standard deviation) was used to analyze the data of the research, and the data collected was used to study and make a conclusion, and in deductive statistics, the one-way variance analysis test was used for analyze research theories, and t-test was used for the dependent and independent groups.

##### Analysis of research questions:

##### Research first question:

"Is family education program effective in promoting the knowledge level of parents concerning children's training issues?"

**Table 1:** Dependent t-test: Comparison between pre-test and post-test of empirical group regarding the test's effectiveness on parents' knowledge.

Significance level	Freedom degree	t	Standard deviation	Mean	Number	Index Variable	
						Pre-Test	Post-Test
0.000	39	17.12	1.95	6.17	40	Parent knowledge	
			2.33	8.95	40		

Considering the information in table 1, where  $t=17.12$ , and confirming the theory of research, it's indicated that there is a significant difference between the mean of pre-test and post-test of empirical group regarding parents' knowledge in children's training issues. Therefore, it can be deduced that family education classes have been effective in promoting parents' knowledge level in children's training issues.

##### Research second question:

"Are family education programs effective in changing parents' view regarding children's training?"

Considering the information available in the table (about the question where  $t=17.27$  and with the confirmation of research theory), it has been shown that there is a significant difference between the mean of pre-test and post-test of the empirical group concerning parents' view on children's training issues, therefore, it can be concluded that the family education classes have been effective in parents' view on their children's training issues.

##### Research third question:

"Is there a significant difference between the level of effectiveness of family education classes on knowledge and parents' view with regard to gender, age, career, degree and their level of income?"

Considering the data of the relevant tables, since zero cannot be rejected, the research theory is rejected. In other words, there is no significant difference between the level of effectiveness of family education classes (programs) on knowledge and parents' view with regard to gender, age, career, degree and their level of income.

Fourth question: "What are the effective factors in family education classes from parents' point to view?" is dealt with, the following issues listed by order of priority were determined as the effective factors of family education classes: exchanging ideas and coordination between home and school, promoting level of parents' awareness on children's educational and training issues, correct training of children and preparing them for life, families' cultural, social and even economical growth and prosperity, and finally society, establishing humanity relationship between parents and children, parents' familiarity with biological, mental and social changes in their children, parent education in how to behave with their spouses and children, having fathers involved in their children training, establishing the ability of sympathy with children, parents' awareness of their children's educational problems, providing instructions for families to lower the level of delinquency in their children,

encouraging the sense of responsibility in parents' educational and training problems, parents' familiarity with students mental conditions at any ages, feeling sympathy and exchanging ideas between and ... .

*Fifth question:*

When the question " what are the problems and barriers effective in the usefulness level of family education programs from parents' point of view? " was dealt with, the following issues were determined by order of priority as the problems and barriers useful in family education programs: parents' unawareness of advantages and benefits of having such classes, unsuitability of educational content of classes with parents' literacy level, irregularity of the time at which classes are held, not using the experiences of successful, some parents' illiteracy or having low literacy, some parents not participating in classes, especially fathers, not using suitable teaching methods in classes, lack of suitable space and educational equipment required for teaching, lack of work forces proficient in educating correctly, lack of coordination between home and schools insufficiency in informing parents, lack of responsibility of some parents and not believing in their children's ability and talent, and finally their lack of interesting their children, poverty and financial and economical of families, lack of good places for keeping their younger children and ... .

*Discussion and conclusion:*

The results of the present research, that deals with the level of effectiveness of family education classes, indicates that family education programs have been effective both in promoting parents' knowledge level with regard to their children's training issues and in changing their views in this field. This implies that " Parent-Teacher interview " in this Islamic Republic of Iran has taken a special consideration to fathers and mothers since it was established, and has chosen this process as a strategy to prevent the prevalence of abnormality in children's behavior as well as making parents familiar to the hazardous responsibilities they'll have in future. It means that parents' knowledge and views concerning children's training issues have improved following their participation in family education courses regarding the goals mentioned in the table " goal-content " in chapter 3. This improvement in the level of parents' knowledge and views in how to behave with children will have a positive effect. It's obvious that the positive effect of such educations will be spread across the society. To support the accuracy of the findings of the present research, Hassan Baglu (1994) shows in his study that these classes are effective in increasing the parents' training awareness and information. Karimi (1996), Chubdar and Jabarestani (2001) have found equal results according to which, " there is a significant relation between family education courses and increased levels of information and awareness in those participating in classes ". Also Suedi (2004) has shown in his research that family education classes have been effective in changing parents' views concerning children's training issues, which verifies the findings of the present study. And Shokri (1994) has shown in his research that family education classes have had a positive effect on changing parents' views whit regard to Islamic education courses and environment health. In addition, findings of Sajjadi's research (2001) are in line with the present research, in which he indicate 65.65 percent of fathers and mothers participating in family education classes confirmed their view concerning their relationship with children changed, and more than 50 percent of respondents claimed that they had practically used the methods provided in these classes. Also, in this research, no significant difference was observed between the level of effectiveness of family education programs on parents' knowledge and views with regard to age, gender, income and their degrees. This implies that parents' demographic characteristics on the effectiveness level of family education programs on parents had no effect, and that the effectiveness results from education provided in classes.

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