Studying the Status of Joy in the Content of Primary School Curriculum

Alireza Araghieh (Ph.D), Amir Hossein Mehdizadeh, (Ph.D), Zeynab Rostamkhani (M.A Student)

Department of educational administration, Islamshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr, Iran

Abstract: Current research, studies the status of joy in the content of primary school curriculum. Statistic society includes all elementary school textbooks, 21 of which were selected as statistic samples using objective sampling method. Research questions investigate the status of joy in the content, figures and questions of the textbooks. To find the answers, content analysis method was used. Results of the study showed the status of issues such as religious values that were more signified and self-esteem was less.

Keywords: Joy, Curriculum, Primary School, Content, Figures, Questions

1. Introduction

1-1 statement of problem

Contemplating about how to live happy is the idea that has long preoccupied the human mind, and persuades him to look for the best ways of living better and achieving joy of life (ZareiMatin et al., 2009). The most significant issue is to pay attention to joy and happiness and its factors, since they play vital role in society and its institutes (Hasanali Nasr Abadi et al., 2009). Joy is the base of life and happy students have positive energy, a motive to better learning (Jafari et al., 2008). The main course of education all over the world, in which students are energetic and happy, is primary school. It’s the course in which full development of personality occur.

Primary school have considerable effect on developing concepts and meanings of things that children encounter in everyday life. This course offer appropriate situation and opportunity for education, pedagogy, and learning accurate methods of communicating with others. As a result, preparing joyful and motivated environment supports learning process of student. However, joyful curriculum results in developing the sense of being valuable and positive in students (Safi, 2011; Alavi, 2009). In this regard, joyful curriculum content is the base of determining curriculum content (Nodding, 2005). One of the issues that have been ignored in educational curriculum is the status of joy. In this regard, this fundamental question arises that how much joyful is educational system and all its components, aspects and elements? Whether educational curriculum tries to create joyfulness in students and other people? (Ferdousi, 2009).

However, in this work we try to find the status of joy in curriculum of primary school. It seems to include the joy in curriculum we should start from primary schools which are the first step of entering educational world and student is fresh to learn.

2-1 research questions

Main question: What is the status of joy in the textbooks of primary schools?

Secondary questions:

1- What is the status of joy in figures of primary school textbooks?

2- What is the status of joy in content of primary school textbooks?
3- What is the status of joy in questions of primary school textbooks?

2- Material and Method

In this descriptive research, content analysis method was used to analyze concepts and themes of primary school textbooks using a special framework. First, concepts of joy were recognized, and then they were transmitted to ten experts of curriculum, and were determined as concepts of joy based on view points of experts.

These concepts include: religious values, optimism, close relation with people, life satisfaction, participating in group works, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Statistical society of the research includes all textbooks of primary school period. In total, 31 books are taught in five years of primary school, 21 of which were analyzed based on purposive sampling. Content analysis table was used for data collection.

Content of textbooks were analyzed in three parts of figures, text and questions. Descriptive statistic method (frequency, percentage, and table) was also used to analyze the data.

3- Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Analysis units</th>
<th>Figures</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious values</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close relation with people</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in group works</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.668</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2231</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Frequency of joy components in various levels of primary school textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>First Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Second Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Third Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Fourth Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Fifth Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious values</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>26.86</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>26.53</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>26.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.24</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>16.22</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>13.71</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>17.19</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>18.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close relation with people</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>21.83</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>20.18</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>16.38</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>11.88</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in group works</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>17.87</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>15.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>22.42</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>13.82</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>13.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>322</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the Table 2, the most frequency in happiness regarding textbooks in first grade of school relates to religious values (23.3%) and participating in group works (20.8%), in second grade close relation with people (21.83%), in 3rd grade religious values (26.86%) and close relation with others (20.18%), in 4th grade religious values
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(26.53%) and optimism (17.19%), and in the 5th grade religious values (32.09%) and optimism (18.95%).

According to the findings, religious values are the most and self-esteem and life satisfaction are the least reflective issues during various grades of primary school.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study focuses on textbooks of primary school period and the status and importance of joy in their contents.

Results of the study show that components of joy can be classified in 7 groups: religion, optimism, close relationship, life satisfaction, participating in group works, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Recognizing these components helps us in designing and codifying curriculums. In this regard, results of descriptive statistic and data from table 1 and 2 show that religious values and self-confidence and self-esteem are the most and least reflective issues, respectively. On the question about the status of joy in figures of textbooks, religious values are most emphasized, but self-confidence and self-esteem are less significant.

On the questions of textbooks, the focus was again on religious values and less on self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism. To increase joyful contents in textbooks, components of joy should be recognized (Farhadi et al., 2005). Desirable representation of some components such as religion is necessary but not sufficient (Dehnavi et al., 2004; Koivumaa–Honkanen et al., 2004).

Regarding the fact that there is a positive relation between joy and quality of student’s relation, it was found that joyfulness increases self-confidence and creates a space full of kindness, successful experiences and healthy relations, and should be considered very seriously in textbooks.

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Corresponding Author:
Alireza Araghieh (PhD).
Department of Educational Administration,
Islamshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Islamshahr, Iran,
Email: Araghieh@iau.ac

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