Identifying the Factors, Criteria and Symptoms of the Ranking of the First Junior High Schools: Findings of a Qualitative Research

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Abstract
Despite the fact that the ranking of junior high schools as one of the most important missions of the Ministry of Education plays a significant role in the success of this organization in achieving the goals of this course, the development and validation of relevant components of ranking of junior high schools has not been taken into serious consideration. The current researches in this field have not considered all the factors related to the ranking of this type of schools. The purpose of this study is to develop and validate the factors, criteria and ranking symptoms of junior high schools. In terms of method, the adopted approach is a type of qualitative research that employs theme analysis method. In this study, documents and resources were examined and 10 comprehensive themes of teaching-learning process leadership, successes, leadership, communication, administrative-executive management, resource management, teachers, administrative staff, ethical leadership and extracurricular activities were identified, and they have been validated by consulting experts. The results reveal that the ranking of junior high schools in the field of education is a new and emerging issue that has not received much attention from researchers in this field. Therefore, due to the limited employed resources, some of the factors, criteria and symptoms proposed in this study may not be complete, or there may be some other components that have not yet been identified. It is also necessary for the effectiveness of school rankings to pay more attention to the alignment of all identified factors, criteria and symptoms with the major factors of the organization, leadership, culture, infrastructure.

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Introduction

In order to survive and endure its existence, each society has been required to satisfy some basic needs such as economic needs, birth, education and creating public order and security. Consequently, to satisfy these needs, institutions such as family, education and etc. have been gradually established. Education—as the most significant social institution emerging from the context of society—is simultaneously its creator and developer, and its impact on the development of society is thoroughly tangible. Education has assumed great responsibilities for the accomplishment of individual and social goals, and it has been considered as the greatest opportunity for the flourishing of human talents by specialists and those involved in education (Shahdousti, 2011). Nowadays, education is assumed one of the most important factors of development, and the countries of the world attempt to opt an efficient educational system. Determining the efficiency level of schools proves a proper measure to understand how to draw on resources optimally in schools and how to know their performance results.

Schools, as the most stable form of education institution, have always been subject to questions concerning their quality. The realization of a quality school in combination with the concept of quality management is a broad and multi-dimensional instrument that requires the restructuring of school systems and the improvement of school products and services, full participation and the creation of a reassuring atmosphere for all school stakeholders. (Khalkhali and Ghahrmani, 2012). Evaluating the efficiency of schools is very important due to the vital services they provide to the society. Hence, the issue of ranking schools is raised.

Ranking is exactly considered what it represents at the end of a period of time when a brief performance of student and school in the form of numbers or letters is provided (O'Connor, 2012). If we tend to take an overall view at the ranking and division of schools, we can divide them in terms of the type of establishment and the services they provide, the ranking of schools carried out by the Ministry of Education is based on the type of service and the structures of schools for the purpose of determining the ranking among other schools and the amount of tuition received by them. Normally the global ranking of schools is measured in accordance with their universities acceptance rate.

Performance appraising and schools ranking are one of the most effective measures that can play a facilitating role in boosting the quality of affairs. Considering the importance of the First Junior High Schools Education Course and the remarkable impact of this course on the formation of students' personality, the ranking of these schools is of great significance. The ranking of the First Junior High Schools is based on the GPA listed in the student's report card, or on success in Olympiads and in the Entrance Exam of specific schools, or a combination of the aforementioned.

The issue of ranking is one of the most controversial topics in education (Leirer, 2015). Many discussions have been raised among teachers themselves and between teachers and experts on the specific components that ought to be considered in the calculation of grades. The educational components employed in the ranking of students and schools are related to the academic progress of students (Gasiki, 2002). Principals and teachers have a long history of using report cards as the main method of appraising students' learning and schools ranking, which dates back to the early 1900s (Moll, 1998). Even though the terms related to ranking are often utilized reciprocally, they have distinct meanings. (McTeague and Ferreira, 1998). Marks and grades are used synonymously. They refer to the grades or marks given to each student that indicate their performance in the tests. Grades (both numerical and letter) provide a brief of student and school performance at the end of an academic year (O'Connor, 2012). Non-educational components were things that were accounted by teachers and principals in calculating the student and school ranking that were not directly related to the student's academic success, but may they have a decisive role in determining the rank. A combination of various researches showed that non-academic

components include: organization, ability, aesthetic aspect of work, attendance at school, behavior, level of difficulty of assignments, effort, attitude, motivation, assignments, completion of activities, participation, accuracy and responsibility (Bailey, 2012; Brookart, 1994, 2009; Gesicki, 2004; McMillan, 2001, 2002; O'Connor, 2007).

Since the emergence of the report card to report the academic progress of students, the practice of ranking has become a clear responsibility of educationist. (Bailey, 2012; Chiekem, 2015; Giski, 2004). Mainly due to teachers' unfavorable use of various ranking methods, a historical problem is that the prevailing definition of student and school ranking is vague to the interested community such as teachers, parents, colleges, employers, and even to the students themselves (Allen, 2005; Cizek et al., 1996). This makes us cautious about the factors involved in the ranking practices used by teachers and schools to meticulously measure student learning. As a consequence, the grades and marks given to students by teachers have long been considered unreliable by measurement experts. (Brookhart, 1993; Gesicki, 2009; Stiggins, Frisbie; Griswold, 1989). Clymer and Williams (2007) state "the employed ranking methods does not server the function of students and schools ranking in the most basic sense, which is to provide an accurate indication of student academic achievement" (p. 36).

Not only does teachers' different non-standard ranking methods create problems for students, but also it leads to the consequences that educationalists do not enjoy the necessary honesty for ranking. O'Connor (2002) holds this view that "improper ranking harms students and teachers" (p. 17). Since various institutions draw on student and school rankings in their important educational, financial and career decisions (Stiggins, 2001) and the impact of the ranking on the future of students, a limited number of teachers and school principals are aware of the components and indicators of ranking and have not received the necessary training to apply different ranking methods and their usage (Allen,

2005; Bailey, 2012; Brokhart, 2004; Gesiki, 2004; Esiggins, 1993).

Based on the 9th strategy of the Document of Fundamental Transformation of Education, on the establishment of an effective, efficient, responsible and responsive management system and laying the foundation for the establishment of an efficient system of resources and consumptions in the public formal education system (major objectives 2, 6, 4 and 7), and solutions 3-19 based on the creation of a ranking system for schools and educational institutions in order to clarify the performance and improve the quality and increase the motivations of logical and scientific competition between them, this study is carried out with the aim of identifying the factors, criteria and symptoms of the quality of the activities provided by the first junior high schools and as a result, ranking them based on these criteria and components. By applying these criteria and avoiding any deviation in their determination, one can determine the general directionality of the first junior high schools in the future.

Theoretical Background of Study

Due to the importance of schools and students ranking, infinite scholars became interested in this issue and conducted studies on the objectives and methods of ranking for more than a century (Faskey and Bailey, 2001). In 1911, researchers investigated the reliability of marks on academic report cards and draw this conclusion that the marks on these reports depended on the teacher and the subject being assessed (Cizek, Starch & Elliott, 1912, 1913, 1913). Furthermore, there was no consistency in the issued ranks each time they were employed (Ashbo & Chapman, 1925). With the discovery of these inconsistencies, report cards were still widely accepted and commonly used by teachers as a tool to represent students' academic progress (Moll, 1998).

By the 1930s, it became apparent to researchers that there were major problems with school ranking systems, as well the ranking methods applied by teachers. According to the results achieved by Reinsland (1973), "when we take heed of the statements and also the studies of

others, we need to accept the fact that the whole ranking system is truly subjective, unreliable and unfair" (p. 26). According to child psychology and the related findings, there is an increasing concern that schools ranking based on grade-based components will have many negative effects (Webster, 2011). In the second half of the 19th century and in the early 20th century, the application of percentages was the most common system used to rank students and, indeed, schools. (Moll, 1998). In this system, teachers assigned each student a number between zero and 100, claiming that the given percentage was a true indicator of what the student had learned. Students who scored below fifty were considered to be failed (Moll, 1998). Moll (2005) states that "credit is indicative of the validity of the assessment as well as the correctness of the teachers' ranking procedures" (p. 218). The validity of a component is essential because the sole objective of this component or the components we use to rank students and schools is to communicate accurately with others and to represent the academic success of students and the school. If the components do not meticulously show the success of students, they will not represent the truth (Allen, 2005, p. 218). In Iran and the world, extensive research has been conducted on the issue of ranking junior high schools; nevertheless, after the implementation of 6-3-3 academic courses, no research has been carried out in the field of first junior high schools ranking, and this study is considered the first study and, consequently, an innovation. Some related researches are mentioned below.

The findings of the research by Kazemi Sarmeli and Teymurpour (2013) entitled "Ranking The Social Network-Based Designing Educational Tools Components In Schools Based On Analytical Hierarchy Process (Ahp)" reveals that out of 6 criteria (performance management, performance assessment, security, management of interactions, data and processes), the criteria performance management and performance assessment as the two fundamental principles of the teaching-learning process were of the most considerable importance compared to other criteria. The results of Noradsedigh's research

(2016) entitled "Analysis, Ranking and Presentation of the Identifying Components of Managers of Tehran's Nongovernmental Schools (Mixed Method)" shows that among the 13 identified components, capacity building skills, moral characteristics, passion, personal skills and interpersonal skills hit the first place of importance. Aeej (2017) in a research to identify and rank the factors affecting innovative performance in non-government schools compared to non-government schools in Kerman city, concluded that the Konkur (Entrance University Exam) factor was identified as the first factor in two types of government and non-government schools and won the first rank. Mohammadi (2018) in his research entitled "Identification of Factors, Criteria and Indicators of Accreditation Iranian Theoretical High Schools" shows that the validation framework of theoretical junior high school has seven factors (physical structure, organizational structure, individual teacher factors (administrative and educational staff), individual student factors, political factors, cultural factors and the technical core of teaching and learning). Mahdiuon et al. (2016) in their study entitled "A survey on Quality of Schools and Identifying Related Affecting Factors: A Mixed Method Research" reveal the factors affecting the quality of schools from the point of view of educationalists, including: (1) environmental factors of school quality, (2) teacher's characteristics (3) facilities and equipment, (4) school principal, (5) student's characteristics, (6) human relations in school, (7) family, (8) educational objectives and teaching content, (9) resources (financial and human) and (10) teaching method. Achav (2013) conducted a research on student, teacher and school characteristics that can affect student achievement. It showes that there is a significant relationship between the socio-economic status of students and the academic progress of students. And there is a significant relationship between the type of school (urban and rural) and the academic progress of students. The results of Bergren's (2014) research, titled "Effect of School Atmosphere on the Academic Progress of Students in Junior High School" clarifies that the

factors of school atmosphere, socio-economic status and school size have a significant relationship with the academic progress of students. A summary of the studies conducted on the concept of ranking in the literature related to the factors, criteria and components of school ranking is listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of the most important researches

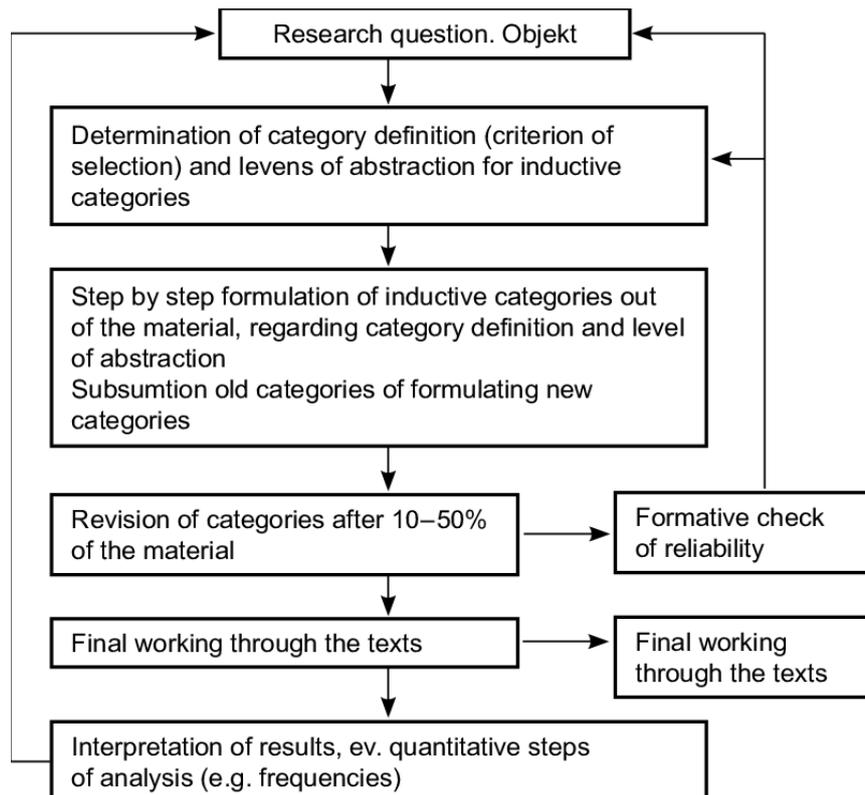| Researcher(s)	Research Title	Results
Institute of Ministry of Education Studies (2005)	TIMSS and PIRLS International Studies	The role and experience of the teacher on the efficiency of the educational system, the less density of classes on the academic progress of students, the devotion of more hours to education on the academic progress of students, the effect of access to computers and educational resources on the performance of students.
Abdulahi (2009)	Designing a System of Indices to a the School Quality at the Elementary and Guidance Levels	This research was conducted with the aim of preparing and validating indicators of qualitative evaluation of the performance of primary educational institutions and the guidance of Tehran Education Organization in 2005.
Moslami Aghili, Junaidi Jafari and Ziauddini (2010)	The Assessment of Establishment and Maintenance of the Health Management System in Schools and Grading for Awarding Stars (H.S.E-Ms)	The results of the research state that suitable classrooms space was about 4 cubic meters per student. Only 21.4% of schools have used appropriate tables and chairs. 69.6% of schools do not have proper emergency exit. After the establishment of the health management system in the pilot schools, the rank and health stars were improved.
Nazari (2011)	The Role of Grading in the Performance of Secondary Schools in Tehran	The results show that there is no significant difference between the average performance of 1st and 2nd grade schools in the 724 investigated schools. That is to say the grading of non-government schools does not affect their performance.
Tahouri (2014)	Evaluation of the Relative Performance of the Second Junior High School of the 2nd District of Tehran by Integrating Balanced Scorecard Models and Data Coverage Analysis	In this research, the indicators related to the balanced scorecard and their input and output have been prepared by studying and reviewing similar researches and also by using the opinions of experts in this field.
Mahdiuon et al. (2016)	A survey on Quality of Schools and Identifying Related Affecting Factors: A Mixed Method Research	(1) environmental factors of school quality, (2) teacher's characteristics (3) facilities and equipment, (4) school principal, (5) student's characteristics, (6)

		human relations in school, (7) family, (8) educational objectives and teaching content, (9) resources (financial and human) and (10) teaching method
Mohammadi (2018)	Identification of Factors, Criteria and Indicators of Accreditation Iranian Theoretical High Schools	The findings show that the validation framework of theoretical junior high school has seven factors (physical structure, organizational structure, individual teacher factors (administrative and educational staff), individual student factors, political factors, cultural factors and the technical core of teaching and learning)
Schreiber (2000)	Investigating the Relationship Between Attitude Towards Mathematics and Students' Success	The results of the research show that students who have high performance in mathematics tests have a more positive attitude towards mathematics.
Parter (2000)	Examining and Identifying School Process Indicators	In the research, Parter introduces the inputs as equipment and financial source, teacher's general characteristics, student's background and parent's norm interaction.
Smith (2008)	School Building Quality and Student Performance in South Carolina Public High Schools Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	Science laboratory equipment, ability to monitor and security, adequate heating system, air conditioning system and suitable weather conditions, equipment and facilities, color and furniture, performance and size of sports and recreational facilities are effective and influential on students' performance.
Hakan and Soval (2011)	Determining the Reliability and Validity of the Evaluation Scale Based on the SIP Model in the Field of English Curriculum Evaluation	In their research, they draw conclusion that the SIP evaluation scale has adequate reliability and validity in the evaluation of the English educational program in the field of education.
Larison (2012)	Examining the Characteristics and Experiences of Selected Elementary Schools with High Effectiveness	The results of the analysis reveal that teachers' high experiences, parents' cooperation, coordination between school objectives and activities, and proper management were the most vital effective factors.
Salem et al. (2012)	Determinants of Effective schools: A Case Study of Punjab Schools	The authors investigated and identified the determining factors of effective schools, and the results of their research identified 17 factors for effective schools.
Achav (2013)	Student, Teacher and School Characteristics May Affect Student Progress	In the research on teacher characteristics for teaching, Achav

		found four items: planning and preparation, classroom environment, teaching and professional responsibility.
Bergren (2014)	Effect of school Atmosphere on the Academic Progress of Students in Junior High School	The results of regression analysis and cluster analysis show that the factor of school atmosphere and school size have a significant relationship with the academic progress of students. The results of his research also showed that the socio-economic status holds a significant relationship with the academic progress of students.
Umato (2014)	Investigating the Relationship Between Teacher's Characteristics (Teacher's Qualification, Teacher's Background and Experience) with Students' Academic Progress	In the research, Umato drew on the Pearson Correlation Method to determine the relationship between variables. The result of the research reveals that there is a significant relationship between the teacher's qualification and the teacher's experience with the students' academic progress.

Research Methodology

According to the purpose, this research proves practical; because it seeks to achieve a practical goal, the main goal of which is to provide helpful information for implementation. It is a part of assessment research due to the judgment about the components of the educational system such as school. In terms of methodology, exploratory qualitative research was used. In an exploratory design, we need exploration for several reasons: measurements or instruments are not available. The variables are unknown, or there is no guiding framework or theory. Since this project started qualitatively, it was more appropriate to discover a phenomenon. This plan is more useful when the researcher needs to develop and test such a tool due to the lack of research tools, or when the variables are unknown, there is need to identify the important variables in order to conduct this study quantitatively. It is also appropriate to use an exploratory design when the researcher tends to generalize the results to other groups, test different aspects of a theory or classification, or identify a phenomenon in depth and measure its presence (Creswell, Planoclark, 2014, p. 83). Different divisions of content analysis have been implemented, including: categorical content analysis, correlation content analysis, and assessment content analysis in another division based on the Shannon theory. Approaches in the field of content analysis are also divided into three categories, including: conventional and customary content analysis; directional content analysis and summative or cumulative content analysis. However, in general, it can be said that all qualitative content analysis approaches follow a similar process that consists of seven steps: (1) setting the research questions that need to be answered; (2) choosing the desired sample to be analyzed; (3) specifying the content analysis approach that should be applied; (4) planning the encryption process; (5) implementing the encryption process; (6) determining validity and reliability; (7) analyzing the results of the encryption process (chi square). This study makes use of the concepts of (1) overt and covert content; (2) analysis unit; (3) meaning unit; (4) compression; (5) separation and summarization; (6) content area; (7) code; (8) category; (9) theme. The theme has been reached and the inductive category application model has been used. (graph 1)

Graph 1: Step model of inductive category development

Considering that in the exploratory plan we seek to identify unknown variables, we can hold that in this research the aim was to identify components and indicators that were unknown to the researcher and if identified, he could use them to rank schools. The exploratory plan to understand the phenomenon commences with qualitative data. Researchers drawing on this plan use the qualitative stage as a basis for creating a tool, identifying variables or describing the necessary cases to test a new theory or framework. Identifying the factors, criteria and symptoms of school ranking and this identification has been achieved by employing qualitative data, afterwards with a qualitative approach, the author analyzed the content of the literature and the content of the documents, and then using the opinions of experts on the validity of the factors, criteria identified factors and symptoms. Using a qualitative approach, the researcher sought to use these data as a foundation to create a reliable tool to identify the factors, criteria and symptoms of school ranking. Also, with the qualitative approach of the exploratory design, a new framework of factors, criteria and symptoms could be created to be used for ranking schools. The methodology of this research is presented based on the classified compilation model in the following figure.
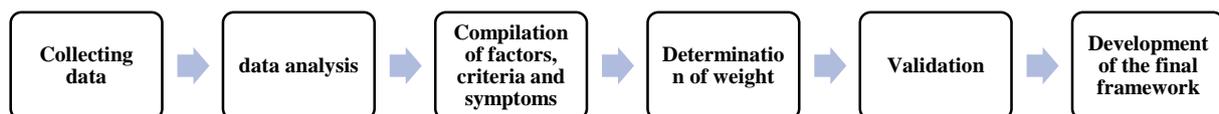

Figure 1: Research process model

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), qualitative research has certain characteristics, including the following: (a) the emphasis of this research is on a naturalistic element and the phenomenon under study has been examined in a natural environment; (b) the data extracted from

this type of research is descriptive; (c) this type of research emphasizes process; (d) is analogical; and (e) is meaningful. Moijs (2010) found that non-quantitative data play an essential part in qualitative research, so in this study, the researcher used a phenomenological design. According to the type of research, which is qualitative and exploratory, the statistical population of information related to UNESCO, regulatory guide of Education Minster, Document of Fundamental Transformation of Education, the international studies of Thames and Pearls, Eric, ProQuest and the countries member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) can be mentioned. In order to validate the bases obtained from the target population and affirm the validity of the extracted indicators, as well as check the content validity of the indicators, their importance coefficients regarding the ranking of the first junior high schools from the population of experts were also employed. To select a sample from this population, the purposeful sampling method was utilized according to the rule of theoretical saturation. The theoretical and empirical bases related to successful schools and effective components in ranking were used, which had investigated the factors, criteria and symptoms of school ranking. Among the 250 sources identified, 27 sources, despite the fact that they contained one of the ranking keywords in the title, abstract or keywords, but lacked codes related to the questions and objectives of this research. In total, 223 sources contained related codes, which are considered as the selected sample of the qualitative part of this research.

Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the extracted results, the following method of thematic analysis was used. Themes are divided in three levels, basic or main subjects, organizing subjects and comprehensive subjects. Simultaneous theme analysis can be conducted in the framework of realist/fundamentalist paradigm and structuralist paradigm. Every research and analysis needs to chase a series of specific epistemological principles. Epistemology guides the researcher and influences the way of theorizing about meanings.

For example, with the realist/fundamentalist approach, motivation, experience, and meaning could be theorized directly and openly, since there is a simple and largely one-way relationship between meaning, experience, and language, that is, language enables human beings to create meanings and express their experiences. On the contrary, from the point of view of structuralists, meaning and experience are not something that exist intrinsically in people, but are socially created. Thus, when the theme analysis is carried out in the structuralist framework, it cannot seek to investigate and focus on the motivation or psychological aspects of people, but it should seek to theorization about the cultural-social conditions or structural conditions that cause, or they enable a person to reveal certain behaviors. Therefore, when the theme analysis focuses on covert or implicit themes, it majorly analyzes the text with a structuralist approach, although it cannot be claimed that the analysis of covert themes is always structuralist (Brown and Clark, 2006).

Validity and Reliability of Research

In this research, in order to strengthen validity, in addition to research literature and sources related to the factors, criteria and symptoms of school ranking, codes related to the objectives and questions of the research were selected and extracted. Homogeneity matching methods were also employed. In this way, different sources of textual data were used, including books, papers and authentic reports. In addition, the findings of the qualitative part were given to the experts, and they were asked to express their opinion on the identified themes, their relevance to the objectives and research questions, and the correctness of naming them based on their knowledge and experience. To facilitate this, the results of the analysis were clearly explained to the respondents along with the process of reaching such an analysis. First, the extracted themes along with the factors, criteria and symptoms of the framework were first given to 8 principals, experts and professors of the university to express their opinions on the identified themes, their relevance to the objectives and questions of the research and the

correctness of naming. They will announce. After gathering the opinions and feedback of these 8 individuals, changes and modifications were made in such a way that some of the basic themes were merged together due to the fact that they had a lot in common, the names of some basic themes were modified, and after making changes because some basic themes did not fall to any theme of the organizer, they were eliminated. In this way, the number of basic subjects was reduced from 250 to 206 units.

"Reliability means that if we re-measure the measured characteristic with the same or similar means under similar conditions, how similar, accurate and reliable are the results" (Homan, 1991, p. 116). To check the reliability of the research, the Holst method was employed, which is one of the methods proposed by Neendorf (2002, p. 149). In this method, coding must be done twice. Its formula as below:

$$PAO = \frac{2m}{(n1+n2)}$$

PAO represents the percentage of observed agreement or reliability coefficient, *m* is the number of agreement in two stages of coding, *n1* is the number of extracted codes in the first stage and *n2* indicates the number of extracted codes in the second stage. The percentage of agreement observed is between zero and one variable. In this research, coding was done twice manually. The number of codes extracted in the first order was 1625 units and the number of codes extracted in the second order was 1703 units. Also, the total

number of agreeable codes in the two stages of coding is 1625, and by implementing these values in the mentioned formula, the value of the reliability coefficient is 98%, which shows that the results of the qualitative part are highly reliable.

Research Findings

In the first step, to get familiar with the data, all the textual data regarding the capture of general policies were re-studied. After several re-studying, in the second step, the open code was extracted, and in the next step, the basic themes emerged from the analysis and composition of the noted sentences. Following that and in the fourth step, according to the formation of the basic theme, the organizing theme was determined. In the fifth step, according to the themes of the organizer and also the view formed by the researcher during the research, the number of 10 comprehensive themes was determined. Themes and patterns in the data were identified by one of two methods, the Inductive Method (bottom-up). In the inductive approach, the identified themes are mostly related to the data itself and are extracted from the collected data. (Mahmoudi, Neyri and Pourezat, 2013). Therefore, in this research, the inductive method has been adopted to extract the basic, organizing and inclusive themes. 157 basic themes, 43 organizing themes and 10 overarching themes obtained from 1684 open codes in all existing texts on the capture of general policies are presented in the table below.

Overarching themes	Organizer themes	Basic themes
Leading the teaching-learning process	Educational supervision	Different monitoring methods
		Assessment of the quality of education programs
		Continuous supervision
		Criticism and assessment culture
	Employee performance assessment (educational and non-educational)	The quality of the principal's assessment
		Clarity of assessment components
		Regular feedback
		Different assessment methods
		Set expectations
	Planning	Designing curriculum
		Implementing curriculum
		Informing authorities and beneficiaries
		Understanding and implementing the curriculum

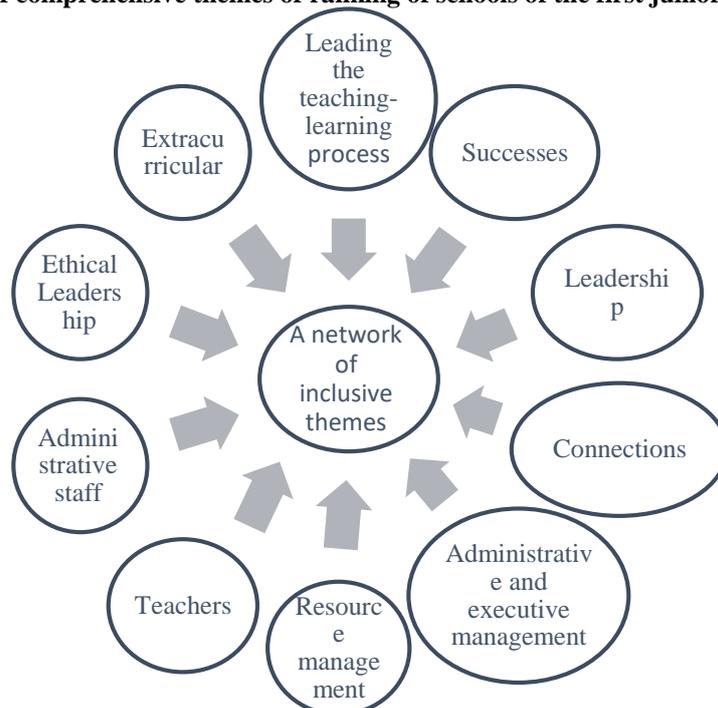|		Curriculum adaptation
		Adaptation of courses
		Identify the hidden curriculum
		Monitoring the correct implementation of the curriculum
		Correcting processes and fixing defects
	Assessment of student learning	Student performance reports
		Responsiveness
		Monitoring individual learning
		Comparison of students' academic progress
		Maintaining learning records
		Easy access to trainers
		Communication with family
		Appropriate strategies for learning
		Appropriate assessment systems
		Systematic methods for assessment
		Using assessment data to change programs
		Carrying out process assessment
		Considering performance measurement
		Emphasis on students' self-assessment
	Creating a conducive learning environment for students	Considering cognitive, emotional and social needs
		Supporting high levels of learning for all students
		Setting high learning expectations for students
		Considering training time
		Support services provided to students
		Use alumni feedback
		Informing parents
		Providing the necessary training
		Safe entry and exit of students
		Adherence to standards in the provision of nutritional services
		Adherence to standards in the provision of health services
		Creating a positive and rich environment for students
		Creating motivation and enthusiasm in students
		Regular visits to places that provide food to students
		Guidelines for students with special needs
		Engaging students in school programs
		Creating an environment for performing activities outside of school for weak students
		Solving learning problems through collaboration
		Activation of laboratory and workshop environments
		Considering the participation and interaction of students with each other in content creation
	Educational Technology	Introducing teachers with Educational Technology
		Monitoring usage of Educational Technology
		Students' satisfaction with Educational Technology
		Teachers' belief in the constructive role of modern Educational Technology
		Flexibility in use of technology
		Creating opportunities to use Educational Technology
	class management	Presenting the lesson plan and informing the students of assessment
		The power of leadership and class management
		Ability to express and master the subject matter
		Ability to transfer and understand course material
		Discipline and punctuality
		How to use educational aids

		Emphasis on the practical aspects of courses according to the needs of society
		Proper scheduling and trying to make maximum use of class time
		Summary of the material presented at the end of each class
		Considering the attendance of students
		Mastery of skills and practical tasks
		Using active participation and motivating students
		Establishing appropriate emotional communication with students
Successes	Academic progress of students	The percentage of accepted students in charter schools and Exceptional Talents Schools
		The average score of students' exams in the academic semester
		The ratio of students admitted to charter schools and Exceptional Talents Schools to all students
		The grade point average (GPA) of students by year and field of study
		Establishing a suitable program to review and analyze statistics related to the passing rate, academic failure, average GPA and course grades of students in order to assess their progress and use the results in relevant planning.
	Academic failure of students	Efforts to reduce academic dropout and dropout of school
		The percentage of failed students
		The ratio of students who are absent from class during the year, drop out or change their field of study to the total number of students in each academic semester.
		Establishing a suitable program to examine and analyze students' academic failure
	Assessment of student learning	Assessing the joy of learning
		Assessing students' motivation to learn more
		Assessment of knowledge and skills
		Adopting varied methods for assessment
		Compilation of different methods of assessing academic progress
		The realism of the assessment results
		Provide appropriate feedback
Leadership	Vision and mission	Compilation and promotion of the vision and mission of the school
		Loyal to fundamental and lofty ideals about learning and students
		Creating excitement, enthusiasm, trust, support and commitment to the vision and goals of the school
		Accepting responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the school's goal and vision
		Understanding school missions by the stakeholder community
		The centrality of students in the goals and vision of the school
		School community participation and beneficiaries in formulating school goals and vision
		Explanation of the vision document for all stakeholders
		An explicit definition of the philosophy of education
		Partnership with entities outside the school in the fulfillment of missions
	Continuous school improvement	Promoting self-assessment in school
		Promoting culture development, cooperation, innovation and creativity

		Planning school improvement activities, implementing these changes and assessing their impact on teaching and learning
		Considering the academic progress of each student
		Being committed to implementing the curriculum at school
		Identifying and designing changes required to improve student learning
	Leading teams and groups	Creating and establishing effective communication
		Creating a regular learning environment for all groups
		Collaborative decision-making and sharing leadership
		Effective conflict resolution skills
		Creating capability in groups to perform leadership tasks
Communications	Communication with family	Effective oral and written communication with families
		Drawing on the abilities of parents
		Ability to use new technologies in communication with families
		Attracting financial assistance from families
		Giving timely feedback to families
		Holding various ceremonies with the presence of parents
		Activating the association of parents and school teachers
		Employing experts in parent training sessions
	Communication with the community	Involving other members of the community in school affairs
		The success of the school in interacting with the community around the school
		Networking and coalition building skills to attract and maintain community support for school programs
		Effective communication with external organizations and local community
		Effective communication with experts and specialists
Administrative-executive management	Policies and policies	Development of policies
		Regular review of policies
		Participation in policies and policies
	Planning for student progress	Various methods to assess students
		Academic progress assessment methods
		Results feedback
		Attempting to get the best result by every student
		Using various assessment methods
		Providing appropriate feedback
		Considering student differences in teaching style
Manage Resources	Budget and credits	Student per capita
		Ratio of exclusive income
		Public aid
		Earning exclusive income
		Allocation of credits
		Balance in income and expenses
		Strict control over finances
		Considering financial resources in the implementation of programs
		Transferring financial affairs to competent people
		Considering the amount of resources and its management in planning
	Fees	Prioritizing needs
		Saving costs
		Real costing
	Educational equipment and educational assistance	Establishing suitable laboratory and workshop
		Providing suitable equipment and facilities
		The amount of educational aids usage
		The amount of information technology usage

Teachers		The amount of Internet facilities usage
		Providing educational and research resources
	Educational spaces and educational assistance	Variety of educational space
		The quality of classrooms and educational spaces
		Sufficient educational space
		Classroom sizes
		Cleaning
		Safety
		Availability of appropriate educational equipment in the school
		The amount of educational equipment usage in the school
		The level of teachers' interest in using this equipment
		The level of students' interest in using this equipment
	Characteristics of teachers	Using active teaching methods
		Degree, field of study and service experience
		Emphasis on different aspects of intellectual activities
		Accurate assessment of textbooks
		Strengthening and cultivating thinking in students
		Teaching problem-solving strategies to students
		Strengthening problem-solving and decision-making skills in students
		Teaching based on the central issue
		Preferring uplifting topics
		Cultivating creative thinking among students
		Providing problem-based activities to students
		Providing opportunity for reflection
	Individual professional development	Expansion of educational opportunities
		Participation in educational workshops
		Specialized workshops
		Continuing education courses
	Activities Scientific, educational and research	Number of action research reports
		Workshops
		Participation in the action research program
		Plans
	Professional development as a group	Value each other's professional development
		Working together to create learning opportunities for students
		Examining assessment methods in group
		Sharing expertise with other colleagues
Administrative staff	Features of deputies	Distribution percentage Staff according to Evidence educational
		Percentage distribution of employees according to field of study
		Percentage distribution of employees according to service history
		The ratio of administrative and executive staff to students
		To employ staff based on their competence and expertise
	New Admin Features	The compatibility of the principal's educational qualification with the their position
		The compatibility of the principal's academic field with the their position
		The compatibility of the principal's service history with the their position
	Professional growth of the manager	Participation in workshops
		Creating opportunities for professional development
		Sharing your expertise with other colleagues

Ethical Leadership	Moral-religious and value principles	Modeling ethical action and decision-making based on religious values and beliefs
		Interpersonal skills in the context of respect and acceptance of values
		Treating people fairly, justly, honestly and respectfully
		Behaving in a transparent and open manner
		Applying laws, policies, regulations and procedures in a fair, continuous and wise manner
		Accountability to all, the role of the principal as servant of the people
	Professional ethics	Preserving the rights and confidentiality of students and employees
		Principles of social justice and equality
		Adherence to morals and sublime Islamic values
		Committed employees
		Mutual respect between people
		Enjoying professional ethics and developing it at work
		To recognize individual initiatives
		Carrying out hard work with fun
Extra Curriculum	Camps	The number of scientific, cultural, artistic, pilgrimage and general tourist expeditions organized per year
		Percentage of students participating in cultural and artistic camps
	Student associations and councils	Establishing and activating the student council
		The faith and belief of the principal and school officials in the important and influential role of student councils
		The ratio of the number of students who are members of student councils to the total number of school students
	Sports competitions	Developing a codified and appropriate program in the school for policy-making and financial management for sports competitions
		Holding sports competitions at school
		Allocating financial resources for sports programs

Network of comprehensive themes of ranking of schools of the first junior high school

Discussion and Conclusion

The results drawn from the content analysis of theoretical and experimental bases, asking opinions from experts and validation showed that for the ranking of first junior high schools, there are 10 factors, 33 criteria and 218 symptoms related to the ranking system of the first junior high schools were identified. The ten factors are: leadership of the teaching-learning process, successes, leadership, communication, administrative-executive management, resource management, teachers, administrative staff, moral and extracurricular leadership. But what proves to be significant in this study is the direct effect of these factors on the ranking of the first junior high schools which has been briefly analyzed. Regarding the leadership factor of the teaching-learning process, it can be claimed: the teaching and learning process, as the technical core of the school, are taken by the teacher and other school employees and with the cooperation of the students in the school, and it is necessary a cheerful and absorbing environment be provided in the classroom and the school to create and maintain constructive human relations between teachers and students and to tackle effectively possible disorder, and indeed learner's learning deficiencies and even teaching is fixed by conducting correct assessment and providing appropriate and timely feedback. To assess students' learning, evaluable examples must be defined for the symptoms that have been defined so that we can use them to assess schools and rank them. It is vitally important to assess the academic progress of students as a factor of success and as one of the ranking criteria of schools, it can be held that the of rank and positions that students win in festivals, cultural and artistic competitions and physical training at the provincial and country levels is considered as an important component. The symptom that is intended to assess leadership needs to be corrected in some cases. Regarding communication, it can be acknowledged that the current framework cannot satisfy the needs of education in the future. What educational leadership needs is to create communication and a structure in which factors such as employee participation, cooperation, trust and a sense of collective identity are taken into account, and in line with this, we need systems that consist of vertical communication and hierarchical structure. Therefore, our schools ought to move away from traditional structures and move towards learning and knowledge-oriented structures. In order to assess the administrative-executive management factor, two criteria of policies and as well as planning for students' progress should be proposed. Another important point in the resource factor is that providing resources as one of the tasks of managers is not a once process and appropriate action should be taken from time to time regarding the efficiency of resources and its compatibility with other dimensions of the organization. Furthermore, the school must have a suitable educational space, the space of the classrooms and other public and private spaces of the school must be proportional to the number of students and administrative/teaching staff. Also, the school should hold workshop, laboratory, religious, cultural, sports and appropriate standard spaces. Objectives and individual objective setting are the main components of teachers' personal motivation, especially when the objectives are specific, challenging and attainable and people embrace them. These forces cause work-related behaviors and determine the form, direction, intensity and continuity of motivation. Likewise, beliefs are important motivational forces that exert a direct impact on the success of students and the school's superiority over other schools. The factor of administrative staff, with the three criteria of the characteristics of the assistants, the characteristics of the manager and the professional growth of the principals, seeks to improve the schools according to the activities that take place in the field of employing assistants and principals, as well as the activities carried out for professional growth. The principals themselves ought to take the action raking. The considered symptom for the ethical leadership factor and its related criteria are well designed. Yet, some of them need examples. For instance, the distribution of employees in term of their educational qualifications, the distribution of

employees according to their service history, the ratio of administrative and executive staff to students, the suitability of a principal's educational qualification for a principal's position, the suitability of a principal's field of study for a principal's position, and the suitability of a manager's service record for a principal's position are incomprehensible. and has no precedent for assessment. The extracurricular factors instead of the formal elements of the organization, including the elements that lead to the realization of the school's organizational health and promise a healthy, high-quality and ideal school, are a strong, positive, moral and spiritual organizational culture. A strong culture means that people within the school have a high level of agreement about the nature of the school.

According to the findings of this research, to achieve success in the ranking of junior high schools, managers are also recommended, in addition to aligning the strategies, to consider processes and functions of the schools with the needs of the students, to other aspects of the organization, i.e. the macro orientation of the organization, leadership, culture, infrastructures and make sure that these requirements are aligned with the ranking. The effectiveness of the ranking of schools relies on the alignment of all the mentioned factors with the factors, criteria and symptoms of the ranking of schools that were discussed in this research. The usage of factors, criteria and rating symptoms proposed in this research will be a decent guide for managers to use it to rank schools. Managers should make sure that the top documents, objectives and strategy of the organization are focused on solving the problems of the schools in the ranking. They should also adhere to their social responsibilities and pay attention to the Islamic values of the society in the organization's decision-making. It is necessary to provide the necessary infrastructure for the ranking of schools according to the needs of the beneficiaries in educational activities. No matter how much the employees enjoy high knowledge, skills, motivation and ability, but when they do not have the proper facilities and equipment, they will not be able to perform the ranking of the

schools in a favorable way and to get the satisfaction of their beneficiaries. It is recommended to the managers to pay serious and sincere attention to the needs of the schools for the correct ranking so that they can achieve impressive results in the long run. Without leaders who sincerely serve subordinates and seriously try to gain their satisfaction, repeating mottos such as "education is the main pillar of society and is considered one of the important organizations of society" will not have any effect on the satisfaction of the beneficiaries. According to the theory of social exchange, when the leaders of the organization take heed of the needs and welfare of the employees, the employees seek mutual compensation and attempt to achieve individual and organizational objectives. Managers should sincerely try to fulfill the needs and address problems of the beneficiaries. Since managers are considered as role models for their subordinates, they should prove their attention to the beneficiaries in their words and behaviors in order to have a positive impact on the perception, attitude and behavior of their subordinates. Educational organizations should be very careful in choosing managers and not just pay attention to their knowledge and skills. Managers should be assessed in terms of personality to ensure that their beliefs, values and attitudes are in line with the objectives and values of the organization and they can help in the rectifying ranking of schools by availing the suggested indicators. Attitude is as significant as skill and experience, since skill could be taught, but a positive attitude cannot be taught or changed easily. Individuals' attitude depends on their personality traits, which cannot be easily changed. Also, adherence to ethical principles and meeting the necessary competence are other things that should be given special attention when choosing managers. Strengthening the assessment culture of schools based on desirable characteristics and components can have a noticeable effect on the behavior of employees as a control-motivational system. In order to strengthen the culture of assessment and ranking based on desirable components, managers should invest. To conduct a favorable ranking, it is recommended that

communication with beneficiaries, the organization's communication with others be taken into account because it leads to strengthening trust, gathering information about internal and external beneficiaries, better understanding and strengthening cooperation and integration, and finally to an effective ranking. It is suggested to education managers to concentrate on all the strategies, processes and functions of school ranking in line with the needs and problems of students and schools in order to satisfy the beneficiaries. They should also pay attention to the needs of the employees, because the satisfaction of the employees is essential for the satisfaction of the students.

Further Research

- In future researches, interviews with experts in this field, such as senior managers of the Ministry of Education, should be applied to collect qualitative data. Maybe this method will lead to the identification of other factors, criteria and symptoms.

- In future researches, objective and accurate information should be used instead of managers' judgments to assess the results of school rankings. Also, the relevant information should be gathered directly from the relevant source. Questions, for example, related to students and their parents regarding school activities ought to be answered by themselves for ranking.

- Based on the factors, criteria and symptoms proposed in this research, the effect of each of them on the ranking results should be investigated in future researches so that its validity in predicting the results and correct ranking will be tested.

- The strength of the proposed framework of this research in the ranking of schools and its effect on the achievement of the ranking goals should be tested. Also, the power of the proposed framework of this research in the ranking of first junior high school should be compared with other proposed frameworks in order to determine the effectiveness of these factors, criteria and symptoms in comparison with other models.

Ethical considerations

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

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