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The Professional Preparation of Elementary School Teachers in Iran

Ali Shariatmadari

University of Tennessee - Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Ali Shariatmadari entitled "The Professional Preparation of Elementary School Teachers in Iran." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Education.

<div align="right">Philip D. Smith, Major Professor</div>

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Orin B. Graff, Ira Chiles, Lawrence O. Haaby, Travis Hawk

<div align="right">Accepted for the Council:
Carolyn R. Hodges</div>

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(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

October 30, 1959

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Ali Shariatmadari entitled "The Professional Preparation of Elementary School Teachers in Iran." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Curriculum and Instruction.
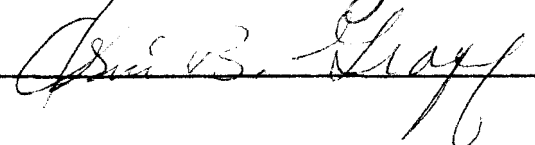
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Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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Accepted for the Council:

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Dean of the Graduate School

THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IRAN

A THESIS

Submitted to
The Graduate Council
of
The University of Tennessee
in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Education

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by

Ali Shariatmadari

December 1959

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Iran has a rich cultural background with regard to religion, ethics, philosophy, science, literature, and social values. In Iran, beginning with the early years of settlement, education has been considered an essential element in the life of the people. The growth of science and the changes that have taken place in the life of the Iranian people require a critical evaluation of the Iranian educational system in the light of modern educational practices.

Educators in Iran have an obligation to provide leadership in developing a sound educational philosophy compatible with the cultural background of Iran and the basic theories of education as practiced in progressive countries.

The school curriculum at all levels, including the teacher education curriculum, should be based upon a philosophy which considers the cultural heritage of the Iranian society as well as modern ideas in education.

It is the duty of all teachers in any society to help pupils to understand the cultural aspects of the society, to learn competencies which are necessary for social life and to improve their living conditions. Therefore, the preparation of teachers is of great importance in any culture.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the
present professional program of teacher education for ele-
mentary school teachers in Iran with special attention given
to the principles or theory of the elementary school curricu-
lum. Emphasis was placed on an analysis of responses of ele-
mentary teachers (graduates of the program) to a questionnaire
designed to reveal their understanding of the basic princi-
ples and purposes of the elementary school curriculum. The
investigation was undertaken with a view to (1) suggesting
improvements for the program of teacher education for ele-
mentary school teachers in Iran, and (2) providing a broad
base of information for American educational consultants.

In order to accomplish this purpose it was necessary
to analyze the cultural and philosophical factors which
establish the basic principles of education in Iran. This,
in turn, involved exploration of the basic concepts of Islam,
of Zoroastrianism, of the thinking of certain Iranian philos-
ophers, and of the social ideals of the Iranian people.

Importance of the Study

At the present time educators in Iran are concerned
with evaluating practices in the Iranian school system and
the Ministry of Education is in the process of changing and

improving the school curriculum. It appears, however, that
no study of the teacher education program with special regard
to the theoretical aspects of the elementary school curricu-
lum has been undertaken. Moreover, Western educational con-
sultants, particularly those from America, generally appear
to work under the handicap of a lack of understanding of the
social, philosophical, and religious basis for educational ob-
jectives in Iran.

Basic Assumptions

This study was based upon the following assumptions:

1. There is some common knowledge required for good
teaching in every society and under all types of conditions.
This knowledge has to do with the nature of the learner and
the learning process. In addition, every teacher should have
some understanding of the social philosophy, the cultural
tensions of the society in which he teaches, and he needs
some understanding of sound methods and procedures for
building and improving the curriculum.

2. In Iran, the teacher training program of a single
province provides reliable data upon which to base sound
general conclusions since the instructional materials, cur-
riculum, and standards of all elementary teacher education in-
stitutions are the same in all the provinces.

3. The cultural and philosophical background of the Iranian people is such as to support reasonable proposals for the improvement of education in their country.

Limitations of the Study and Sources of Information

1. A single elementary teacher education program was selected for study, namely, the Normal School in Shiraz, the major city of the province of Fars. This school was selected because the Ministry of Education was planning to revise the program of this Normal School.

2. Emphasis was placed upon the theoretical aspects of the elementary school curriculum such as the nature of the learning process, the nature of the learner, and the social philosophy as taught in the Normal School.

3. This study was limited to about 65 per cent of the total elementary teachers (men) in Shiraz who have completed the program of the Normal School in this city. This sample was considered representative of the total elementary teachers (men) who have completed the program of the Normal School in Shiraz. At the present time, there is no Normal School for women in Shiraz.

4. The principal sources of information were:

    a. The Ministry of Education of Iran

    b. The Department of Education of Shiraz

    c. The Normal School of Shiraz

d. The elementary school teachers of Shiraz

Specially, the following materials were foundational in the study:

(1) Curriculum catalogues of the Normal School

(2) Textbooks and other instructional materials from the Normal School

(3) Official directives of the Ministry of Education

(4) Questionnaires returned by the elementary school teachers of Shiraz.

Procedure

In achieving the purpose of this study the descriptive-survey approach to research was used. The first step was to secure permission from the Department of Education of Shiraz to conduct a study involving the securing of data from the elementary school teachers of Shiraz. Permission was also obtained from the Department of Education for Mr. Ashraff Al-Kottab and Mr. Fararoui (two instructors in the Shiraz Normal School) to cooperate in the activities necessary to carry the study through to its completion.

The second step was to prepare an instrument for securing data from the elementary school teachers of Shiraz. A questionnaire was prepared and discussed with members of the writer's doctoral committee.

The third step concerned the selection of elementary school teachers in Shiraz. Through the assistance of Mr. Ashraff Al-Kottab and Mr. Fararoui information was obtained concerning the total number of elementary school teachers in Shiraz who have completed the Shiraz Normal School program. There were seventy-four such teachers. Fifty of these teachers were selected at random and asked to complete the questionnaire. Forty-five completed and returned the questionnaire.

The fourth step was the gathering of other information. Specially, the following actions were taken:

1. A request for official documents was sent to the Ministry of Education of Iran. A special volume of Education, the official magazine of the Ministry of Education, and three reports prepared for UNESCO concerning education in Iran were received in answer to this request.

2. A request for information concerning the program of the Shiraz Normal School was sent to Dr. Issa Sadig, a former minister of education and author of the textbooks used in the education courses. Three books were received from this author.

3. A request for information was sent to the present head of the Shiraz Normal School and an official statement by the Ministry of Education concerning the Normal School program was received.

4. Information about the cultural and philosophical background of Iran was obtained from standard publications

available in the libraries of Iran, the Near East Studies Library of the University of Michigan, the library of the University of Tennessee, and from the personal notes of the writer.

The fifth step was to analyze and interpret data. In Chapter V, the writer presented and analyzed the content of the professional aspect of the Normal School program concerning the theoretical aspects of the school curriculum, and in Chapter VI, teachers' responses were tabulated and analyzed.

The sixth step was concerned with conclusions and recommendations based upon findings of this study and the personal experiences of the writer.

Related Studies

A review of the relevant literature revealed several studies related to the total educational system of Iran which included brief discussions of the teacher education program. They may be summarized as follows:

Sadig[1] probably was the first educator to make a study of the educational system of Iran. The purpose of his study was to find the defects of the educational system of Iran and

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[1] Issa Khan Sadig, Modern Persia and Her Educational System (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1931).

to propose some suggestions for its improvement, taking into consideration the educational practices in the most advanced countries of Europe and in the United States.

Sadig mentioned several factors which he viewed as having much influence on the educational system of Iran. The factors included: (1) religion, (2) private initiative, (3) rigid discipline, (4) the French system of schooling, (5) centralization of authority, (6) the social attitude toward teachers and children, and (7) the strong belief in heredity with a corresponding neglect of attention to environmental influences.

He believed that the following characteristics of the Iranian people resulted from the system of education followed at that time:

1. The people believed in fate.

2. There was a lack of social attitude and of desire for group activity.

3. There was contempt for industrial and commercial pursuits.

4. The people held many superstitions.

Sadig summarized the ideals of the Iranian people as follows:

> 1. Persians (Iranians) desire to have a country strong and independent in order to preserve their entity and their national life.
> 2. They wish to have a Persia (Iran) prosperous through scientific development of her national resources in agriculture and mines, and through exchange

of those products with other countries.
3. They desire healthy citizens, able to earn
their living, to enjoy life, and to contribute to
the enjoyment and happiness of their fellow-
citizens.
4. They aspire that Persia have a place of
honour among the nations of the earth by contribu-
ting the country's best to the culture of the
world.
5. They seek, with the blessing of God, to
harmonize the principles of Muhammadan religion
with the requirements of the time and with the
needs of intercourse with other beliefs of man-
kind.[2]

Concerning the question of teacher education for elementary
teachers, Sadig suggested that the Normal School for towns
must provide a program for elementary teachers not only to
study subject matters, but also to provide assistance in meth-
ods of teaching these subjects. He believed this program
should include the study of the child, the meaning of life
and education, and the methods and procedures of teaching.
He recommended workshop, laboratory work and extra-curricular
activities for prospective teachers.

Sadig proposed the following purposes for the school
curriculum in Iran:

1. To give an understanding of the Iranian
culture and the great achievement of the Iranian
people in the past.
2. To train boys and girls to become good
citizens.
3. To teach by precept and by example that God
extends his blessing to those who have good
thoughts, good words, and good deeds which are the
bases of righteousness and tolerance.

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[2]Ibid., p. 84.

4. To teach the rural people and the tribes how
to live, how to make a home, how to furnish it, how
to prepare food and how to acquire health habits.
5. In secondary schools and in institutions of
higher learning the gifted youth must be trained
for leadership and service in the state.
6. In special schools those workers who are to
lead in their callings must be trained for voca-
tional efficiency and must be given a sense of their
responsibility.
7. The promotion of health and healthful sports
must be stressed in all schools.
8. Finally, the youth must be trained to use
their leisure time intelligently by aesthetic ac-
tivities, by pleasure in reading, by intellectual
investigation, and by constructive activities.[3]

Jalali-Shirazi[4] made a study of education in Iran and
proposed some suggestions for its improvement. He discussed
the history of the early civilization and education of Iran
from 900 B.C. to 650 A.D. He believed that two forces--the
geographical and social--affected the culture and education
of Iranians at the beginning of their new empire.

According to this author, the purposes of education in
ancient Iran were as follows:

1. Religious instructions

    a. To teach youth religious dogma

    b. To teach love of God, country, parents, and
    friends

    c. To teach shamelessness in anything which was

[3]Ibid., p. 85.

[4]Mehdi Jalali-Shirazi, "Education in Iran and Some
Suggestions for Its Betterment" (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis,
University of Pittsburg, 1938).

honorable.

2. Physical instructions

    a. To teach self-realization and self control

    b. To train youth to be strong by enduring fatigue and hard work and by acquiring courage

    c. To teach obedience to officers

    d. To teach temperance regarding eating and drinking

3. Social instructions

    a. To train youth to be administrators in the courts

    b. To teach justice

    c. To teach youth democracy in order to be able to govern the country

    d. To teach youth the laws and customs of the nation

In teaching justice, children were told (a) not to accuse anyone of theft, deceit, violence, or any wrong doing, (b) not to hate anyone, and (c) to reward those who helped others.

Jalali-Shirazi believed that as the Arab people conquered Iran, they changed the Iranian culture:

> The Arab influenced the dress, customs, traditions and, furthermore, changed the Iranian psychology, philosophy of life, and belief in God. The mosques took the place of Zoroastrian Fire-Temple, and the Koran and Mohammedan priests superseded the Avesta and Magis. In arts and literature,

the Islamic arts took the place of the old Iranian,
and in the language the Arabic character replaced
pahlavi alphabet.[5]

The purposes of education after the invasion of the

Arabs, as Jalali-Shirazi has mentioned, were as follow:

1. To teach the principles of Islam

2. Moral training

3. Vocational training

4. Physical training

The author believed that the ultimate purpose of Iranian edu-

cation, however, should be the happiness of the individual.

In achieving this purpose, the individual must be well pre-

pared to adjust himself to new problems and to meet his needs

satisfactorily. He recommended that the school, as well as

other educational agencies, should keep in mind:

> (1) The importance of culture, in the "sense of in-
> telligent understanding," and of civilization, "re-
> fined manners and artistic taste," (2) the impor-
> tance of adjustment and adaptation, and partici-
> pation in the sense of "growth and development" of
> generalized habits and personality, and (3) the im-
> portance of a disciplined mind.[6]

In the question of teacher training, the author be-

lieved that two years of professional training on a high

school level were not sufficient. The teacher training pro-

gram did not include enough professional work. He thought

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[5]Ibid., p. 41.

[6]Ibid., p. 111.

the National Teachers College was appropriate for secondary

teachers, because the graduates from this school had acquired

experiences and skills necessary for teachers of high school.

Jalali-Shirazi suggested four changes in the Iranian

educational system:

1. To add one more year to the Normal School.
2. To offer more courses in education.
3. To choose the topics of general courses in such a way that they may be more applicable to life situations.
4. To increase the salaries of these graduates.[7]

Furthermore, he suggested the following courses for the

Normal School:

1. Introduction to education
2. General psychology
3. Educational psychology
4. Child psychology
5. Teaching procedures
6. Tests and measurements[8]

He suggested the following educational courses to be added to

the curriculum of the National Teachers College:

1. Psychology of adolescence
2. Teaching of secondary school subjects
3. Classroom management
4. Tests and measurements
5. History of education[9]

In 1948 Overseas Consultants, Inc., carried forward the

investigations started by the Morrison-Knudsen International

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[7]Ibid., p. 134.

[8]Ibid., p. 140.

[9]Ibid., p. 141.

Company in Iran. The purposes of this study regarding the

Iran's educational system were as follow:

> 1.   To determine an ideal educational goal
> which, although it might not be completely attain-
> able in the immediate future, nevertheless would
> contribute most to the ultimate development of the
> nation and to the standard of living of its people.
> 2.   To recommend a series of specifics which
> would be linked directly to the fulfillment of the
> seven-year plan but which, at the same time, would
> fall within the framework of a desirable long-
> range development of Iranian educational facilities
> and methods.
> 3.   To suggest a series of priorities for the
> implementation of these specific educational proj-
> ects, indicating their relative merits.[10]

They selected 190 schools of different types in almost

forty cities and towns and in fourteen villages throughout

the country. They interviewed former ministers of education,

educational leaders, members of educational councils, teachers,

factory owners, managers, tribal chiefs, and others.

It was found that the main weakness in the educational

system of Iran is its educational philosophy. Five factors

were mentioned which had determined the educational philoso-

phy of the Iranian people: (1) the Farsi or heroic tradition,

(2) the feudal system of agricultural economy, (3) the poetic

tradition, (4) the influence of Islam, and (5) the influence

of the French educational system.

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[10]Overseas Consultants, Report on Seven-Year Develop-
ment Plan for the Plan Organization of the Imperial Govern-
ment of Iran, Volume II (New York: Overseas Consultants,
Inc., 1949), p. 81.

They pointed out that the educational system of Iran, due to the influence of the French system, was authoritarian highly centralized, and based upon a theory that education was an acquisition of knowledge. It was believed that a few individuals, the intellectual elite, were capable of determining the school curriculum for all schools in the country. The school program, content, procedures, and purpose were imposed upon local educational units, with little or no consideration for originality, or modifications to meet local needs.

They believed that this type of educational system had many disadvantages for the Iranian people:

> The results of the present school system reveals it to suffer from three serious deficiencies: it eliminates far too high a percentage of the potential school population before that group has the opportunity to secure skills that will make the young men and women economically and socially productive in Iranian society; it teaches a highly formal, theoretical and relatively non-useful set of skills and body of knowledge, so that those who do graduate are frequently unequipped to compete in the practical life of Iranian society; and it is extremely rigid so that it resists change and fails to meet the demands of local situations.[11]

Also, this study revealed inadequate preparation in the training of teachers, lack of incentives toward continued professional growth, the absence of provision for in-service education, and a low economic and social status of teachers.

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[11]Ibid., p. 101.

These authors suggested a type of educational philosophy which was developed in democratic countries of the West. This educational philosophy puts its faith in the worth and dignity of the individual and in his capacity for growth and development. It aims toward the preparation of an educated citizenry rather than a few educated individuals. It is based on the idea that the only way to prepare competent leaders in sufficient number to meet the needs of the nation was to provide the opportunity to practice leadership and self-direction as widely as possible.

They recommended that the Normal Schools for the preparation of elementary school teachers at the present secondary level should be continued, but that their programs should be revised in order to be compatible with the proposed new educational philosophy.

They suggested eight educational projects which should be undertaken in connection with the Seven Year Plan program as follows:

1. Basic educational research
2. Decentralization
3. Rural education
4. Industrial and vocational education
5. Tribal education
6. Overseas specialized training
7. Teacher training
8. Educational incentives[12]

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[12]Ibid., p. 133.

Another study related to elementary education in Iran was made by Abbass Ekrami.[13] The purpose of this study was to suggest a program for the improvement of public elementary education in Iran with emphasis on the teaching-learning situation. The author enumerated the characteristics of the Iranian people such as the belief in fate, a strong belief in heredity, contempt for physical labor, lack of self confidence and dependence on others, love for knowledge, and a high native intelligence. He believed that democracy and communism are the two basic values which are the immediate results of Western influence in Iran.

Ekrami believed that the educational system of Iran neglected some major objectives such as:

> To achieve emotional and mental health for children, to provide a wide range of interests, to create a reasonable degree of confidence, to foster creativity, to show proper use of leisure time, to promote economic efficiency, to develop a realistic approach in facing and solving the problems of life, to instill a desire for a full and rich life, to foster team spirit, to develop a scientific attitude, and to accept responsibility.[14]

On the other hand, the author believed that this system placed much emphasis on certain objectives such as moral

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[13]Abbass Ekrami, "A Program for the Improvement of Elementary Education in Iran" (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1953).

[14]Ibid., p. 123.

principles, discipline, desirable character, and the accept-
ance of authority.

He thought the neglect of the important educational ob-
jectives was due to the fact that nobody was responsible for
educational surveys in the Ministry of Education, there was no
scientific evaluation of classroom procedures, and there were
no sound criteria for the formulation and improvement of pur-
poses of education.

He mentioned that there were no professional courses
which presented information concerning the purposes of ele-
mentary education in Iran. The objectives stated in official
directives were general, vague, and of little use to teachers.
He pointed out that the Higher Council on Education was the
only unit which had responsibility in building and improving
the school curriculum in Iran. Goals, standards of promo-
tion, content, and procedures assigned by the Higher Council
on Education were imposed on the local units. The needs, in-
terests, and abilities of children, and the local needs were
neglected in curriculum development.

The author believed that nine years of general educa-
tion as prerequisite for admission to the Normal School was
not enough. The professional preparation in the Normal
School was superficial and inadequate. He suggested the
following professional courses for the Normal School program:

1. An introduction to education to help the
prospective teacher understand his responsibility,

become familiar with rules and regulations of the
school system and the purposes of education; to
bring home, school, and community together, and
create harmony among them.
2. A study of human growth during childhood
and adolescence.
3. Psychology of learning.
4. Methodology (general).
5. Guidance and mental hygiene.
6. Methodology (special).[15]

Organization of the Study

The first chapter presents the problem of the study,
importance of the study, its basic assumptions, limitations
and sources of information, procedures, and a discussion of re-
lated studies. The second chapter provides a brief review of
the philosophic points of view, the basic concepts of Zoroas-
tran and Islam, and the social ideals of the Iranian people.
The third chapter describes briefly some of the ideas of
Iranian philosophers concerning education and educational ob-
jectives in Iran. The fourth chapter discusses some basic
issues in the school curriculum. The fifth chapter presents
the present professional program of the Normal School re-
garding the theoretical aspects of the school curriculum in
Iran. The sixth chapter examines teachers' responses to a
questionnaire designed to reveal their understanding of cur-
riculum principles. The seventh chapter provides a summary,
conclusions, and recommendations based on the findings of the
study.

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[15]Ibid., p. 251.

CHAPTER II

CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF IRAN

The purpose of this chapter is (1) to discuss the pre-
dominant philosophies which influence the thought and beliefs
of the Iranian people, (2) to present the principles of
Zoroastrianism and Islam, including the basic ideas of these
two religions, and (3) to identify some of the social ideals
of the Iranian people.

Philosophic Ideas

It is possible to classify the Iranian thinkers into
four groups: (1) philosophers (philosophic rationalists),
those who try to find out the truth about the reality of the
universe through reasoning, whether it is compatible with
religion or not; (2) dialecticians (theological rationalists),
those who try to discover the truth while they take into con-
sideration the principles of religion; (3) Sufists (theologi-
cal mistics), those who try to discover the truth through
mystical practices, taking into account the religious prin-
ciples; and (4) Arifans (philosophic mistics), those who
try to understand the truth through mystical practices dis-
regarding the religious principles.

There is no sharp line dividing these different ideas
and it is hard to place the Iranian philosophers in each of

these four groups. Regarding the point of emphasis in their
works, the writer would classify Farabi and Ibn Cina as
philosophers, Toussi as a dialectician, Ghazzali as a Sufist,
and Mulla Sadra as an Arif. The writer has selected these
philosophers because they were the most outstanding thinkers
in Iran.

During the last fifty years modern philosophies, and
various systems of philosophy have been translated by some
university professors and others. Iranian students who study
Persian literature, philosophy and methodology of sciences
have some courses in modern philosophy. Aristotle's logic
still is the influential tool for those who study oriental
philosophy. The college of literature, requires one course
in Aristotle's logic for those who want to study philosophy
or literature.

Dialectical materialism was introduced by a writer who
wrote several books in philosophy, ethics, psychology, and
theories of sciences. However, this system of philosophy
had very little influence on the way of thinking of the
Iranian people, though it destroyed the religious beliefs of
some young people.

Farabi

Abu-Nasr Mohammad Ibn Mohammad was the greatest philos-
opher of Islam before Ibn Cina (Avicenna). He was born near

the end of the ninth century A.D. at Vasidg, a small town of
Farab in the province of Turkestan. He went to Baghdad and
started his study with Abu-Bashr Matta. Then he went to the
city of Harran and studied Aristotle's logic with Yohanna
Ibn Hailan. He finished the study of Aristotle's philosophy
at Baghdad. He spent the last part of his life in Damascus
and died there in 950.[1]

Farabi was famous as a translator of Greek works and
because of his work in this field he became known as the
second teacher-successor to the first teacher, Aristotle.

His own ideas were expressed in psychological and meta-
physical treatises in which he discussed the "Intelligence
and the Intelligible," the "Soul, the faculties of the Soul,"
the "One and the Unity," and "Substance, Time, Empty Space,
Space and Measure."

He wrote The Enumeration of Sciences, The Opinions of
People of a Model City, The Agreement Between the Two Opin-
ions, and The Intentions of Plato and Aristotle.

The authors[2] of The Encyclopaedia of Islam say that
Farabi believed that Plato and Aristotle should not be
interpreted as contradicting one another; and he considered

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[1]Ziae Dorry, Phalsaphat Aletemad (Teheran: The
Library of Khayyam, 1949), p. 23.

[2]M. T. Houtsma et al., The Encyclopaedia of Islam
(London: Luzac and Company, 1927), p. 54.

their systems as different forms of the same truth.

Farabi divided all beings in the world into two types, necessary being and possible being. By possible being, he means the one whose non-existence it is not impossible to assume. He believes that the possible being can not be created in an infinite chain and needs a necessary being to create them. By necessary being he means the one whose non-existence is impossible to assume. The necessary being does not need any cause and is the cause of all beings. It is one, perfect, non-materialistic, eternal, purely good; and it is intelligence and the absolute reason.

In the problem of creation, Eastern philosophers discuss this principle: "From the one only one originates." They try to justify the creation of plurality from the single cause. Farabi believed that God created the primary intelligence. Other intelligences of the spheres come from the primary intelligence, and the last is the active intelligence above which the universal soul, then form and lastly matter are placed. Matter is the substratum of the world which contains its potential. The world is created by originating from this matter, not produced from nothing.

He believed that soul is produced materialistically, but it remains in spiritual form. His method in philosophic discussions was deductive, and rational, and based upon pure reasoning. He was a mathematician and a distinguished musician.

Ibn Cina (Avicenna)

His Biography

Abu-Ali Hussin Ibn Abd Allah Ibn Hassan Ibn Cina was born in 980 at Afshaneh, a village of Kharmissan in the province of Bokhara. He received instruction at an early age and by ten years of age he had memorized The Koran (the sacred book of Islam) and had become acquainted with other writings in literature and religious laws.

When Abdullah Nateli entered Bokhara, he was asked to teach Ibn Cina. Nateli was a philosopher and taught Ibn Cina for a few years. With Nateli Ibn Cina studied religious laws, read the beginning of Prophysy's Issagoge, went through a few propositions of Euclid's geometry and learned some points of astronomy. When his teacher left Bokhara, he studied by himself and read Euclid's books, then studied Almagest of Ptolemy, the Aphorisms of the philosophers, various texts on natural sciences and metaphysics and several books that he found on medicine. He was about sixteen years of age when he became known as a physician. He was eighteen years of age when Nuh Ibn Mansur, the ruler of Bokhara, fell sick of a malady which confused all the physicians. Ibn Cina was famous because of the breadth of his knowledge of medicine. For this reason, he was asked to attend the ruler's house and cooperate with other physicians in treating Nuh Ibn Mansur. Nuh was pleased with Ibn Cina and let him use the governmental

library. He studied many works of the ancient Greeks in that
library.

Through his own studies, Ibn Cina became quite famil-
iar with logic, natural sciences, and mathematics. He
started studying the metaphysic of Aristotle, and read it
several times but he could not understand it until he got a
book by Farabi, On the Objects of Metaphysics. When Ibn Cina
read that book and studied it carefully, he understood
Aristotle's metaphysics.

After traveling through Isphahan and several other
cities in Iran, he died in 1037 at Hamedan.[3]

His Writings

He finished his first book when he was twenty-one.
This book was a Summary which consisted of all the branches
of knowledge except mathematics. His second book was Import
and Substance. The third one was Good Works and Sin. Among
his great writings, the following are very important:

1. The Kanun or Laws of Medicine. This book was the
result of Ibn Cina's study in the rich library of the ruler
of Bokhara and his personal research and clinical experience.
The first section of The Kanun contains a discussion of the
general principles of physiology and health. The second sec-
tion deals with drugs and their effects. The third and

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[3]G. M. Wickens, editor, Avicenna: Scientist and Philos-
opher (London: Luzac and Company, Ltd., 1949), pp. 9-27.

fourth sections of this book are on pathology and discuss the
various diseases which affect the different parts of the
body, fevers, tumors, rashes, poisons. The last section
deals with the combinations of various drugs into remedies.

2. The Kitab Al-Isharat Val-Tanbihat. The first part
of this book discusses some essential points of logic--the
use of propositions and syllogisms, and the purpose of logic.
Other parts of this book deal with metaphysics, cosmology,
and treat of the substance and composition of bodies, the
heavenly and worldly soul, being and its causes, creation,
the organization and end of things, and finally some problems
of mysticism such as the spiritual stages on the way to union
with God.

3. The Kitab Al-Shifa. This book was considered the
philosophical encyclopaedia. As the authors of The Encyclo-
paedia of Islam say, "He is important as the universal encyclo-
paedist, who fixed the syxtem of learning for centuries
following."[4]

4. The Hikmat Al-Mashrighiya or oriental philosophy.

5. The Nijat, a summary of Isharat.

His Philosophy

Ibn Cina's philosophy contains Aristotelian meta-
physics, Neo-Platonic elements, basic principles of Islam

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[4]Houtsma, op. cit., p. 419.

which are expressed in <u>The Koran</u>, and the writings of the

sacred religious leaders of Shieh (a great sect of Islam),

and his own ideas.

The writer wishes to discuss briefly some of the basic

ideas that have originated with Ibn Cina himself. Courtois

pointed out in the introduction to the book <u>Avicenna Com-</u>

<u>memoration</u>, that the following points are Ibn Cina's own

ideas:

> His genial find was in the notion of "being"
> where he discovered the distinction between essence
> and existence, between necessary and possible
> being, between being necessary of itself and neces-
> sary by another.
>   Ibn Cina distinguished between material percep-
> tion which was caused, he asserted, by rays of
> right coming from the object and the psychological
> reaction of the subject: the reality of the object
> somehow reproduces itself in the subject perceiving;
> the form so elaborated is stored by the sensus com-
> munis and presented to the internal, intellectual
> faculties for analysis.[5]

Ibn Cina presents almost the same reason for the con-

ception of "necessary being" as Farabi does. For this reason

some writers believe that this conception of the "necessary

being" and "possible being" was not new in Ibn Cina's philo-

sophic thoughts. Teicher denies this claim and says:

> This conception has apparently no antecedents
> in Greek philosophy, and I prefer to accept
> Averroes' statement that it was first introduced
> by Avicenna, as against the claim made in the

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[5]S. J. Courtois, editor, <u>Avicenna Commemoration</u>,
Vol. II (Calcutta: Iran Society, 1956), p. xvi.

writings of his Islamic predecessors. This claim
has never been substantiated and Averroes obviously
knew better.[6]

Ibn Cina believed that it was impossible to think
that the "necessary being" should not exist. Teicher thought
that the existence of the "necessary being" was an intuitive
notion in Ibn Cina's ideas and can not be proved and demon-
strated. But among Islamic philosophers, Ibn Cina was known
as a man of reasoning rather than as an intuitionist. He ac-
cepts the existence of the "necessary being" in order to
avoid a "regressus ad infinitum" of cause and effect.

Goichon mentioned the fact that an infinite series of
causes is rejected by reason. The chain of cause-effect
relationships must begin from a being that is uncaused, a
being which is necessary of itself. He quoted from Ibn Cina's
book, Isharat:

> Every regularly formed series of causes and ef-
> fects which follow one after another and in which
> is found a cause which is not an effect, ends in
> this cause, because if this uncaused cause were
> one of the intermediate causes, it would not be
> uncaused.[7]

Ibn Cina believed that the first cause of creation of
beings is the being necessary of itself; it is the efficient

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[6]G. M. Wickens, editor, Avicenna: Scientist and Philos-
opher (London: Luzac and Company, Ltd., 1952), p. 34.

[7]Courtois, op. cit., p. 111, quoting Isharat.

cause of all existence. He thought that it was possible to think of non-existence of all the beings in the world, and this does not involve the mind in contradiction. Then he concluded that all beings, except the "necessary beings," are possible in themselves. At the same time they are necessarily existent when considered in relation to the "necessary being." He believed that the "beings" in the world exist and are true and real. However, the cause of their existence and reality can not be in themselves because they are only possible--they may or may not exist.

Concerning the distinction between essence and existence, Ibn Cina argued that our mind can drive "universal concepts" from the individual, concrete beings around us which are applicable to all the individuals of a group, the concepts of man, donkey, metal which express the nature and essence of these beings. All of these essences belong to the "possible beings" which do not exist by themselves. Therefore, the essences of these beings do not include existence. But this is given to them from outside. Later, he concluded that essence is distinct from existence and every possible being is composed of its existence and its essence.

Ibn Cina believed that the first being--the necessary being--cannot be a composite, since every composite being needs a cause to unite its component parts and it cannot be the first cause and necessary being. For this reason, the

first cause is absolutely simple, and the essence and exist-
ence in it should be one and the same.

Ibn Cina like Farabi, in justifying the creation of
plurality from the single cause, believed that God created
the primary intelligence:

> The creator is the being who is absolutely one,
> from whom issues one being called the "first
> caused." This being is the pure intelligence by
> which multiplicity enters the universe, per-
> mitting the creation of a multiplicity of beings.[8]

Ibn Cina's philosophy is dualistic. He discussed mind
and matter, God and world, and soul and body. He believed
that God has created man and has given senses and reason to
him. The senses gather information for the intelligence
which chooses the right and turns away that which is wrong.
He thought that there were three types of souls: (1) plant
soul which grows and assimilates nourishment; (2) animal soul
which has organs, perceives, and moves voluntarily; (3) human
soul which has organs, acts by a rational choice and per-
ceives universals.

Ibn Cina believed that every organized body has a
special soul for itself. The soul does not come from a body
but from a substance which has form without body. Souls are
created and multiply when the bodies are ready to receive
them and to a certain extent, they are in harmony with the
body.

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[8]Courtois, op. cit., p. 115.

He believed that "soul" is unity. It is a single substance and is the substratum of all experiences. He believed that human mind can grasp existence without sensible experience. Goichon has quoted from Isharat (one of Ibn Cina's books):

> Let us suppose that one of us is created in an instant, and created perfect. But his eyes are blindfolded and cannot see any external objects. He is created floating in the air, or rather in the void, so that the resistance of the air which he might feel, does not affect him. His members are separated, and therefore do not meet or touch one another. Then he reflects and asks himself if his own existence of his feet or his hands, of his entrails, his heart, or his brains, or any exterior thing; but would nevertheless affirm that he exists, without establishing the fact that he has length, breadth or thickness.[9]

Ibn Cina enumerated four stages for the faculty of intelligence in man until it connects with the active intelligence. In the first stage, man does not have any knowledge and form. This stage is called "material intellect." In the second stage, man brings his physical and mental faculties to activity, gradually conceives primary principles, and becomes able to go from known to unknown. This stage is called "habitual intellect." The individual's knowledge does not provide certainty and assurance until he reaches the third stage. In this stage, the individual is able to understand theoretical problems directly. This stage is called

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[9]Ibid., p. 109-10.

"acquired intellect." In the fourth stage, the individual reaches an intellectual level that enables him to grasp everything. This stage is called the "actual intellect."

Ibn Cina believed that the growth of man is quite different among individuals.

His Religion

Barani[10] believed that there was no doubt that Ibn Cina was more favorably inclined to Shieh. Ibn Cina was very sincere in his religious beliefs and tried to justify the basic ideas of Islam. He considered Mohammad as the most perfect prophet. He wrote something concerning the philosophy of prayers, and the exegises of a few parts of The Koran.

Ibn Cina was a poet and made several poems. He wrote a famous Persian quatrain concerning his belief in religion, and for the purpose of clarifying a misunderstanding on the part of those who considered him a heretic. This poem was mentioned by Barani and other writers:

> It is not so easy and trifling to call me a heretic
> No belief in religion is firmer than mine own
> I am the unique person in the whole world
>   and if I am a heretic
> Then there is not a single Musolman (Moslem)
>   anywhere in the world.[11]

Ibn Cina believed that God is a necessary being, He is One in every respect, He is beyond all causes, and His

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[10]Ibid., p. 7.

[11]Ibid., p. 8.

attributes do not add to His essence, and He is qualified by
the qualities of praise and perfection, therefore, we should
state that He is knowing, living, willing, omnipotent,
seeing, speaking, hearing, and possessing all other good quali-
ties.

Ibn Cina had much influence through his famous work,
The Kanun, in the West until the seventeenth century. His
works in metaphysics, logic, and other ideas original with
him have been translated into Latin, French, and German.

His method was experimental in his work on medicine,
and he used reasoning in his discussion on philosophy.

Ghazzali

Abu-Hamed Mohammad Ghazzali was one of the most out-
standing Sufists in Iran. He was born in 1058 at Faberan, a
small town of Touse in the province of Khorassan. He started
his study in religion in his early years at Touse. Then he
went to Naishabour and studied there under Imam Al-Haramain.
He was twenty-eight when he left Naishabour for Baghdad, and
at this time he was known as a great teacher. After eight
years, the famous Minister Nizam Al-Mulk appointed him as a
teacher in the school of Nizamieh. He taught in this school
for several years and wrote some books on philosophy, ethics,
and religion. The study of conflicting ideas in the work of
philosophers made him an absolute skeptic toward philosophy,

and finally he turned seriously to Sufism. He resigned from his teaching job in Baghdad and gave his position to his brother, Ahmad Ghazzali. He left Baghdad for Touse, and spent the rest of his life in that city. He died at Touse in 1113.[12]

Some of His Writings

The Ihya Al-Ulum (Revival of Sciences). This book was divided into two parts, each consisting of two sections: the first section deals with external acts of devotion and religious usage; the second is on the inner side of life, the heart and its workings, good and evil; the third and fourth sections discuss acts of creature toward God, usage of life, and soul saving matters.

The Kitab Al-Vadjiz. This book deals with Islamic laws.

The Meyar Al-Elm (Criteria of Science). This book discusses the principles of logic.

The Tahafut Al-Falasifa (Contradiction of Philosophies). In this book Ghazzali tried to demonstrate the fact that philosophers could not prove their ideas by reason.

The Kimiay Siadat (The Essence of Prosperity). This book deals with the principles of ethics.

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[12]Zabih Allah Safa, History of Literature of Iran (Tehran: n.p., 1957), pp. 920-22.

The Mishkat Al-Anwar. This book discusses the meaning of God as light and the guidance of the inner light to God.

His Ideas

Ghazzali believed in God, prophecy, and the day of judgment. He considered ecstatic experience as the basis of all religious certainty. He believed that intuition or direct experiential knowledge is the only way for learning the religious truths. He argued against philosophers in three basic points: (1) the creation of the universe, (2) the revival of the body contrasted with the revival of spirit, and (3) the idea of God's knowledge of specifics in contrast to generals.

Toussi

Abu Jafar Nasir Al-Din Toussi was one of the great dialecticians (Mutokalleman) in Iran. He was born in 1201 at Touse a city in the province of Khorassan. He studied philosophy under Farid Al-Din Damad, and mathematics under Kamal Al-Din Hasseh. He was twenty-two when he was considered as an authority in religion. He set up an observatory which was provided with the best facilities in Maragheh and gathered several astronomers to study there. He established a library with 400,000 books at Maragheh. He died in 1274 at Baghdad.[13]

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[13]Issa Sadig, The Course of Culture in Iran and West (Teheran: The Print House of Sherkat Tabeh Ketah, 1958), pp. 432-35.

His Works

The Version of the Optics of Euclid, The Version of
Almagesti, The Kitab Al-Fazkira (a study of the whole field
of astronomy), The Ghavaed Al-Aghaed (the bases of opinions),
Zidj Ilkhami (a discussion of era, the movement of the planets,
and astrological observation), The Hall Al-Mushkelat Al-
Isharat (a defense of Ibn Cina against Fakr Aldin Razi), The
Muhassul Alaghaed, The Akhlagh Nasseri, and The Assass
Aleghtebas.

His Ideas

Toussi was famous because of his works in the field of
astronomy. To some extent he followed Ibn Cina's philosophy,
but he rejected the idea that "From the one only one origi-
nates." He believed that all the creatures with plurality
were created by God. He was primarily concerned with the
basic principles of Shieh in his philosophic points of view.
He tried to prove the basic thoughts of Shieh through logical
reasoning in his book, Tadjrid Alakaed. He believed that
reason is the only criterion by which we discriminate good
from bad. He rejected the idea of determinism and predestina-
tion. In all his discussions, he proved his ideas through
reasoning and supported them by some verses of The Koran, and
some narrations of the prophet, and other sacred leaders of
Shieh.

Mulla Sadra

Sadr Almutuallehim, known as Mulla Sadra, was born in
the latter half of the seventeenth century at Shiraz. He
went to Isphahan and studied there under Shaikh Bohaei and at-
tended the lectures of Mir Damad, the famous philosopher, for
several years. Then he went back to Shiraz, and taught in a
school which was founded by the governor of Fars.[14] He wrote
several books of which the following are mentioned here:

The Shavahed Alrububieh (Evidence of Divinity), The
Asfar Alarbaa (the four travels), The Exegesis of The Koran,
and The Sharh Ussul Kafi.

His Ideas

There are several points that might be considered as
original in Mulla Sadra's philosophy:

1. He believed that "existence" is a single truth,
but it possesses numerous stages. The difference among all
beings is due to stages which they are in, not because of the
different existences. He differentiated these stages by per-
fection and imperfection, and weakness and strength.

2. He thought that the element of "real being" is all
things, yet is not any one of them.

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[14]Edward G. Browne, A Year Among the Persians (Third
Edition; London: Cambridge University Press, 1950), p. 136.

Dorry[15] claimed that this point had been mentioned by Farabi in his book, _Fusus_, when he says "Necessary Being" is the source of benevolence. He possesses the whole in such a way that there is no plurality in Him.

3. He believed in the unity between "knower" and "known." According to Mulla Sadra, true comprehension of any object is possible when the knower and the known are identified.

4. He believed that change occurs within the essence rather than within its quality or quantity.

5. He thought that imagination is independent of the physical organism and depends by its nature upon the world of the soul, and it persists as a spiritual entity after death.

Basic Ideas of Zoroaster (Zarathustra)

According to Dinshah,[16] the basic principles and philosophy of Zoroaster ideas are as follows:

1. The force of all the material and spiritual causes is an absolute, infinite existence that is the origin, plan, and purpose of the whole universe. This force is Ahurmazda (God).

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[15]Dorry, _op. cit._, p. 59.

[16]Silister Irani Dinshah, _A Radiation from the Philosophy of Ancient Iran_ (Tehran: Print House of Rasty, 1955), pp. 9-10.

2. All secular and spiritual matters are under the influence of interplay of the two opposing forces, the force of good, and the force of bad.

3. The whole creatures are bound with the law of righteousness.

4. All beings are moving forward toward a sacred spiritual end of integration.

Also, Dinshah discussed seven spiritual stages,[17] and mentioned in each stage one of the characteristics of Ahurmazda toward which Zoroaster encouraged people to move:

1. The first attribute of Ahurmazda is righteousness, and truthfulness. Zoroaster said that there is only one way to save people and it is the way of righteousness.

2. The second stage is to possess a good character. As Dinshah mentions, there are two mental forces which were discussed in Avesta (a book of Zoroaster's teaching), one is acquired knowledge, and the other is inherent knowledge. In order to realize the inherent knowledge, it is necessary to use two mental capacities, imagination and thought.

3. The third characteristic is the possession of power. Ahurmazda is the source of power and this power may be manifested through the just king.

4. The fourth stage is the sacred love or the affection toward the whole world. Zoroaster recommended that

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[17]Ibid., pp. 61-113.

people love one another, because love and affection is a radiation of the absolute truth.

The fifth and sixth stages are prosperity and salvation respectively. In order to attain these two stages one should know one's self, and serve other people.

The final stage is the one in which sacred persons will be united and inspired by Ahurmazda.

In teaching moral principles, Zoroaster urged people to be just, not to break promises, to obey the laws and just government, to obey Ahurmazda, to be clean, to be diligent, to guide others, and to support peace and justice.[18]

Basic Ideas of Islam

The predominant and official religion of Iranian people is Islam-Shieh. According to Sadig[19] more than 98 per cent of the people in Iran are Moslem, others are Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian. Among Moslems 7 per cent are Sunni.

Islam in a general sense means submission to God, but it is also a name given to the Mohammadan religion which is based upon the following principles:

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[18]Silister Irani Dinshah, *The Ethics of Ancient Iran* (Tehran: The Print House of Rasty, 1955), pp. 11-40.

[19]Issa Khan Sadig, *Modern Persia and Her Educational System* (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1931), p. 5.

1. The belief in a single God as the creator of the universe. In <u>The Koran</u>, the sacred book of Islam, there are some verses which call attention to the universe, its happenings, its phenomena and its creation, and encourages people to think, to comprehend and to discover the existence of the creator.

The concept of God is well stated by Ali, the sacred leader and the successor of the prophet:

> God is not like any object that human mind can conceive; no attribute can be ascribed to Him which bears the least resemblance to any quality of which human beings have perception from their knowledge of material objects. The perfection of piety consists in knowing God; the perfection of knowledge is the affirmation of his verity; the perfection of verity is to acknowledge his unity in all sincerity; and the perfection of sincerity is to deny all (human) attributes to the deity.
> God is the creator, not because he himself is created; God is existent, not because he was non-existent. He is with every object, not from resemblance or nearness; he is outside of everything, not from separation. He is the primary cause, not in the meaning of motion or action; he is the seer, but no sight can see him.[20]

2. The belief in prophecy. Moslems, especially Shief, believe that human beings live together and it is necessary for all of them to take into consideration the benefit and welfare of mankind. On the one hand, individuals are selfish, ignorant, and inclined toward immorality. On the other hand, they believe that individuals are capable of being guided and

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[20]Sayyed Ameer Ali, <u>Life and Teaching of Mohammad</u> (London: W. H. Allen and Company, 1891), p. 612.

educated. Since cooperation, social justice, and the use of
reason are the essential elements in human life, there must be
some guidance from the perfect, all-knowing, powerful, and
merciful God to encourage people to spread knowledge and com-
bat ignorance, to build up moral bases, and to follow the laws
and regulations which are provided for the welfare and benefit
of society as well as of individuals. Prophets were in-
dividuals among human beings who are directed and inspired by
God to help people in all aspects of their own lives. Moslems
believe that Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others were prophets
who contributed to the progress of human life, and Mohammad
was the last prophet who was supposed to implement the teach-
ings of his predecessors.

3. The belief in the day of judgment. There are some
verses in The Koran which indicate that there will be a day of
judgment in which all human actions will be judged by God:
"And Moses said, verily, I will take refuge in my Lord from
every one who is big with pride, and believes not on the day
of reckoning." (XI:28)

The above principles are common among Sunny and Shieh,
the two great sects of Islam. Besides, all Shieh considers
(1) the justice of God, and (2) the recognition of twelve
innocent leaders as true successors of Mohammad to be two
other principles of the religion.

The main practices of Islam are as follows:

1. The observation of the five assigned periods of prayer.

2. Fasting during the whole of the month of Ramzan.

3. Giving one-fifth of the yearly income to the public treasury.

4. Giving legal alms once a year. Every one who possesses a certain amount of property, is supposed to give legal alms. This amount of property varies with regard to different kinds of property owned. The following groups are eligible to benefit from these alms:

    a. A person who does not have sufficient income to support his expenditure.

    b. A person who is handicapped and does not have any property.

    c. Those who are in charge of collecting alms.

    d. Those who are debtors and are not able to pay.

    e. Those who are far from their homes and do not have money to spend.

5. The pilgrimage to Makka once during the life time. This is obligatory for those who have enough money to go to Makka and come back with enough left to pay their expenses for another year.

6. Defense of the Moslem countries and opposition to tyranny.

7. and 8. Inviting others to do good and discouraging wrong if the circumstances are favorable.

When a Moslem becomes mature, he or she is responsible for his actions and beliefs. He or she should accept the principles of religion through his own understanding and reasoning. It is obligatory for a Moslem to know: (1) Why God is a real and a necessary being, and that he is the creator of the universe, (2) the reason for necessity of prophecy, and the prophecy of Mohammad, and (3) the reason for the day of judgment. The evidence of this obligation is expressed in verses of The Koran which encourage people to think about the creation of the universe and then accept the existence of God. Mohammad and his successors recommend independent thinking in the acceptance of religious principles and blame those who imitate such religious beliefs.

Allameh Helli said in his book, Bab Hadi Ashr, that there is not any disagreement among the Shieh leaders that the acceptance of principles of religion should be based on reason rather than imitation. By imitation, he meant the acceptance of the word of others without any reason.

Basic Criteria of Islamic Laws

The legislator of Islam divides actions into five types:

1. Obligatory action, the non-observance of which

causes sin. Reason dictates that these actions are good and have many advantages for people. Moslem leaders believe that those religious obligations which have been assigned by the legislator of Islam are based on sound judgment. Every thing which is good and has advantage is obligatory for people.

2. Prohibited actions, the performance of which causes sin. In this case, also, reason judges that these actions are detrimental and disadvantageous.

3. Desirable actions which the legislator would prefer people to do, but these actions may be omitted without fear of sin on the part of the individual.

4. Undesirable actions which are allowed but are considered improper.

5. Allowed actions, those that people may do or choose not to do.

These Islamic laws are based on two main principles:

1. Good and evil are things which are ascertained by reason.

2. There is a famous statement that all those who work in Islamic laws among Shieh leaders accept as a self-evident principle, whatsoever reason dictates, the legislator of Islam dictates also. There are many verses in The Koran which support these two principles: "Things which are pure are allowed you, things which are foul are prohibited." "Say verily, my Lord has prohibited or forbidden filthy

actions, both that which is discovered, and that which is con-
cealed, and also, inequity, and unjust violence. . . ." (VII:
32)   "They will ask you what is allowed them as lawful to
eat. Answer such things as are good are allowed you." (V:3)

In his book, Kashf Almorad, Allameh Helli, one of the
most outstanding leaders among Shieh, explains the words of
Toussi concerning the five types of Islamic laws in these
words:

> He (Toussi) draws conclusions in several ways,
> that reason distinguishes good from bad. This is
> one of those ways. Its explanation is that we
> know without considering religion, that some things
> are necessarily good and some are bad. A wise per-
> son knows emphatically the goodness of doing good
> and praises this, and considers evil tyranny and
> deplores those actions. This is an inevitable judg-
> ment without any doubt, and this is not taken from
> religion, because atheists and Barahema, who do not
> believe in religion, accept this judgment also.[21]

Sources of Islamic Laws

According to Sheih leaders there are four sources for
Islamic laws. In his book, Taghrirat Ussul, concerning the
subject matter of the principles of Islamic laws, Shahabi[22]
mentions the evidence or sources of Islamic laws as follows:

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[21]Al-Hassan Allameh Helli, Kashf Al-Morad Fi Sharh Tajrid
Al-Eteghad (Ghomm: Mohammedian Press, 1953), p. 186.

[22]Mahmoud Shahabi, Taghrirat Ussul (Teheran: n. p.,
1946), p. 13.

1. The book (_The Koran_).

2. Tradition--this means what Mohammad and his twelve successors did, said, and what was done in their presence, and not forbidden by them.

3. Unanimous opinions of learned leaders of the religion.

4. Reason.

The Precepts of Islam

1. The importance of intelligence and its use in all social and individual affairs. Islam requires the use of reason in accepting it as a religion. Islamic laws are based on the sound judgment of reason. Islam has rejected the imitation, and subjugation of religious beliefs. There are some verses in _The Koran_ concerning the importance of reason and other related points: "Lo, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens (of his sovereignty) for men of understanding." (III: 190) "There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. . . ." (II:256)

The author of _Bohar Al-Anvar_[23] mentioned a narration from Ali, the successor of the prophet, concerning the

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[23]Mohammad Bagher Madjlessi, _Bohar Al-Anvar_ (Teheran: n.p., 1924), p. 29.

importance of reason that when Adam was told to select one of these three--reason, shyness and faith--he selected reason.

Al-Raheem has quoted some of Mohammad's words on this point. "Wisdom is the stray camel of the believer; take hold of it wherever ye come across it."[24]

2. The importance of knowledge. Islam has put much emphasis on knowledge and understanding. Learned persons are the most respected persons in Islam and it is the duty of every Moslem to seek knowledge. Al-Raheem quoted the following words from Mohammad:

> Seeking knowledge is the duty of every Moslem, both man and woman.
> One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers.
> It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night than to pray the whole night.
> Be faithful in knowledge, and do not hide knowledge from each other. A betrayer in learning is worse than a betrayer in wealth.
> Be modest to whom you learn from; be modest to whom you teach and do not be tyrannical learned men.[25]

There is a verse in The Koran which indicates that learned persons believe in the meaning of the verses of The Koran: "But those who are well grounded in knowledge, say, we believe therein, the whole is from our Lord; and none will consider except wise persons." (III:6)

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[24]Ahmed Hassan Al-Raheem, "Curriculum Development in the High School of Iraq" (Unpublished Ed. D. thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1954), p. 155.

[25]Ibid., p. 155.

An illustration of the significance of knowledge in Islam is seen in Mohammad's recommendation: "Effort spent in prayer should be allocated to a search of knowledge." It is important that this emphasis upon knowledge was addressed to Ali who was considered the most learned of Mohammad's successors. Shahabi mentions that this word of Mohammad was narrated by Ibn Cina in his book Resaleh Meiradjieh.[26]

3. The importance of justice in Islam. Islami legislation considers justice one of the great characteristics of a good Moslem. The justice of God is one of the basic principles of religion for Shieh; the head of religious affairs should be the one who has the most knowledge concerning religious laws and he is the most just; the one who leads the prayer should be just; and every Moslem should do justice to himself and to others. The following verses support the importance of justice in Islam: "Cooperate with one another in justice and piety, but cooperate not with one another in injustice and malice." (V:6) "But if thou undertake to judge, judge between them with equity; for God loveth those who observe justice." (V:42) "O ye who believe! Be ye steadfast witness for Allah (God) in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that he deals not justly." (V:8)

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[26]Mahmoud Shahabi, The Leader of Wisdom (Teheran: Print House of Elmi, 1949), p. 4.

4. The importance of group decision and group activities. Islam considers the believers as brothers and encourages them to cooperate with one another and work together. "It was by the mercy of Allah (God) that though wast lenient with them, for if thee hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from about thee, so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs." (III:159) "God's hand is with the group." "Cherish group processes, avoid solitude." (The words of Ali.)

5. The importance of social welfare and concern. Islam encourages people not to be individualistic or selfish, and to work for the common good. One of the famous words of Mohammad indicates that one who gets up in the morning and does not try to help in other people's affairs, is not Moslem.

As it was mentioned before, one-fifth of the yearly income and legal alms should be spent for the social welfare of people, building public hospitals, schools and so on. The writer remembers that during the second World War, some people were in need of food and other necessities in Shiraz. The money which was collected as legal alms and one-fifth of the yearly income was not enough to meet the needs of these people. Some religious leaders sent a telegram to the head of religious affairs (Syyed Abu Al-Hassan) and asked him what to do. He sent a statement saying that it is obligatory for

every Moslem who has property to take some of his own proper-
ty and send it to the public treasury to provide food for
those people in need.

6. The importance of the support of democratic govern-
ment and of the opposition to tyranny. According to the Is-
lamic laws which have been stated by some authorities, it is
the duty of every Moslem to support and try to establish a
democratic government. Also, it has been said that Moslems
should oppose tyranny and resist totalitarian government.

Edward G. Browne, late professor of Cambridge Universi-
ty in England wrote several books on different aspects of the
Iranian culture. He quoted some of the Iranians' remarks con-
cerning democracy when Malkam Khan (a great politician) was
discussing "humanity" in 1890's:

> One of the Ulama (religious leaders) of Fars
> writes, you are continually repeating the word "man"
> (Adam) and "humanity" (adamiyyat). What do you mean
> by them? We who thirst for justice and are the foes
> of oppression, and who by God's grace consider our-
> selves to be "men" in order that, even in what con-
> cerns the name, we may differ from beasts of prey,
> proclaim ourselves everywhere as "men."
> Whoever seeks after justice, is zealous for
> honor, loves knowledge, protects the oppressed, sup-
> ports progress, and wishes well to the community
> is a "man."[27]

There were two great movements against tyranny and cor-
ruption in the recent history of Iran which led to the change

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[27]Edward G. Browne, The Persian Revolution of 1905-
1909 (Cambridge: University Press, 1910), pp. 17-18.

from a totalitarian government to a constitutional govern-
ment. These two movements were supported and guided mainly
by religious leaders in Iran. Browne says:

> The first striking outward manifestation of the
> spirit occurred, so far as I know, in 1891, on the
> occasion of the prolonged and finally successful
> popular protest against the concession for a
> monopoly of Persian tobacco, granted to an English
> company in the spring of 1890.
> But it was the support and guidance of the
> mullas and mujtahids (religious leaders) the
> spiritual heads of the nation, which made organized
> and effective protest possible.[28]

An illustration of flexibility of Islamic laws is seen
in the statement of the head of religious affairs against the
tobacco concession. Mohammad Hassan, known as Mirzay Shirazi,
the head of religious affairs, discovered that the corrupt
king Nasser Al-Din and his minister were bribed by an English
company and gave the concession to that company without taking
into consideration the welfare of the Iranian people. Moham-
mad Hassan prohibited smoking tobacco and urged people not to
buy or sell tobacco. This statement defeated the king and
obliged him to cancel the concession. In reply to the ques-
tion concerning smoking, Mohammad Hassan stated: "At the
present time the use of tobacco in any way will be considered

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[28]Edward G. Browne, A Brief Narrative of Recent
Events in Persia (London: Luzac and Company, 1909), pp. 6-
7.

as fighting against Imam Zaman" (the sacred leader of the time).[29]

Another movement which was led and supported by religious leaders and others was the revolution of 1905 against the totalitarian government and the request for the constitution. The ideas of equality before law, the participation of the people in selection of the government, and the importance of social welfare and group decisions were supported by the Islamic laws since the beginning of Islam. Some of the great religious leaders such as Sayyed Jamal Assadabadi had stated these ideas. Browne says:

> At least thirty years ago the idea of a fixed and equitable code of laws before which all Persian subjects should be equal, and of a more or less representative government in which all Persian subjects should have a share, were actively promulgated in Persia by two very remarkable men of two quite distinct types, namely, the eminent Muslem divine and philosopher Sayyed Jamalud-Din (born about 1839, died 1897, and the equally eminent Persian diplomat, Prince Molkhom Khan.[30]

In the question of the constitution, the head of religious affairs (in 1905), Akhund Mulla Kazim Khorassani sent a statement saying that it is the duty of every Moslem to support the constitution and to assist in establishing the House of Justice (parliament). When this statement was

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[29]Ebrahim Taymouri, Prohibition of Tobacco--The First Negative Resistance in Iran (Teheran: Library of Socrates, 1949), p. 103.

[30]Browne, op. cit., p. 6.

issued, other religious leaders in Iran insisted that the people support the constitution. Finally the king had to accept the decision of the Iranian people and submitted to constitutional government in 1906.

The prophet of Islam himself had the same attitude toward democratic government. Ameer Ali has quoted from Ibn Hisham regarding this point: "His democratic thunder was the signal for the uprising of the human intellect against tyranny of priests and rulers."[31]

Islam respects human worth and dignity and rejects any sex, race, social and national privileges: "O people! We have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. The most respectable person among you is the most virtuous." (XLIX:13)

Al-Raheem mentioned the story of Bilal, a Negro person who had a high position at the time of Mohammad. "Bilal, a Negro friend of Mohammad who was from Utipio had the honor of being the prayer crier of Moslems before the prophet."[32]

Islam respects other religions and encourages Moslems to like other people and to do justice to them:

> Verily, those who believe (Moslems), and those who are Jews, Christians, or Sabaeans, whoever have faith in God and the last day, and work that which is right and good, for them shall be the reward

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[31]Sayyed Ameer Ali, Life and Teaching of Mohammad (London: W. H. Allen and Company, 1891), p. 212.

[32]Al-Raheem, op. cit., p. 111.

with their Lord; there will come no fear on them;
neither shall they be grieved. (V:73)

Say O Moslems: We believe in Allah (God) and that
which was revealed unto us and that which was re-
vealed unto Abraham, and Ismael, and Issac, and
Jacob and tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus
received, and that which the prophets received from
their Lord. We make no distinction between any of
them, and unto him we have surrendered. (II:136)

Browne has quoted a statement issued by the head of

religious affairs, Akhund Mulla Kazim Khorassani, in reply

to the question of the duty and treatment of Moslems toward

Zoroastrians. This statement was issued in 1909, saying:

The contempt and resentment of Zoroastrians and
people of other religions is prohibited, and it is
obligatory for all Moslems to consider the recom-
mendations of Mohammad in this respect which indi-
cate that Moslems should treat others well, should
like them, and protect their properties and lives.
Moslems should not neglect these recommendations
any time.[33]

Islam does not impose religion upon people by force.

It does not proclaim the doctrines of fatalism, determinism,

and rigorous religious duties upon its adherents. When a

Moslem becomes mature, he is expected to undertake some re-

ligious obligations according to his ability. Every individual

is responsible for his own actions, and he is the one who

should make a sound judgment and control his own behavior.

"There is no compulsion in religion, the right direction is

henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejects false

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[33]Browne, op. cit., p. 422.

deities and believes in Allah (God), he grasped a firm hand-
hold which will never break." (II:256)   "But of those who be-
lieve and do that which is right we will not load any indi-
vidual but according to his ability; they shall be the com-
panions in paradise; they shall remain therein forever."
(VII:41)

Western writers such as Browne, Gustavelobon, and
Urguhart, confess that simplicity and flexibility of Islam
let non-Moslem people accept this religion.   Jalali quoted
from Browne: "The simplicity and elasticity of Islamism
attracted them (Iranians) and they very soon became con-
verted."[34]

Gustavelobon[35] believed that the simplicity of re-
ligious principles and laws of Islam let Christian people
change their own religion and even their own language.   He
said that they found Islam closer to the truth, and the
rulers of Islam more just.

Social Ideals of Iranian People

A careful study of Iranian culture reveals that the
social philosophy of this nation is a social democracy which

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[34]Mehdi Jalali-Shirazi, "Education in Iran and Some
Suggestions for Its Betterment" (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis,
University of Pittsburg, 1938), p. 41.

[35]Fakhr Daei-Gillani (trans.), Civilization of Islam
and Arab (Teheran: The Print Institution of Elmi, 1955), pp.
143-48.

is strengthened by belief in God as a source of justice, knowledge, and kindness.

Some of the social ideals of the Iranian people are as follow:

1. They want to be the final authority in all affairs of their lives.

2. They want to protect their independence from foreign influences.

3. They are willing to accept foreign aid only if their rights and privileges as an independent nation are not violated.

4. They prefer to use the method of intelligence in solving social and individual problems; reasonable suggestions regardless of source are considered.

5. They desire to preserve their own culture, but, at the same time, they are willing to exchange their own ideas with other nations.

6. They want their children to be acquainted with the social and moral principles of Islam, and to have favorable attitudes toward social justice and democracy.

7. They want to support any movement toward justice, peace, and understanding throughout the world. They suffer from undesirable situations which have developed in certain small countries through the actions of so called Bigs.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF IRAN

The purpose of this chapter is (1) to present briefly
some of the ideas of the Iranian philosophers concerning edu-
cation, (2) to identify some educational objectives which have
been expressed through religious beliefs, and (3) to mention
the purposes of elementary education as stated by the authori-
ties of the Ministry of Education in Iran.

Iranian philosophers were not primarily concerned with
education. But some of them have discussed a few problems re-
lated to educational practices. Among those five philosophers
whose philosophic ideas were presented in the second chapter,
Ibn Cina, Ghazzali, and Toussi have expressed some notions on
education in their writings.

Sadig,[1] in his book, The Course of Culture in Iran and
West has presented the ideas of the Iranian philosophers on
education. The writer wishes to summarize Sadig's writings
in this respect.

Ibn Cina and Education

Ibn Cina is the first philosopher in the post-Islamic
period in Iran who discussed a few educational problems. The

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[1]Issa Sadig, The Course of Culture in Iran and West
(Teheran: Print House of University, 1953), pp. 407-40.

purposes of education according to Ibn Cina are: (1) religion,
(2) good morals, (3) health, (4) literacy, and (5) arts and
crafts.

He believed that parents should choose a good name for
their children and find a physically and mentally healthy
person to take care of them. He advised parents to start
moral training of their children at the end of the second
year. Parents should guard their children from undesirable
habits, from exposure to bad conduct, and from bad friends.
Ibn Cina believed that parents should not repress their chil-
dren's desires, and should not impose on them what they hate,
otherwise children become sad, angry, timid, and finally get
sick and will not be interested in anything.

When the child is six years of age, his parents should
send him to school until the age of fourteen. Ibn Cina be-
lieved that a teacher must be religious, honest, wise, clean,
just, and dignified. He must know how to educate children,
and improve their moral character.

He suggested a program for children which includes
teaching of The Koran, religious ideas, language, moral poems,
physical education, and arts and crafts.

He believed that the teacher should sometimes encourage
and sometimes threaten, and if that did not work he should
punish children. He recommended that teachers try to under-
stand the interests and capacity of children in order to teach

them arts and crafts which they are capable of learning.

Ibn Cina divided instruction into five types:

1. The practical instruction which helps children become acquainted with tools and the use of various instruments which are necessary for any industry.

2. Instruction concerning how to concentrate, how to memorize and repeat poems or names of plants.

3. Moral instruction which helps children learn good habits through exhortation.

4. Instruction by authority which makes children accept the teacher's words without any reason, but the teacher must be trusted for this type of instruction.

5. Instruction in reasoning which helps children become aware of causes and reasons for what they observe, and what they do every day.

Ghazzali and Education

Ghazzali discussed the importance of every Moslem seeking knowledge, and suggested different sciences for people who possess different capacities. He believed that the child is as a precious essence which is ready to accept any form, therefore, educators should be very careful in moral training of children during their early years.

Ghazzali thought that the sense of imitation is very strong in children. They follow the teacher's words and

manner; and they accept his standards. Therefore, the teacher should be careful in his speech and behavior. Ghazzali believed that wisdom is more important than knowledge and that it is inborn. Wisdom has some faculties such as awareness, understanding, memory and thought. He suggested that a scientist who is wise acts according to his knowledge.

The purposes of education according to Ghazzali are: (1) to achieve success in religion and world affairs (the life of this world is a means for the other world), (2) to save oneself from hell and acquire paradise and approval of God, (3) to control desire, (4) to improve the moral character, and (5) to revive the religion of Mohammad.

He suggested a program for children which included reading, writing, The Koran, the stories of great and religious men, poems which do not stimulate sexual activity, morals, and one hour of play. His ideas on educational practice were as follows:

1. He believed that adults should keep children away from bad friends.

2. Parents should bring up children and habituate them to simplicity in everything, eating, dressing and sleeping.

3. He believed that children must be taught useful and necessary things through training.

4. He believed that reward is an effective means for

the education of children.

5. He believed that children should practice what they learn.

6. He allowed punishment of children if it is necessary.

7. He believed that teachers should be very kind to children.

Toussi and Education

Toussi put much emphasis on environment and its influence on children's behavior. He believed the soul of the child was simple and ready to accept any form from the environment. He recommended that parents keep children away from those who were gambling, drinking, and using bad words.

He believed that childhood is the period of the greatest possibilities for educational achievement. In this period, children easily may acquire good character and form the bases of their personality. He recommended that parents give their children good names, and choose an intelligent and healthy person to take care of them.

For Toussi, the purpose of education for any individual is to be prosperous. He defined prosperity as feeling fine, enjoying oneself, having good character, and having few enemies and a large number of good friends among dignified and learned persons.

He proposed a program for children which consisted of:
(1) manners and duties of religion, (2) history of great
events, (3) health habits for eating, drinking, and sleeping,
(4) memorization of selected poems which were effective in
moral training, (5) ethics, (6) manner of living, (7) physical
education, and (8) industry and science.

Regarding educational practice, he pointed out the
following:

1. He believed that individuals differed in inter-
ests, and capacity. Teachers should study the child care-
fully and prepare a program of industry and science to fit
his interest and capacity.

2. He thought that through practice and repetition
children could learn manners, form good habits and modify
their own behavior.

3. He believed that reward was a good form of motiva-
tion for children. Also, that when a child does something
wrong the teacher should admonish him, but not before other
students.

4. He thought that teachers should make children
memorize historical events, poems of exhortation, and other
useful lessons, because such things were effective in moral
training.

5. He believed that teachers should make children
work hard, and spend some time in physical education during
the day.

Zoroastrian Teachings and Education

Through the study of Zoroaster's teaching the following conclusions may be drawn for education:

1. Children should be well trained to have good thoughts, good words, and good behavior.

2. Children should obey the just government; so one of the functions of schools is to accustom children to obey the laws and regulations of the country.

3. The famous proverb of Zoroastrians that "A good mind dwells in a sound body" led ancient Iranians to work first for the strength of the body, and then for the mind. Teaching righteousness, archery, and horseback riding were considered very important in the school program.

Dinshah has quoted this ancient Iranian prayer:

> O Ahurmazda, give me a child who will become a
> learned person, who will assume his responsi-
> bility to society, and a child who is courageous,
> dignified, and altruistic, and a child who
> serves his family, his city, and his country.[2]

This prayer illustrated well the purpose of education in ancient Iran. Also, there were some of Zoroaster's words which encouraged people to avoid laziness, get to work in the early morning, and try to do a job which is very helpful to others.

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[2]Slister Irani Dinshah, The Ethics of Ancient Iran (Teheran: The Print House of Rasty, 1955), p. 74.

Islam and Education

Education for men and women in all aspects of human life--moral, economic, social, and political--has been considered necessary and very important in Islam. Taking into consideration the precepts of Islam that have been drawn from the Islamic sources and which were mentioned in the second chapter, the following purposes may be of much importance:

1. To develop boys and girls physically, mentally, spiritually, morally, and socially, so that they may be able to assume responsibility to make sound judgments and to control their own behavior.

2. To develop in young people an attitude of brotherhood, justice and cooperation among themselves.

3. To help young people understand and appreciate the importance and advantage of the use of the method of intelligence in all aspects of human life.

4. To encourage young people to participate in social work and to contribute to the welfare and good of society.

5. To provide educational opportunity for every individual regardless of social, economic, race, and national background.

6. To prepare young people for vocational pursuits which enable them to render a valuable service to others, and to earn their own living.

7. To develop an understanding, appreciation, and attitude toward peace, justice, and brotherhood among human beings in general.

Those Iranian philosophers who have discussed some educational problems, though they were living in 11th, 12th, and 13th century, nevertheless have presented some interesting points regarding purposes and procedures of education.

Some of the purposes which have been expressed by these philosophers should be taken into account. For example, moral and spiritual training, health habits, vocational training, practical instruction, physical education, and reasoning.

Other notions such as the consideration of interests and capacity of children, individual differences among children, the effect of reward in the learning process, the influence of environment, the usefulness of subjects to be taught, the importance of childhood in the growth of personality, and the teacher's competency deserve our attention today.

Recently the authorities in Iran have issued two statements concerning the educational objectives for elementary education in Iran. One was proposed by the National Education Convention of July-August 1957 and was presented by the representative of Iran in Summer Education Conference at Geneva held by UNESCO in 1958. According to this statement

the purpose of elementary education in Iran is:

> To prepare children for their own individual and social life, by helping their balance of growth--physical, intellectual, and emotional. In order to achieve this objective, the elementary school should endeavor to help the child:
> To develop physical and mental health.
> To learn the basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic).
> To recognize and put into practice, to the best of his ability, moral and social values and essentials of his religion.
> To appreciate art and music, and learn self-expression through art.
> To understand, appreciate, and respect the national cultural heritage.
> To learn how to use his leisure time in a desirable way.
> To develop critical thinking and learn to share responsibilities.
> To appreciate work and have simple elementary experiences in how to make a living.
> To learn how to spend money with judgment and economy.
> To acquire those skills necessary to allow him to make full use of his ability to learn.[3]

The other statement was approved by a commission on the elementary curriculum in the Department of Studies and Programs, and was published in a special volume of Education, the official magazine of the Ministry of Education in 1957. This statement indicates that:

> The main purpose of education is to prepare children for life in such a way that complete and equal development is possible in the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of living. Therefore, educators believe that education should be oriented to the

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[3]Ministry of Education, Growth and Development of Primary Education Supplementary Report, A Report of UNESCO Summer Education Conference Geneva (Tehran: Audio-Visual Services Fine Arts Administration, 1958), pp. 3-4.

following purposes:

1. To facilitate physical growth and mental health.

2. To develop competency in reading, writing, and calculation.

3. To develop desirable attitudes toward family and family life.

4. To develop a sense of respect for others, to understand their positions and to hold intercourse and live with others in satisfying way.

5. To train faith and spiritual forces.

6. To develop a desire for using leisure time through useful activities.

7. To develop an appreciation of art and creativity in expressing the art through various ways.

8. To develop an understanding of educational heritages and to respect them.

9. To prepare necessary experiences and knowledge for life and livelihood.

10. To teach the essentials of the most efficient consumption.

11. To develop critical thinking and the sense of responsibility.

12. To develop a sense of appreciation of obligations, responsibilities, and privilege of civilization.

13. To develop an understanding of nature and to combat its difficulties.[4]

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[4]The Department of Studies and Programs, "The Purposes of Elementary Education," Education, 6:45, September 1957.

CHAPTER IV

SOME BASIC ISSUES IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss briefly some
basic issues in developing and improving the school curricu-
lum.

The Society and the School Curriculum

The school is a social institution which has been
established to accomplish the educational tasks that are
necessary for society to maintain its unity, to improve its
values, and to meet the needs of its members. Dewey, in com-
menting on the continuity of experience in social life, states:

> The continuity of any experience, through re-
> newing of the social group, is a literal fact. Edu-
> cation in its broadest sense, is the means of this
> social continuity of life. Every one of the con-
> stituent elements of a social group, in a modern city
> as in a savage tribe, is born immature, helpless,
> without language, beliefs, ideas, or social standards.
> Each individual, each unit who is the carrier of the
> life-experience of his group, in time passes away.
> Yet the life of the group goes on.[1]

The society, its cultural aspects, its value system,
and its needs is one of the important bases of the school cur-
riculum. The school experiences, activities, content, pro-
cedures, and purposes should be compatible with the social

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[1]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The
Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 3.

philosophy of the society in which the school exists and functions. Teachers and other people who work toward developing and revising the school curriculum should have an understanding of the cultural aspects of the society. Every society is unique and has specific characteristics which are quite different from those of other societies. The school curriculum is always influenced by the ideas, customs, and values which are predominant in the society. But at the same time the school should cultivate, preserve, and improve the social values and beliefs of the people.

Basic Functions of the School Curriculum

1. <u>Understanding of the culture</u>. One of the basic roles of the school curriculum is to enable pupils to understand and appreciate the cultural values of the society. The school curriculum should guide attitudes, behavior, and beliefs of pupils toward desirable social values. In this way the school maintains the social continuity of life and introduces ideals, expectations and values of the society to the young people. Referring to the role of education as transmission through communication, Dewey says:

> Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. This transmission occurs by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling from the older to the younger. Without this communication of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, opinions, from those members of society who are passing out of the group life to

those who are coming into it, social life could not survive.[2]

2. <u>Major competencies</u>. The second role of the school curriculum is to help pupils to develop major competencies, which are necessary for living, such as, competency in the use of communicative skills, competency to solve life's problems through the method of intelligence, competency in industrial skills, competency in living with others, and competency in developing well-balanced mental and physical health. Dewey, in emphasizing this work of the school, has stated:

> We are apt to look at the school from an individualistic standpoint, as something between teacher and pupil, or between teacher and parent. That which interests us most is naturally the progress made by the individual child of our acquaintance, his normal physical development, his advance in ability to read, write, and figure, his growth in the knowledge of geography and history, improvement in manners, habits of promptness, order, and industry--it is from such standards as these that we judge the work of the school, and rightly so.[3]

3. <u>Evaluation of culture</u>. Another function of the school curriculum is to enable pupils in developing competencies needed for evaluating social values and institutions. The school should help pupils to examine values and customs, basing their evaluation of these matters on sound, critical thinking. Through this procedure, the school curriculum

[2]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 4.

[3]John Dewey, <u>The School and Society</u> (New York: McClure, Phillips and Company, 1900), p. 19.

encourages pupils to question what has been taken as granted.
The school curriculum should help pupils participate in
directing and controlling social change. It provides experi-
ences which emphasize reflective thinking as the way of making
sound decisions. Social values, like other aspects of human
life, are subject to change, therefore, there is a need for
continuous evaluation on the part of individuals in all areas
of life.

4. Creativity in the culture. The function of the
school is not only to transmit the cultural values to pupils
or to enable them to evaluate these values, but the school
should help pupils to improve the culture; to create new
ideas, new tools, new habits, and new ways of living.
Dewey's definition of education, "That reconstruction or re-
organization of experience which adds to the meaning of experi-
ence, and which increases ability to direct the course of sub-
sequent experiences,"[4] indicates that a major function of the
school is to enable pupils to evaluate and reconstruct their
values and customs.

As the society is in the process of change, new prob-
lems and needs appear, and new solutions are necessary for
successful living. Therefore, the school program should en-
able pupils to realize their own capacities and potentials and

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[4]Dewey, Democracy and Education, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

discover new ways to solve their own problems and the prob-
lems of the society as well.

    5. <u>Adjustment to change</u>. Change in all aspects of
human life takes place in every society. Some societies, due
to technological growth in industry and science, are in the
process of rapid change. Others change slowly, but they
change. Therefore, the school curriculum must enable pupils
to adjust themselves to social change.

Social Philosophy and the School Curriculum

    The social philosophy or the value system of a society
should be reflected in all aspects of the school program.
Democracy as a social philosophy has been accepted by many
nations, including Iran. However, the concept of democracy
and its basic assumptions may be interpreted differently by
the nations who are striving toward this ideal. Although
there are different interpretations of democracy it may be
assumed that these nations consider democracy in general as
the best way of improving the social life. Dewey, referring
to democracy as the best form of social life, raises the
following questions:

> Can we find any reason that does not ultimately
> come down to the belief that democratic social ar-
> rangements promote a better quality of human experi-
> ence, and which is more widely accessible and en-
> joyed, than do non-democratic and anti-democratic
> forms of social life? Does not the principle of re-
> gard for individual freedom and for decency and
> kindliness of human relations come back in the end

to the conviction that these things are tributary to a higher quality of experience on the part of a greater number than are methods of repression and coercion or force? Is it not the reason for our preference that we believe that mutual consultation and convictions reached through persuasion, make possible a better quality of experience than can otherwise be provided on any wide scale?[5]

1. Democracy and some of its basic assumptions.

Democracy is more than a form of government. Dewey says, "It is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience."[6]   It is a way of approaching life. Some of the basic assumptions of democracy are:

(a) Respect for human worth and dignity;

(b) Faith in the capability of people to make sound judgment and right decisions when they are informed;

(c) The use of the method of intelligence in all aspects of life;

(d) Cooperation as the basic way of living and working together for the welfare of both the individual and the society; and

(e) The right and responsibility of those who are influenced by a decision to participate intelligently in making that decision.

2. Democracy and the school curriculum.

The basic theory of education which directs the purpose,

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[5]John Dewey, _Experience and Education_ (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 26.

[6]Dewey, _Democracy and Education_, op. cit., p. 161.

procedures, content, and activities in the school must be compatible with democracy. The school itself must be a democratic society and exercise democratic procedures in all aspects of its work.

The school experiences should help pupils to realize and develop their own potentialities. Opportunities for integration of personality must be provided continuously for all pupils regardless of race, beliefs, wealth, class, and sex. Individual differences among pupils must be recognized by teachers and others.

The teacher should have faith in the ability of children to realize their own needs, interests, and capacities and to grow in their ability to solve their own problems under his guidance. The teacher should provide opportunities for pupils to identify their own problems and to find possible solutions for those problems. The problem-solving method or method of intelligence should be used in all areas of the school life. The teacher should look for problematic situations which challenge the efforts and activities of pupils. He must guide them to formulate the problem, to find materials and resources, to organize data, to state tentative hypotheses, to test these hypotheses, and to find reasonable solutions for the problem and to evaluate the consequences of decisions. All school experiences and activities should be carried on cooperatively by teachers and pupils. Teacher-pupil

planning should be used in the school activities. All the school affairs, such as formulating purposes, selecting procedures, and evaluation should be done through cooperation of school administrators, teachers, parents, pupils, and others.

The school curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to initiate actions, to assume responsibility, and to base their judgment on sound reasons.

The Purpose of Education

One of the basic issues in the school curriculum is the determination of goals toward which school experiences should be oriented. To determine the goals or objectives of education, the curriculum builders must have a clear understanding of: (1) the sources of educational objectives, (2) criteria of sound educational objectives, and (3) the functions of educational objectives.

1. Sources of Educational Objectives

    a. Social needs and problems. Some educators consider "major functions of social life" as the goal toward which the school experiences should be oriented. These functions are: "protection and conservation of life, property, and natural resources," "production and consumption of goods and services," etc.

Romine[7] defines educational objectives in terms of
areas of life problems such as "effective citizenship,""con-
tinued learning," "physical and mental health," "home member-
ship," "vocational efficiency," etc. For example, in the
area of physical and mental health he states a number of prob-
lems which are common to all individuals such as: "How to
avoid infection," "How to develop good health habits," "How to
develop a well-balanced diet," etc. Then he mentions some
problems in this area which center more in the community, such
as: "The problem of water supply," "The problems of public
health services," "The problem of making available to all ade-
quate medical and nursing services," etc. On the bases of the
above problems, he formulates some behavioral objectives such
as: "An understanding of laws of personal health," "Habits of
healthful daily living," "Sensitivity to unhealthful home and
community conditions and desire to remedy them," etc.

There is no doubt that pupils encounter many problems
in social life, and they should be able to deal with such
problems. One of the purposes of education is to enable pupils
to develop good social attitudes, concerns and understanding
in order to contribute to the solution of the social problems.
Referring to the social orientation of the school experiences
and the school-community relationships, the authors of The

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[7]Stephen A. Romine, Building The High School Curriculum
(New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1954), pp. 166-68.

Elementary School, say:

> Any emphasis on the school's becoming an integral
> part of its community, as was pointed out in the
> previous chapter, will force the staff to consider
> 1) the personal social problems of living in that
> community as possible organizing center of its cur-
> riculum; 2) the democratization of social processes
> of living and working; 3) a broader selection and
> use of personal and physical educational resources;
> 4) the more effective leadership of the school, in
> the broader cooperative development of the educa-
> tional program of the community; and 5) the partici-
> pation and use of the school staff and the physical
> resources of the school in community enterprises.
> This effort to become community centered, if it ever
> goes beyond allowing the community to use the physi-
> cal plant in order to build good public relations,
> will push the school toward a more effective social
> orientation of its program, which should be reflected
> in appropriate statements of the social processes
> and areas of living which will serve as the basis for
> the development of the educational program of the
> school.[8]

b. _The needs of individuals._ One of the important

sources of educational objectives is the needs of individuals.

As Dewey says: "An educational aim must be founded upon the

intrinsic activities and needs (including original instincts

and acquired habits) of the given individual to be educated."[9]

Some people think that the purpose of education is to

prepare children for adulthood. They neglect the child as an

active being who has his own needs and purposes. It is true

that one of the purposes of education is to help pupils to

become good citizens and to live efficiently and happily in

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[8]Virgil E. Herrick et al., _The Elementary School_ (Engle-
wood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956), p. 79.

[9]Dewey, _Democracy and Education, op. cit._, p. 126.

adulthood. But this does not mean that teachers or others who work with children should neglect the more immediate needs, capacities, and interests of children even though educational experiences are to be oriented toward preparation for future life. Criticizing the idea that education is a process of preparation or "getting ready," Dewey has said:

> In the first place, it involves loss of impetus.
> Motive power is not utilized. Children proverbi-
> ally live in the present; that is not only a fact
> not to be evaded, but it is an excellence. The
> future just as future lacks urgency and body.
> To get ready for something, one knows not what nor
> why, is to throw away the leverage that exists, and
> to seek for motive power in a vague change. Under
> such circumstances, there is, in the second place,
> a premium put on shillyshallying and procrastina-
> tion. The future prepared for is a long way off,
> plenty of time will intervene before it becomes a
> present. Why be in a hurry about getting ready for
> it.[10]

Developmental tasks of children, as will be mentioned, should be a main source of educational objectives.

2. <u>Criteria of Sound Educational Objectives</u>

a. Objectives should be stated in terms of growth and development. This means that aims of education are considered as directions of growth, a process which may be directed and changed but is continuous. In this sense, as Dewey has pointed out, education has no aim beyond itself and it is a process of reconstructing and reorganizing. Dewey criticized the idea

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[10]<u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 63-64.

that growth is a movement toward a specific goal and said:

> Three ideas which have been criticized, namely,
> the merely primitive nature of immaturity, static
> adjustment to a fixed environment, and rigidity of
> habit, are all connected with a false idea of
> growth or development--that it is a movement
> toward a fixed goal. Growth is regarded as having
> an end, instead of being an end. The educational
> counterparts of the three fallacious ideas are
> first, failure to take account of the instinctive
> or native powers of the young; secondly, failure
> to develop initiative in coping with novel situ-
> ations, thirdly, an undue emphasis upon drill and
> other devices which secure automatic skill at the
> expense of personal perception. In all cases, the
> adult environment is accepted as a standard for
> the child. He is to be taught up to it.[11]

Another important point in this respect is that the educa-
tional objectives should not be concerned only with the in-
tellectual aspect of the growth, but social, emotional, and
physical as well.

b. Objectives must be stated in terms of behavior,
including skills, concepts, attitudes, and understanding.
This means that educational experiences should affect the
whole personality of the pupil, and objectives should be in-
terpreted in behavioral terms. For instance, such an ob-
jective as "pupils should think reflectively," should be
interpreted in behavioral goals. The school experiences
should provide opportunities for pupils to learn how to
identify and state the problem, how to collect and analyze
data, how to formulate hypotheses, and how to test hypotheses

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[11]Ibid., p. 60.

in the light of evidence available to them.

  c. The educational objectives should be compatible with the basic assumptions of democracy in those societies which are striving toward the democratic ideals. The objectives should be stated in regard to the needs, interests, and capacity of individuals. These objectives should guide the teachers to recognize individual differences and to provide experiences for every pupil according to his ability. These objectives should stimulate teachers and pupils to participate in group activities, to use the problem solving method in various aspects of the school work, and to cooperate in solving the problems of both group and individuals.

  d. Objectives should give evidence of internal consistency. Internal consistency means that educational objectives should reinforce one another. For example, if the objectives aim to promote scientific inquiry all of them should support this procedure. In contrast to internal consistency, objectives which suggest both democratic and non-democratic procedures are contradictory.

  e. Educational objectives should lend themselves to interpretation into activities, methods, and procedures. When objectives suggest certain procedures and activities, it would be possible to evaluate these objectives and the progress which has been made toward them. Otherwise, they are not meaningful.

f. Objectives should be comprehensive. In a sense, as previously mentioned, this means that objectives should be concerned, not only with the intellectual aspect of human growth, but also with social, emotional, and physical growth. They should be stated in terms of understanding, attitude, appreciation, skills, and knowledge. In another sense, the educational objectives must be general. As Dewey stated: "A truly general aim broadens the outlook; it stimulates one to take more consequences (connections) into account. This means a wider and more flexible observation of means."[12]

g. Objectives should be acceptable and understood by all those who are involved in the educational experiences. They should be attainable by teachers and others. This indicates that stating and formulating purposes and objectives require a cooperative action in which teachers, administrators, parents, pupils, and others should be involved. Those who work in this process, should be familiar with the value system of the society and its social problems, as well as with the needs, capacities and interests of the children. Regarding the formation of the purposes of education, Dewey has pointed out the following:

> The formation of purposes is, then, a rather complex intellectual operation. It involves (1) observation of surrounding conditions; (2) knowledge of what has happened in similar situations in the

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[12]Ibid., p. 128.

past, a knowledge obtained partly by recollection and partly from the information, advice, and warning of those who have had a wider experience, and (3) judgment which puts together what is observed and what is recalled to see what they signify. A purpose differs from an original impulse and desire through its translation into a plan and method of action based upon foresight of the consequences of acting under given observed conditions in a certain way.[13]

The educational objectives are not ends in themselves but they are guides for the educational experiences. As the needs of society and individuals are subject to change, so these objectives, also, should be dynamic and flexible.

3. <u>Functions of Educational Objectives</u>

a. Objectives give direction to the experiences, activities, and studies undertaken by teachers and pupils.

b. Objectives provide a point of attack which is very important in educational experiences.

c. Objectives provide for continuous and consistent progress.

d. They coordinate the efforts of individuals and groups of pupils and teachers.

e. They stimulate teachers and pupils in various activities.

f. They serve as guides for selection and organization of the school experiences.

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[13]Dewey, <u>Experience and Education</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 80.

g. They form the bases for an evaluation of the progress pupils have made.

The Content or the Subject Matter
of the School Curriculum

The question of what should be taught and how to organize the school experiences is a controversial issue among educators.

Types of School Curriculum Organization

1. Subject matter organization. The school curriculum may consist of skills, facts, and concepts which are organized into unrelated subjects such as reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. Pupils are supposed to learn these skills, facts, and concepts through memorization. Frequently a single text is the only source.

Dewey presented the characteristics of traditional schools:

> The main purpose or objective is to prepare the young for future responsibilities and for success in life, by means of acquisition of the organized bodies of information and prepared forms of skill which comprehend the material of instruction. Since the subject matter as well as standards of proper conduct are handed down from the past, the attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity, and obedience. Books, especially textbooks, are the chief representative of the lore and wisdom of the past, while teachers

are the organs through which pupils are brought into
effective connection with the material.[14]

In this type of program, each subject has its own logical ar-
rangement apart from other subjects. This type of organiza-
tion may be compatible with the concept of learning as an
acquisition of knowledge and skills. The purpose of educa-
tion which is followed in this type of program is the pursuit
of knowledge for its own sake. Regarding this type of pro-
gram, Dewey has said:

> In the traditional schemes of education, subject
> matter means so much material to be studied.
> Various branches, each having its principles of
> arrangement complete within itself. History is one
> such group of facts; algebra another; geography
> another, and so on till we have run through the en-
> tire curriculum.[15]

In the subject matter organization, the needs, inter-
ests, purposes, and capacities of pupils are likely to be neg-
lected. The subject matters of the school program are often
beyond the ability of pupils. The function of the school is
only to transmit the knowledge and skills which may be
neither related to the background of experience of pupils and
their problems, nor to present social life. This type of pro-
gram and its procedures are incompatible with the basic
assumptions of democracy, and it does not provide experiences
for children which enable them to understand the social values

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[14]Ibid., p. 3.

[15]Dewey, Democracy and Education, op. cit., p. 157.

of the society. In regard to the school experience and the ability of children, Dewey stated that:

> The teacher should be occupied not with subject matter in itself but in its interaction with the pupil's present needs and capacities. Hence simple scholarship is not enough. In fact, there are certain features of scholarship or mastered subject matter--taken by itself--which get in the way of effective teaching unless the instructor's habitual attitude is one of concern with its interplay in the pupil's own experience.[16]

Dewey was also of the opinion that subject matter in the school curriculum should be used to point to something beyond itself. For example, science may be introduced through a study of social problems and in turn, may be used to enlarge understanding of social difficulties.

> It is a sound educational principle that students should be introduced to scientific subject matter and be initiated into facts and laws through acquaintance with everyday social applications. Adherence to this method is not only the most direct avenue to understanding of science itself but as the pupils grow more mature it is also the surest road to the understanding of economic and industrial problems of present society.[17]

2. _Broad field organization_. The broad field organization of the school curriculum brings two or three subjects together and establishes a broad field. For example, such subject as reading, writing, and spelling become language arts, or history, geography, and civics become social studies.

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[16]_Ibid._, p. 215.

[17]Dewey, _Experience and Education_, _op. cit._, p. 98.

In this type of program it is easier for pupils to see the relationships which exist between two or three subjects. However, if the instructional materials, content, procedures, and purposes are the same as in the subject program, this type of organization has many of the same weaknesses.

3. <u>The experience program</u>. The content and activities of this type of program are selected and organized according to the felt needs, desires, and interests of pupils. In this program, pupils are given a great amount of freedom and the teacher tries to identify the interests of the children then organizes appropriate experiences accordingly. There is no plan in advance for directing and organizing the school activities. The experience program tends to be weak in social or cultural orientation. It is likely to develop an individualistic attitude among pupils. The most dangerous thing in this type of program is that it may fail to develop intelligent actions on the part of pupils. Needs, interests, and desires of pupils are the starting point in the school activities, but surely the main function of the school program is to help pupils control their own desires and interests and to develop critical thinking. Involved here is the question of the nature of freedom. Discussing the nature of freedom, Dewey has said:

> It is easy, in other words, to escape one form
> of external control only to find oneself in another
> and more dangerous form of external control. Im-
> pulses and desires that are not ordered by intelligence

are under the control of accidental circumstances.
It may be a loss rather than a gain to escape from
the control of another person only to find one's
conduct dictated by immediate whim and caprice;
that is, at the mercy of impulses into whose forma-
tion intelligent judgment has not entered. A per-
son whose conduct is controlled in this way has at
most only the illusion of freedom. Actually he is
directed by forces over which he has no command.[18]

One of the weaknesses of the experience program is

lack of organization of the school activities. It is diffi-

cult to organize the school activities on the base of the in-

terests of pupils. Those who advocate rigid plans for the

school activities, and those who support a rather planless pro-

gram leave much to be desired in sound education. The school

experiences should have sound organization which provides

opportunities for pupils to grow in the direction of clearly

stated educational goals. In regard to the problem of organi-

zation of school experiences, Dewey said:

Nothing can be more absurd educationally than
to make a plea for a variety of active occupa-
tions in the school while decrying the need for
progressive organization of information and ideas.
Intelligent activity is distinguished from aimless
activity by the fact that it involves selection of
means--analysis--out of the variety of conditions
that are present, and their arrangement--synthesis--
to reach an intended aim or purpose.[19]

4. _Social problems program._ The social problems pro-

gram may consist of a number of problems usually related to a

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[18]_Ibid._, pp. 75-76.

[19]_Ibid._, p. 105.

central theme. For example, a theme like "social relations" may involve such problems as: "Getting along with others," and "How to work effectively in group situations." These problems may be tentatively planned in advance or may be brought up in the class situation. All experiences, activities and plans are based upon the investigation of these problems. In this type of program, there is no limitation regarding the time, materials, subject matter, procedures, and activities to be employed. The study of such problems is a part of the school curriculum and is required for all students. The underlying theory of this type of program is to base learning on the problem solving method, to provide opportunities for pupils to handle their present social problems, and to use democratic procedures in class activities. Teacher-pupil planning, guidance, the use of varied materials and activities are common in this type of program. Needless to say, this type of program needs competent teachers who understand the concepts upon which such a program is based. A variety of resource materials are needed in the implementation of such a program. One major weakness of this program is that it is likely, in its emphasis upon present problems, to slight the importance of historical factors.

The study of human experience, and the selection of those experiences which enable pupils to deal effectively with present problems is very important. Stressing the

importance of cultural demands, Dewey says:

> Admit that traditional education employed, as the
> subject matter for study, facts and ideas so bound
> up with the past as to give little help in dealing
> with the issues of the present and future. Very
> well. Now we have the problem of discovering the
> connection which actually exists within experience be-
> tween the achievements of the past and the issues of
> the present. We have the problem of ascertaining how
> acquaintance with the past may be translated into a
> potent instrumentality for dealing effectively with
> the future. We may reject knowledge of the past as
> the end of education and thereby only emphasize its
> importance as a means.[20]

Some Criteria in Selection of Content of School Curriculum

1. The content of the school curriculum should con-
tribute to an understanding of the culture, to developing
major competencies like the use of communicative skills and
competency to solve life's problems through the method of
intelligence, and to evaluation and improvement of the cul-
ture.

2. The content should enable pupils to understand
the present issues of contemporary life and to appreciate
the value system of the society.

3. The content should be adjustable to the needs,
interests, and capacities of pupils; it should provide experi-
ences which help pupils in further growth and development;
and it should facilitate dealing with individual differences
among pupils.

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[20]Ibid., p. 11.

4. The content should be selected according to sound principles of learning.

5. The content of the school curriculum should provide unified studies of concepts, skills, knowledge and understanding.

6. The content should be compatible with the educational objectives.

Some Criteria in Organization of the School Curriculum

1. The curriculum organization should coordinate and supplement the endeavors and activities of pupils and teachers.

2. The scope and sequence of the curriculum organization should be flexible in order to allow teachers and pupils to prepare appropriate experiences in the class situation.

3. The school curriculum should be well organized in order to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to allot some periods for studying concepts, ideas, theories; some periods for work on a problem or project; some periods for individual activities and group activities; and some time for self expression on the part of pupils.

4. The curriculum organization should contribute to the continuity of the learning in the class situation and to promote pupils' growth and development.

5. The curriculum organization should be based on the needs, interests, and capacities of pupils.

6. The curriculum organization should enable teachers and pupils to direct their own activities toward educational purposes.

The Learner and the School Curriculum

The school curriculum consists of all activities, experiences, and studies which children have under the guidance and supervision of the school. Therefore, the child, his growth and development in all aspects of life, is the main base of the school curriculum. Dewey, in discussing the school and the life of children, stated:

> Moreover, if the school is related as a whole to life as a whole, its various aims and ideals--culture, discipline, information, utility--cease to be variants, for one of which we must select one study and for another another. The growth of the child in the direction of social capacity and service, his larger and more vital union with life, becomes the unifying aim; and discipline, culture and information fall into place as phases of this growth.[21]

Child Growth and the School Curriculum

The various aspects of maturation of children, such as physical, emotional, intellectual, social, the problems which children face in different stages of maturation, and the basic needs of children should be taken into consideration in curriculum development.

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[21]Dewey, The School and Society, op. cit., p. 107.

There are some significant points relating to child growth and development that teachers, and others who work with children, should take into account. First, growth is a continuous process rather than a series of definite stages which begin and end at a specific time. Secondly, growth is evidenced by gradual changes which take place in the child's behavior. Thirdly, growth includes the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development of children. All of these aspects of growth are interrelated and influenced by one another. Fourthly, individual children differ in the process of growth and development and each child is unique in this respect.

Havighurst has stated nine developmental tasks with biological, psychological, and cultural bases which are very helpful for teachers in understanding children. These tasks may be used as guiding principles in building the school curriculum. The developmental tasks are stated as follows:

1. Learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games.
Nature of the task. To learn the physical skills that are necessary for the games and physical activities that are highly valued in childhood, such skills as throwing and catching, kicking, tumbling, swimming, and handling simple tools.
2. Building wholesome attitudes toward oneself as a growing organism.
Nature of the task. To develop habits of care of the body, of cleanliness and safety, consistent with a wholesome, realistic attitude which includes a sense of physical normality and adequacy, the ability to enjoy using the body, and a wholesome attitude toward sex.

3. Learning to get along with age-mates.

Nature of the task. To learn the give and take of social life among peers. To learn to make friends and to get along with enemies. To develop a social personality.

4. Learning an appropriate masculine or feminine social role.

Nature of the task. To learn to be a boy or girl; to act the role that is expected and rewarded.

5. Developing fundamental skills in reading, writing, and calculating.

Nature of the task. To learn to read, write, and calculate well enough to get along in American society.

6. Developing concepts necessary for everyday living.

Nature of the task. A concept is an idea which stands for a large number of ideas of lesser degrees of abstraction. The task is to acquire a store of concepts sufficient for thinking effectively about ordinary occupational, civic, and social matters.

7. Developing conscience, morality, and a scale of values.

Nature of the task. To develop an inner moral control, respect for moral rules, and the beginning of a rational scale of values.

8. Achieving personal independence.

Nature of the task. To become an autonomous person, able to make plans and to act in the present and immediate future independently of one's parents and other adults.

9. Developing attitudes toward social groups and institutions.

Nature of the task. To develop social attitudes that are basically democratic.[22]

Individual Differences and the School Curriculum

There are many differences among children such as those in physical maturity, health, interests, background of experiences, readiness, mental development, special gifts,

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[22]Robert J. Havighurst, _Developmental Tasks and Education_ (2d ed.; New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1952), pp. 15-27.

reading ability, family expectations, and socio-economic status to which attention should be given.

Curriculum builders should take into consideration these differences and provide experiences which may be effective in meeting the needs of individual children. One of the major criticisms of the traditional school is its failure to provide comprehensive programs based on needs, interests, and abilities of individual pupils. Dewey, referring to the uniformity of method and the passive role of children in traditional schools has said:

> . . . on the same basis is explicable the uniformity of method and curriculum. If everything is on a "listing basis," you can have uniformity of material and method. The era, and the book which reflects the era, constitute the medium which is alike for all. There is next to no opportunity for adjustment to varying capacities and demands. There is a certain amount--a fixed quantity--of ready-made results and accomplishments to be acquired by all children alike in a given time. It is in response to this demand.[23]

The question which educators must face is how can the school curriculum be adjusted to individual differences among children. In dealing with this problem, several approaches have been proposed and tried by educators. Some of these approaches include:

1. _Ability grouping_. Classification of pupils according to ability is one way of developing individualized

[23]Dewey, The School and Society, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

instruction in the school program. School authorities divide

pupils into ability groups on the basis of I.Q., reading

age and ability. Tests are given to each pupil, such as the

Otis Self-administering Test of Mental Ability. The I.Q.

determined by this test may be one factor considered in estab-

lishing ability groups. This grouping is more refined when

comparison of results from this test are made with the re-

sults from other tests, the pupil's background, and his

achievement in school. Sometimes pupils are classified into

low, medium, and high ability groups. The assumption is that

each group is homogeneous in regard to ability of pupils.

Some of the difficulties in ability grouping are as

follows: First, the groups are not really homogeneous when

pupils are classified on the bases of I. Q. or their past

achievement because these two factors alone do not suffi-

ciently reflect the influence of differences in physical ma-

turity, interests, background of experiences, and socio-

economic status, as were mentioned previously. Second, abil-

ity grouping requires a modification of purposes, methods, and

subject matter. Third, ability grouping encourages pupils to

make insidious comparisons, pupils who are placed in lower-

level section tend to feel ashamed and discouraged. It is not

endurable for children to be considered stupid. Fourth, under

a system of ability grouping, the school authorities are

likely to pay less attention to the social and emotional

aspects of the maturity of children. Finally, there is some
research to indicate that ability grouping is not effective
in the long-term achievement of pupils. For example, Barbe[24]
presented a study which was conducted in several schools in
New York City. Two groups of pupils were selected to be in
the experiment. Group I was formed with children of 150 I.Q.
and above, while Group II consisted of children with I.Q.'s
of 135-150. All of the children were between the ages of
seven and one-half and nine and one-half years and were ac-
celerated in their school placement. At the end of the three-
year experiment, comparisons were made of achievement of the
experimental groups and control groups of children who had
equal intellectual capacity but were not in special classes.
It was found that there was no significant difference in the
achievement scores of the segregated and non-segregated groups.

2. Gifted children. Various proposals have been made
for working with gifted children. Some of these proposals in-
clude:

(a) Acceleration. This means placing the child ahead
of his age-mates. In such a situation, the child may have edu-
cational experiences more appropriate to his intellectual level,
but at the same time, he may not have physical, emotional, and
social ability to cope with these more advanced experiences.

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[24] Walter B. Barbe, "Homogeneous Grouping for Gifted
Children," Educational Leadership, 13:225-29, January 1956.

b. <u>Enrichment of the curriculum</u>. This may enable the gifted child to remain with his age-mates and at the same time gain intellectual experiences that are more suitable to his abilities. The child may object to having more difficult assignments than those given to the average ability pupils. Additional difficulties may arise if it becomes obvious that gifted children are being handled differently than average pupils. An experienced teacher, however, by using various methods is able to encourage pupils to participate in class activities according to their own abilities.

c. <u>Special classes</u>. This procedure is feasible only in large school systems. Still there is doubt as to whether gifted children can achieve more in these classes than in regular classes. However, this is one way to help more able students to take advantage of the school activities.

Special classes for mentally and physically handicapped children have been established in some schools. Certain programs for mentally handicapped children may be useful and enable them to attain their full potential. For example, the curriculum may be built around the school lunch program and other common school activities. These children, under the guidance and supervision of teachers, may participate in purchasing, cooking, and serving of food. Academic work may grow out of activities such as preparing menus and buying groceries. Language work may be done with meeting people,

waiting on table, or writing invitations. Through such activities children may develop basic concepts, attitudes, and understanding according to their abilities.

d. <u>Problem-solving method</u>. One of the functions of the school program is to enable pupils to solve problems intelligently. The problem-solving method requires a variety of activities which provide opportunities for pupils to learn how to identify their own problems and to state them in their own words. This method enables pupils to collect relevant information, to use knowledge in dealing with problems, to organize and analyze data, and to draw some conclusions and find solutions for problems. In all of these phases, pupils participate in many activities. They are motivated by their own needs, they try to solve their own problems, and they select and organize information and knowledge according to their own abilities.

Teachers, by using this method, may be more able to understand the needs, capacities, interests of pupils, and provide experiences which enable them to solve their own problems.

Other methods such as the laboratory method, project method, and unit method are helpful in dealing with individual differences.

In order to provide educational programs in which the individual differences of children are used as a basis for

curriculum building, the following considerations may be help-

ful:

1.   The school needs a systematic study program which

through various techniques such as physical examination, use

of various tests, and case study shows the status and growth

of each pupil. The school needs to provide for continuous

evaluation of each individual's progress. This program should

enable teachers to know more about children, their needs, in-

terests, abilities, and problems.

2.   The total number of pupils in each class should

be so adjusted that the teacher can know pupils and adapt

experiences according to the needs, ability, and interest of

the child.

3.   There should be much informal grouping within

classes on the bases of interests, capacity, and needs of

pupils.

4.   The school program should be comprehensive and pro-

vide various experiences utilizing different methods as

needed.

5.   The school should provide instructional materials

and equipment appropriate to the needs and ability of pupils.

Learning Processes and the School Curriculum

Curriculum builders must take into consideration the

nature of learning as they work toward improving the present-

day school curriculum. Learning is the modification of be-
havior, attitudes and tendencies toward behavior which re-
sults from the process of experiencing. Experience is a
process in which there is interaction between the individual
and his environment. Purposeful activity in the learning
process involves the whole organism of the learner and the
whole situation in which he behaves. In regard to the organ-
ismic concept of learning, Ragan has stated:

> The personality of the individual emerges through
> interaction with the environment, but one element in
> the interaction consists of the ability of the indi-
> vidual to create new ideas. The individual and the
> environment are not regarded as separate entities but
> as a functional unit. Learning is regarded as a
> means for improving the behavior of individuals and
> in turn for improving human relationships. Thus,
> human thought and action are recognized as factors
> in building behavioral patterns and in giving direc-
> tion to social change.[25]

Factors Involved in the Learning Process

1. _Readiness_. Readiness is an important factor in
the learning process. The learner should be physically, emo-
tionally, intellectually, and socially mature in order to
learn certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes. There are
times that the individual is more ready to participate in cer-
tain activities and to gain much from what is going on in the
teaching-learning situation than he is at other times.

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[25]William B. Ragan, _Modern Elementary Curriculum_ (New
York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1953), p. 44.

There is also much difference in the stage of readiness among children. Some may be ready to start reading or writing at an earlier age than others. Some children may be ready intellectually, but they may not be mature socially or emotionally. Developmental tasks as well as needs and interests of children may provide some direction for readiness.

The school program must provide experiences which may be adjustable to the child's stage of readiness. Sometimes it is necessary to postpone the teaching of some concepts or skills for a child or a group of children who have not reached a certain level of development. At the same time attention must be focused on the needs of other children who are ready to progress. The school curriculum must be organized in accordance with the growth and development of children. The scope and sequence of school experiences must be flexible enough to meet the needs of individual children.

2. Background. Learning is a form of growth and it is a continuous process. Experiences of the learner are very important for they are the bases for further growth and development. The child's experiences in the school are affected by previous experiences. What a child learns in class situations should modify his future experiences. In defining the principle of continuity, Dewey said: "The principle of continuity of experience means that every experience both takes

up something from those which have gone before and modifies
in some way the quality of those which come after."[26]

The child's previous experiences should be utilized to
help him understand present situations and to gain greater
control over new experiences.

Educators who guide the development of the school cur-
riculum should take into account the individual background of
children. Teachers and others who work with children should
adjust school experiences to the differences in background so
that present experience will facilitate growth and develop-
ment.

3. Activity and learning. When one considers learning,
not merely as acquisition of knowledge and skills, but as the
modification of behavior and attitudes through experience,
one realizes that children must have an active role in the
learning situation. Because the child is the one who should
be actively engaged in the learning process, teachers must
provide opportunities for him to participate in experiences
which enable him to think critically, work cooperatively, en-
gage in social activities, and to solve his own problems.
None of these objectives can be achieved if teachers fail to
encourage children to participate in these processes.

New methods such as the problem-solving method, the
project method, etc., are more likely to provide opportunities

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[26]Dewey, Experience and Education, op. cit., p. 27.

for the learner to participate and actually have an active
role in school experiences than traditional methods of teach-
ing. Dewey, in commenting on the traditional school says:

> There is very little place in the traditional
> schoolroom for the child to work. The workshop, the
> laboratory, the materials, the tools with which the
> child may construct, create, and actively inquire,
> and even the requisite space, have been for the most
> part lacking. The things that have to do with these
> processes have not even a definitely recognized
> place in education.[27]

4. <u>Interest, purpose, and motivation</u>. There are
several interrelated factors in the learning process, such as,
interest, purpose, effort, and motivation. Interest of the
child plays a significant role in the class situation. Dewey,
in emphasizing the value of interest in learning states:

> Interest represents the moving force of ob-
> jects--whether perceived or presented in
> imagination--in any experience having a purpose.
> In the concrete, the value of recognizing the dy-
> namic place of interest in an educative development
> is that it leads to considering individual children
> in their specific capacities, needs, and prefer-
> ences. One who recognizes the importance of inter-
> est will not assume that all minds work in the same
> way because they happen to have the same teacher and
> textbook.[28]

If the child is to take an active role in a learning
situation, he must be interested in what is going on in that
specific situation. Being interested stimulates the child to
make an effort in interacting with his environment and ad-
justing himself to the new situation.

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[27]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 49.

[28]Dewey, <u>Democracy and Education</u>, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 153.

School programs must provide life-like problems which require effort on the part of the child if he is to deal with such problems effectively. School experiences should challenge the interest of the child. At the same time these experiences should not be beyond his present ability. Problems which are too difficult tend to cause one to lose interest.

School experiences should be closely related to the purposes of children. Teachers should help children identify their own purposes and plan ways for attaining them. Teachers must also provide situations in which children not only identify their own needs but the needs and purposes which the social life requires of them. When the school activities are purposeful to children, the level of their interest is higher and the activities are likely to be more meaningful to them.

The child's purpose guides his actions and enables him to evaluate his own achievement. When a child's needs direct his activities there is no need for extrinsic motivation. Interest, purpose, and motivation must be intrinsic to the child. Teachers should provide a variety of experiences through which the child becomes increasingly able to satisfy some of his own basic needs. The school activities should be selected in accord with basic needs of children. The purposes of such activities should be clear and attainable for children. Children should grow in their ability to recognize

the consequences of their own behavior, and in their ability
to evaluate their own progress.

5. <u>Transfer of learning</u>. One of the basic functions
of education is to help children apply what they have learned
to new situations. Educators have differed in their opinion
as to whether this transfer, from school situations to other
situations, is an automatic process or whether it depends upon
the similarity or identical elements in new and old situations.
They also question whether transfer is possible when the
learner is not aware of interrelationships of the elements in
the old and new situations. This means that transfer of
learning takes place when the learner understands the basic
principles, concepts, and ideas in the two situations. Ac-
cording to Gestalt theory, learning is the result of insight
and understanding. Thus the learner is in a better position
to apply his learning to other situations when his learning
has been cognitive rather than mechanistic. Therefore, the
teacher should help children generalize and understand the
principles and relationships involved in each learning situ-
ation. The following conditions should be taken into account
if one is to promote transfer of learning:

>   1. The degree to which the "acquired and re-
> tained" facts, principles, skills, ideals, and atti-
> tudes have been generalized in the learning activi-
> ties and experiences rather than limited to a narrow
> area of application.
>   2. The degree to which learning activities and
> materials include ideas, concepts, and emotional

relationships identical or quite similar to those
required in the field to which transfer is expected.

3. The degree to which skills and procedures em-
ployed in learning situations are identical or very
similar to those needed in the fields to which trans-
fer is expected.

4. The degree to which the learner has been
trained to examine and analyze new situations for the
purpose of associating them with previous ones and to
identify elements in new situations to which acquired
training may be applied.

5. The native ability of the learner to general-
ize, to perceive relationships and to recall previous
experiences as pertinent to the new situations and
the problems involved in them.[29]

6. Whole-part relationships and understanding. Ac-

cording to Gestalt theory, learning goes forward when the

learner gains insight into the learning situation. In order

to gain insight the learner must see the situation as a whole.

Parts do not make any sense unless the learner puts them in-

to a pattern. Another important point in this respect is

that the whole may exhibit characteristics not found in any

of the parts. The pattern or configuration that the human

mind produces to relate the parts and elements is more than

a simple sum. Thus it is that learning is not the result of

repetition but is the result of insight, understanding, and

generalization. It is not mechanical in nature for it follows

the pattern of growth of living organisms. Another implica-

tion of this theory is that understanding comes first in the

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[29]Harl R. Douglass, editor, The High School Curriculum
(New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1947), p. 67.

learning situation and then the learner acts and achieves

something. In contrast, behaviorism indicates that response

takes place first and, after several responses, the learner

begins to understand. Concerning the two types of responses,

mechanistic and cognitive, Dewey says:

> The difference between an adjustment to a physical
> stimulus and a mental act is that the latter involves
> response to a thing in its meaning; the former does
> not. A noise may make me jump without my mind being
> implicated. When I hear a noise and run and get water
> and put out a blaze, I respond intelligently; the
> sound meant fire, and fire meant need of being ex-
> tinguished. I bump into a stone, and kick it. One
> side purely physically. I put it to one side for fear
> some one will stumble upon it, intelligently; I respond
> to a meaning which the thing has. I am startled by a
> thunderclap whether I recognize it or not--more likely,
> if I do not recognize it. But if I say, either out
> loud or to myself, that is thunder, I respond to the
> disturbance as a meaning. My behavior has a mental
> quality. When things have a meaning for us, we mean
> (intend, propose) what we do. When they do not, we
> act blindly, unconsciously, unintelligently.[30]

The Gestalt theory is very influential in educational

practices at the present time. Teaching reading through

phrases and sentences instead of teaching children to build

words from the letters of the alphabet is an example of the

influence of the Gestalt or field theories upon teaching

methods. Regarding the influence of Gestalt theory in the

elementary school program Ragan says:

> Instructional practices in the elementary school
> have been greatly influenced in recent years by
> Gestalt psychology and other field theories of
> learning. The newer concepts of learning are out-
> growths of organismic logic, which is exemplified

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[30]Dewey, _Democracy and Education_, op. cit., p. 35.

in physics by the theory of relativity, in biology
by the idea of emergence and in the social sciences
by such concepts as interdependence, group dynamics,
and the voluntary cooperation of groups in the so-
lution of common problems.[31]

Various methods such as the problem solving method,
project method, and unit method may be helpful in showing the
whole field in any area of the school curriculum. Those en-
gaged in curriculum building must take into account this con-
cept of learning in the selection and organization of the con-
tent or subject matter of the school curriculum.

Curriculum Improvement

A Basic Approach in Curriculum Improvement

Smith, Stanley, and Shores[32] have suggested a basic
procedure in developing and revising school curriculum. They
believe that curriculum improvement is a social process in
which the needs, values, and problems of the community, the
structure of the school, the attitudes, needs and under-
standing of pupils are essential elements. They also believe
that curriculum improvement requires change in the social
equilibrium of the society in which the school functions.
Concerning the social equilibrium and the school curriculum

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[31]Ragan, op. cit., p. 44.

[32]Othanel B. Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan
Shores, Fundamentals of Curriculum Development (Yonkers-on-
Hudson: World Book Company, 1957), pp. 436-49.

they state:

> The fact of the case is that there are scores
> of social and psychological forces playing upon
> the school with respect to the educational program.
> Some of these forces are tending to change the
> program, while others, acting in the opposite
> direction, are tending to keep the program as it
> is, if not to drive it to a lower level of efficien-
> cy. When the resultant of these opposing forces is
> zero, the level of educational practice tends to
> remain about the same. When these opposing forces
> become "frozen" so that they remain nearly the same
> from year to year, it is customary to speak of the
> educational program as the "conventional" or "tradi-
> tional" curriculum. A state of affairs such as the
> one just described, in which the resultant of the
> opposing forces is zero, or so near zero as to allow
> little appreciable change, is referred to as social
> equilibrium.[33]

These authors believe that curriculum improvement is possible only through upsetting the old equilibrium and setting up a new equilibrium. This may be done (1) by weakening the restricting forces, and (2) by strengthening the supporting forces. They suggest four steps in curriculum improvement:

1. A comprehensive study of the school-community situation to discover the forces which support the present curriculum.

2. To overturn the present equilibrium.

3. To control different forces involved in this process in order to move the change toward a desirable direction.

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[33]Ibid., p. 441.

4. To set up a new equilibrium of elements which maintain the new curriculum.

Some Basic Considerations in Curriculum Improvement

1. Educators who work toward curriculum improvement should set forth a basic theory of education which is compatible with the value system of the society. This theory is to guide the curriculum workers in all aspects of curriculum improvement. The educational objectives should be stated in the light of this basic theory. Those who participate in the process of formulating purposes and stating guiding principles should take into account: (1) the needs, interests, abilities of pupils; (2) the present social problems, the competencies which are necessary for social life, and the needs of society; and (3) the basic principles of the learning process and factors involved in this process.

2. A comprehensive study of the present program is necessary for its revision and improvement. This study should enable the curriculum workers to understand the theory, principles, and factors which affected the present program. The weaknesses and strengths of the present program should be identified in the light of the basic theory of education, the educational objectives, and the guiding principles which have previously been set forth.

3. Planning for curriculum improvement is a cooperative action in which many people, including administrators,

teachers, students, parents, and professional people in the field of education, should participate and work together. In preparing a comprehensive plan for curriculum change the following steps should be taken: (a) selection of those who should participate in this process, (b) leading the group to assign the duty and responsibility of each individual, (c) determining the area of the curriculum which should be revised, (d) establishing inservice education for teachers and other individuals who work in this process, (e) providing professional materials for group members, (f) providing money, time, materials, and equipment which are necessary for curriculum revision, and (g) informing community people of the purposes, procedures, and results of this revision.

4. The execution of the plan should begin after the plan has been carefully prepared. The crucial point in this stage is that planning should be continued as a part of actions, and the main plan should be modified and revised if it seems necessary.

5. Evaluation of the revised curriculum is an important aspect in the process of curriculum improvement. It is true that the school curriculum should be changed in order to be adjustable to the needs of individuals and society, but the change which does not contribute to adjustability of the school curriculum is not worthwhile. Therefore, any changes which take place in the school curriculum should be evaluated in the light of theories and purposes of education.

CHAPTER V

THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OF

THE NORMAL SCHOOL IN IRAN

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold: (1) to
describe the present professional program of the Normal School
in Iran, especially that part which deals with curriculum
theory; (2) to discuss briefly the course content related to
curriculum theory; and (3) to identify some of the areas in
this program that need strengthening and supplementing.

The Present Professional Program

The professional aspect of the present program (see
Table I, page 114) consists of three courses; psychology,
education, and ethics. In addition, five hours of practice
teaching is required for all students in the second year. A
more comprehensive description of this program is presented
in the official statement of the Normal School curriculum[1]
which states that students must have three hours of educa-
tional courses per week in the first year--two hours of edu-
cational psychology and one hour of education. In the second
year, students must have one hour of education (methods of
teaching) throughout the year, one hour of educational

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[1]The Ministry of Education, The Normal School Curricu-
lum (Teheran: Print House of Bakir Zadeh, 1951), pp. 2-5.

TABLE I

THE NORMAL SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDY[a]

Subject	Number of Class Meetings Each Week	
	First Year	Second Year
Psychology, education and ethics	3	2
Persian language and literature	4	3
Arabic language	2	2
Foreign language	4	4
History	1	1
Geography	1	1
Mathematics	4	3
Physics and chemistry	3	3
Natural science	2	2
Health	1	1
Mechanical drawing and sketching	1	1
Music and singing	2	2
Physical training and scouting	2	2
Handiwork and agriculture	2	2
Teaching practice		5
Military instruction	3	3
Total	35	37

[a]Source: The Ministry of Education, The Normal School
Curriculum (Teheran: Print House of Bakir Zadeh, 1951), p. 2.

psychology in the first half of the year, and one hour of ethics in the second half. The total amount of practice teaching must not be more than 160 hours per year.

1. Educational psychology.

Students are taught the nature of educational psychology, the usefulness of educational psychology, methods used in the study of mental affairs, physical and mental characteristics of human beings, the nature of sensation, perception, and learning (memory, attention, and association), laws of learning, fatigue, the nature of intelligence, feelings (pleasure and pain, emotions and desires), will, language, and personality. Two-thirds of these topics are taught in the first year, and the remainder in the first half of the second year.

The textbook used in the educational psychology course covered identically the above topics.

2. Education.

    a. Education and its social and moral purposes

    b. The teacher and his characteristics

    c. The learner and his characteristics with regard to his growth and development

    d. Order and discipline

    e. Lesson plans, characteristics of a good lesson, and the use of the textbook

    f. Classification of children in the school

g. The school plant and equipment

h. The school curriculum

i. General procedures in teaching, such as the lecture method

j. Written assignments

k. The duties of the teacher

l. School and community

m. Different methods of examination

These topics are taught in the first year, and in the second year students are taught the use of audio-visual aids and various methods of teaching subject matter.

The textbook used in this course is <u>Modern Method in Education</u>,[2] written by Dr. Issa Sadig. The book included the above topics.

3. Ethics.

The course in ethics deals with the necessity of professional growth of teachers, the teacher's responsibility and his consideration of moral and judicial laws of the country, the teacher's obligations toward children and other teachers, his manner in and out of the school, and privileges of teachers.

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[2]Issa Sadig, <u>Modern Method in Education</u> (Teheran: The Print House of Sahami Sherkat Tabeh Ketah, 1958).

Course Content Related to Curriculum Theory

The author of Modern Method in Education included

therein a discussion of some issues regarding the school cur-

riculum. For example, the purpose of education, as stated by

Sadig, is to help the child become a useful and effective mem-

ber of society. A person, if he is to be an effective and

useful member of society, must have the following character-

istics:

a. He must be healthy. As a means toward achieving

this purpose the school should (1) encourage the development

of sound health habits in children, (2) train children to be

sensitive toward their own health, and (3) prepare informa-

tion concerning health problems for children.

b. He must have vocational training. The author sug-

gested: (1) that the Ministry of Education should establish

vocational schools instead of increasing the number of

secondary schools, (2) that handiwork should be included in

the elementary and secondary school curriculum, (3) that a

guidance program designed to help children in choosing a voca-

tion should be included in the school curriculum, and (4) that

emphasis should be placed upon an appreciation of labor as a

worthy vocation.

c. He must be encouraged to establish and maintain a

family. Emphasis on the biological aspects of man should be

given in the natural sciences. Home economics, care of

children, both theory and practice should be included in the curriculum for girls.

d. He must be religious. The author suggested that teachers themselves should exert a religious influence upon children.

e. He must be interested in civic responsibilities. The author suggested that school provides experiences for children to participate in ruling the country and to cooperate with the government. Six purposes for civic training were mentioned: (1) to train children to perform civic obligations, (2) to acquaint children with the cultural heritage, (3) to provide valid information concerning the social institutions and the needs and weaknesses of society, (4) to teach children the meaning and limitations of freedom, and the necessity for obedience to law, (5) to teach children to study civic problems scientifically, and (6) to acquaint children with the United Nations.

f. He must be able to use leisure time well. The school should help children participate in extra-curricular activities, and learn how to use their leisure time constructively.

g. He must be able to express himself well, and to listen to others and understand them. The author suggested that children, through social activities, should learn to

express their own ideas, and to listen critically to speeches.[3]

Sadig defined curriculum as "the order of the study" which assigns what the learner should do in the school. He mentioned three principles for preparing the school curriculum. First, materials and activities must be selected according to the social purposes of education. Second, interests and desires of the learner must be taken into account in preparing a program. Third, subjects and materials must be arranged according to the growth, age, and intelligence of the learner.

Sadig mentioned a type of activity program in which children, under the guidance of the teacher, select a topic like "transportation" and work on it two periods each day for two months. In this type of program, children work together and they do some reading, calculation, writing, and careful observation. He also mentioned the importance of proper scheduling of school activities.[4]

Some Significant Areas in Teacher Preparation

In contrast to this limited Normal School program a review of the literature pertaining to professional aspects of teacher education suggests that knowledge and understanding

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[3]Ibid., pp. 38-130.

[4]Ibid., pp. 266-273.

in the following areas is important for all prospective
teachers:

1. Child growth and development.   A teacher should
have some understanding and information concerning principles
of child growth and development. He should be competent in
applying these principles in teaching situations. Courses in
child development, mental hygiene of children, and educational
psychology should help prospective teachers understand that:
(a) each child is different in his ability to learn and grow,
therefore, the school program must be adjusted to the nature
of individual pupils; (b) learning is a process of experi-
encing and growing and it is creative in nature, so the
school activities should help pupils express themselves cre-
atively; (c) learning must be purposeful to the learner; and
(d) learning is emotional as well as intellectual.

In addition to understanding the general character-
istics of child development, a teacher should be familiar with
certain problems that children face in different stages of de-
velopment and he should know how to study the child's behavior.

2. A teacher should have some understanding and ap-
preciation of the social philosophy of the society in which
the school functions. He should understand the role, function,
and influence of the school in the society. Courses in
philosophy of education should help prospective teachers under-
stand that: (a) in democratic societies, democracy "as a way

of coming at life"[5] is the guiding social philosophy; (b) the function of schools in such societies is not only to direct pupils toward democratic ideals, but to improve these ideals as well; (c) the school program should provide opportunities for children to exercise the method of intelligence in solving the problems of individuals and society; and (d) the teacher's role in the learning situation is that of a guide rather than of a dictator.

3. Teachers need to understand the basic elements involved in the school curriculum, the procedures of curriculum improvement, and the sociological, philosophical, and psychological bases of the school curriculum. Courses in this area should help prospective teachers develop: (a) the competency to plan a unit of work in accord with the course of study and educational objectives; (b) the competency to organize and guide class experiences effectively; (c) the competency to formulate purposes with regard to educational objectives; (d) the competency to select instructional materials and organize learning experiences in order to meet educational objectives; (e) the competency to adjust the instruction to individual pupils and use individualized instructional procedures when it is necessary; and (f) the competency to analyze issues and problems related to curriculum building and revision.

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[5]H. Gordon Hullfish, "Educating for Democracy," A.A.U.P. Bulletin, 41:265, November 1955.

4. Teachers need to have competence in counseling and guidance. Courses in this area should help prospective teachers: (a) to understand the nature of an effective counseling and guidance program in the whole life of pupils; (b) to be able to participate effectively in the counseling and guidance program of the school; (c) to help pupils understand their own capacities, needs, interests, and limitations; (d) to recognize various problems that pupils face and to realize the need of referring pupils to specialists for help with problems that the classroom teacher is not able to deal with; and (e) to have information concerning the vocational opportunities available to pupils.

5. Teachers need to know the meaning of evaluation, its purpose, its use, and the points that must be taken into account in the evaluative process. Courses in evaluation should help prospective teachers understand that: (a) evaluation of the progress of pupils requires a careful study of all aspects of the pupil's behavior; (b) evaluation has to do with the growth that pupils have made in all phases of the school life rather than with the academic aspect alone; (c) evaluation is a continuous and cooperative process involving pupils, teachers, and parents; and (d) evaluation should consider quality as well as quantity of growth.

Teachers also need to develop these competencies: (a) to construct and use evaluative instruments to measure

the growth that pupils have made toward educational objectives; and (b) to be able to study individual pupils through various techniques such as observations, art expressions, sociograms, and written reports.

6. Teachers need to become familiar with the social aspects of the school and the class situation. There should be some experiences, therefore, in the teacher education program to assist prospective teachers to develop: (a) the ability to utilize democratic procedures in planning and conducting pupil-learning activities; (b) the ability to develop a sense of responsibility and leadership on the part of pupils; (d) the ability to recognize the social dimensions of the class situation, such as prestige, privilege, and leadership and the effects of these things among pupils; (e) the ability to understand the basic psychological needs of pupils such as affection, "belonging to," self expression, and purpose; and (f) the ability to analyze socio-psychological problems in class situations.

7. Teachers need to be acquainted with audio-visual aids and their uses. Courses in this area should help prospective teachers understand that: (a) audio-visual materials make learning more permanent; (b) audio-visual materials have great influence on the attitudes and behavior of pupils; (c) audio-visual materials may stimulate pupils to think effectively and help them develop skills and habits in

listening and observing; and (d) audio-visual materials are effective in sustaining the interest and attention of pupils.

Teachers also need to become familiar with various types of audio-visual aids, such as bulletin boards, cards, cartoons, charts, clipping, diagrams, field trips, film strips, etc. Prospective teachers should become acquainted with various materials and aids which involve: (a) doing, such as direct experiences, contrived experiences, and dramatic participation; (b) observing, such as demonstration, field trips, exhibits, motion pictures, radio, recordings, and still pictures; and (c) symbolizing, such as visual symbols and verbal symbols.

8. Teachers need to understand and appreciate scientific procedures. A professional program should provide experiences that help prospective teachers become familiar with scientific approaches and learn how to use such approaches in teaching-learning situations. For example, a prospective social studies teacher or a teacher of natural sciences should have understanding of the historical approach and the experimental method if she is to familiarize pupils with facts, principles, and generalizations and to develop the scientific attitude among students.

9. Teachers need some teaching practice and experiences with children before starting teaching as permanent teachers. The program of teaching practice should be planned

to provide opportunities for prospective teachers to experience actual work with pupils, to participate in classroom activities, to learn to apply and put to work educational theories. Courses in teaching practice should provide experiences for prospective teachers: (a) to become familiar with pupils and learn how to study and understand them; (b) to observe teaching procedures, to see how the successful teacher deals with pupils, and to prepare reports of observations; (c) to plan and teach for a period of time under the supervision of an experienced teacher; (d) to assume gradual teaching responsibility; and (e) to learn how to keep class and school records, and to do the many other routine things that are usually expected of teachers.

It was mentioned in the first chapter that among those who had conducted studies related to the educational system in Iran, some had proposed a radical change in the professional program of the Normal School and some investigators suggested the following courses:

1. Introduction to education
2. General psychology
3. Educational psychology
4. Child psychology
5. Teaching procedures
6. Tests and measurements
7. Guidance and mental hygiene[6]

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[6]Jalali-Shirazi, *supra*, p. 13; Ekrami, *supra*, pp. 18-19.

An examination of the present professional program of the Normal School in Iran indicated that some of these recommendations had not been carried out.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze
the responses of the men teachers of the elementary schools
who had completed the Normal School program in Shiraz, the
major city of the province of Fars-Iran.

The total number of these teachers was 327. Seventy-
four teachers had completed the Normal School program in
Shiraz. Fifty of these teachers were selected at random and
asked to answer the questions. Forty-five of these teachers
completed and returned the questionnaire.

Based on the material presented in Chapter IV, the
following items were essential for an adequate understanding
of an elementary school curriculum: (1) the factors which
must be considered important in the learning process; (2) the
essential features of child growth and development, and fac-
tors which cause differences among children; (3) the charac-
teristics of the society in which the school functions; (4)
the purposes of education regarding the needs of individuals
and society; and (5) the criteria for the selection and
organization of the content of the school curriculum.

Taking into account the above considerations the
writer formulated six questions for the questionnaire.

In tabulating responses to each question or request for information similar ideas were grouped, even though the ideas were not expressed in identical terms. The first point was, "List specific factors you consider important in the learning process." The responses to this first request were tabulated in Table II, page 129.

The forty-five teachers responding indicated some familiarity with factors involved in the learning process. Eight, or 17.76 per cent, of these teachers mentioned background, readiness, attention, repetition, and exercise as different factors involved in the learning process. Eleven, or 24.42 per cent of them, considered activity, use of audio-visual aids, motivation, attention and interest of children as basic factors in the learning situation. Fifteen, or 33.30 per cent of the teachers responding, mentioned attention, repetition, memory, association, imagination and thinking as important factors in the learning process. Four, or 8.84 per cent, mentioned a knowledge of related subjects and such factors as attention, repetition, and association essential in the learning situation. Three, or 6.66 per cent of the teachers responding, mentioned good teachers, attention, interest, and reward as effective factors and the other 8.84 per cent were confused or did not answer the questions.

An examination of these responses reveals that some of these teachers had quoted or merely extracted from the

TABLE II

FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEARNING PROCESS AS STATED
BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IRAN IN 1959

Responses	Number	Per Cent
1. Background, readiness, attention, repetition, and exercise	8	17.76
2. Activity, use of audio-visual aids, motivation, attention and interest	11	24.42
3. Attention, repetition, memory, association, imagination, and thinking	15	33.30
4. Related subjects, attention, repetition and association	4	8.84
5. Good teachers, attention, interest and reward	3	6.66
6. No answer and confused	4	8.84
Total	45	99.82

textbook which they had studied in the Normal School. For example, those who had stated that "The most important factors are memory, imagination, attention, association, and thinking" had followed almost word by word the statement of the textbook. Others mentioned some of the basic factors such as background, readiness, activity and exercise. But factors such as purpose, whole-part relationships, understanding, and the whole organism of the learner were neglected by all teachers responding. Their failure to mention these factors suggested that these teachers are not acquainted with Gestalt theory in the learning process.

It seems that it is the teacher's obligation to provide educational experiences which are compatible with the background, capacity, interest, and purpose of children in order that they may be able to solve their own problems. To achieve this purpose, a teacher must know that learning is a purposeful activity in which the whole organism of the individual is involved. He must know that learning takes place when the learner sees the whole situation and the relationships between various parts with the whole in any specific situation.

The second question was, "What do you consider the important aspects of maturity in children?" "How do you explain individual differences in the growth and development of children?" The responses to the second question were

tabulated in Table III, page 132. These responses indicate that these teachers did not have sufficient knowledge concerning child growth and development.

As Table III shows fifteen or 33.30 per cent of these teachers mentioned physical and mental maturity, three, or 6.66 per cent of them, considered the natural and physical kinds of maturity, and twenty-seven, or 59.94 per cent, of them were confused or did not answer. Regarding the causes of differences in the growth of children, twelve, 26.64 per cent, of these teachers mentioned home environment, nutrition, and economic status as causes of differences among children. Thirteen, or 28.86 per cent, of the teachers responding considered the lack of health and bad nutrition, while nine, 19.98 per cent, of them considered heritage, environment and way of living as causes of differences, and eleven, or 24.42 per cent, of them were confused or did not answer.

A study of these responses indicate that a large percentage of these teachers did not have an understanding of the various aspects of the maturity of children. In answering the question relative to the cause of differences in the growth and development of children most of them stated some factors which are very general and in some cases vague. For example, several of these teachers mentioned that "The main factors are: heredity, environment, and the way of living."

TABLE III

MATURATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL AS STATED BY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IRAN IN 1959

Responses	Number	Per Cent
Kinds of maturity		
1. Physical and mental maturity	15	33.30
2. Natural and physical maturity	3	6.66
3. Confused and no answer	27	59.94
Total	45	99.90
Causes of different levels of maturity		
1. The home environment, nutrition, and economic level	12	26.64
2. Lack of health, and bad nutrition	13	28.86
3. Heritage, environment and the way of living	9	19.98
4. Confused and no answer	11	24.42
Total	45	99.90

It seems necessary for a teacher to understand the different aspects of maturity--physical, social, emotional, and intellectual--and their interrelationships in child growth. A teacher should know also that many factors such as background of experiences, socio-economic status of the child's parents, the attitude of the child's parents toward children, the situation of the child at home, interests, ability, physical and mental health of the child, and other factors influence the child's growth and development.

The third question was, "What are the characteristics of Iranian society with regard to its economic, social, moral and religious aspects?" The responses to the third question were tabulated in Table IV, page 134. These responses revealed the lack of understanding of different characteristics of Iranian society on the part of these elementary school teachers. Seven of these teachers, 15.54 per cent, considered "being religious" as the main characteristic of the Iranian society. Two or 4.44 per cent of them thought that people in the Iranian society were proud of their past, were religious, and lived in a rich country. Five or 11.10 per cent of these teachers mentioned that people in Iran were moral, religious, concerned with others' affairs, and weak in economic status. Three or 6.66 per cent considered Iranian people patriotic and religious. One or 2.22 per cent characterized Iranian society as being in a feudal stage, and three

TABLE IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIETY IN IRAN AS STATED BY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN 1959

Responses	Number	Per Cent
1. Religions	7	15.54
2. Proud of past, rich regarding natural resources, religious	2	4.44
3. Moral, religious, concerned with others' affairs, and weak economics	5	11.10
4. Patriotic and religious	3	6.66
5. Inclined toward peace, a better life, religion and morality	3	6.66
6. Feudal system and its characteristics	1	2.22
7. No answer and confused	24	53.28
Total	45	99.90

or 6.66 per cent of the teachers responding mentioned that Iranian people were inclined toward peace, a better life, and were moral and religious. Twenty-four, or 53.28 per cent, of these teachers either did not answer or were confused.

It seemed that most of these teachers had very little knowledge about the characteristics of Iranian society. For example, such answers as: "The characteristic of the Iranian society is retrogression not progress," "The child must be trained in religion in order to have other necessary things," "The lack of consideration of the useful exports produces a bad economic situation," and "The economic setting has become better, so this point must be considered important," reveal that these teachers did not have sound concepts of the characteristics of Iranian society. Table IV shows that twenty-four or 53.28 per cent of these teachers had no ideas or concepts to offer and others mentioned some very narrow aspects of the Iranian society. One of the functions of the school teacher is to acquaint pupils with the different aspects of the culture, and the value system upon which it is based. A teacher should have an understanding of the characteristics of a society if he is to help pupils become familiar with the value system and the way that it operates in the various aspects of the social life.

Iranian teachers should have some understanding of the philosophic ideas, religious beliefs, social ideals, and

educational background of the Iranian people as presented in chapters two and three.

The fourth question was, "What is the general purpose of education in Iran?" The responses to the fourth question were tabulated in Table V, page 137. The tabulation shows that there was a greater agreement concerning the social and economic functions of education than other functions listed by the teachers. An examination of these responses indicates that twelve, or 26.64 per cent, of these teachers mentioned the social purpose as the general purpose of education in Iran. Thirteen, or 28.86 per cent, of them stated "To elevate the level of thought of Iranian people and to improve agriculture, sciences, and industry." Eight, 17.76 per cent, of the teachers indicated that the general purpose of education was to educate thoughtful, active, independent, and patriotic individuals. Only one or 2.22 per cent of them had mentioned preservation of the cultural heritage, and two or 4.44 per cent listed vocational training. Two of the teachers, or 4.44 per cent, mentioned college preparation, and seven, or 15.54 per cent, of them had not stated a function.

Some of these statements of function were very general and vague. For example, such statements as: "The advancement of the country," or "To prepare Iranian people for social life," are very general. Some were more or less specific. For instance, those who stated that the general purpose of

TABLE V

GENERAL PURPOSE OF EDUCATION IN IRAN AS STATED BY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN 1959

Responses	Number	Per Cent
1. To prepare for social life	12	26.64
2. To elevate the level of people's thought and to improve agriculture, sciences, and industry	13	28.86
3. To educate thoughtful, active, independent individuals and patriots	8	17.76
4. To preserve the cultural heritage, and to improve the present weakness of society	1	2.22
5. To prepare for college	2	4.44
6. To prepare for vocation and earning of livelihood	2	4.44
7. No answers and confused	7	15.54
Total	45	99.90

education in Iran is "To prepare for college," or "To prepare for vocation and earning of livelihood," considered a narrow aspect of the general purpose of education in Iran. Very few listed a comprehensive purpose of education and seven, or 15.54 per cent, did not have a clear understanding of the general purpose of education in Iran.

The school is a social institution which has been produced by society. The purpose of the school and its activities must be compatible with the social ideals, values and needs of the society. If teachers are to help pupils move toward social ideals, while complete agreement may not be necessary, they should have some common understanding of the general purpose of education in a society.

The fifth question was, "What are the purposes of elementary education in Iran?" The responses to the fifth question were tabulated in Table VI, page 139. These responses indicate that some of these teachers had specific purposes in mind while others thought in general terms. Twelve or 26.64 per cent of these teachers mentioned "Teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic" as the purpose of elementary education. Eight or 17.76 per cent of them considered preparation for secondary school as the purpose of elementary education. Ten or 22.20 per cent stated that the purpose of elementary education was to train well-developed individuals and prepare them for social life. Four or 8.88

TABLE VI

PURPOSE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AS STATED BY ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IRAN IN 1959

Responses	Number	Per Cent
1. To teach reading, writing and arithmetic	12	26.64
2. To prepare for secondary school	8	17.76
3. To train well-developed individuals and prepare them for social life	10	22.20
4. To train children and prepare them for future life	4	8.88
5. To understand the capacity of the child and to acquaint him with his duties	2	4.44
6. To teach reading and writing, to prepare for secondary school and to enable children to solve the problems of life	2	4.44
7. No answer and confused	7	15.54
Total	45	99.90

per cent of them considered preparation for future life as the purpose of elementary education. Two or 4.44 per cent of these teachers stated that the purpose of elementary education was to understand the capacity of the child and to acquaint the child with his duties. Two or 4.44 per cent of them stated a comprehensive purpose--to teach reading and writing, to prepare children for secondary school, and to enable children to solve life's problems. Seven or 15.54 per cent of them were confused and did not answer.

An examination of these responses revealed that a large per cent of these teachers thought that the purpose of elementary education in Iran was to teach the three R's and to prepare for secondary school. A relatively small group considered the preparation for social life and enabling children to solve life's problems as the purpose of elementary education.

A comparison between these responses and the two statements of purposes of elementary education as stated by the authorities in the Ministry of Education in Iran, mentioned in the third chapter, reveals that what teachers mentioned to some extent is different from what the authorities had formulated. These responses indicate two main points: (1) that teachers were not fully familiar with criteria, function, and the conditions of the purposes of education, and (2) that these teachers had no share in formulating the

purpose of elementary education as issued by the Ministry of
Education in Iran. It seems that teachers need to be well
acquainted with the criteria of educational objectives such
as social adequacy, basic needs of individuals and social
ideals. Further, they should understand the function and the
role of the educational purposes in the school activities.
Teachers must participate in developing and stating the edu-
cational objectives if they are supposed to use these ob-
jectives as guidelines in the teaching-learning situation.

The sixth question was, "What are the criteria of
selecting and organizing the content or the subject matter
of the school curriculum?" The responses of the sixth
question were tabulated in Table VII, page 142. A review of
these responses reveals that different criteria were con-
sidered important by different groups of these teachers.
Eight or 17.76 per cent of these teachers mentioned the needs
of individuals and society as the criteria for selection and
organization of the content of the school curriculum. Nine-
teen or 42.18 per cent of them considered the needs, inter-
ests, capacity, and the growth of the child as the criteria.
Three or 6.66 per cent of them mentioned simplicity, useful-
ness and appropriateness to the understanding of the child.
Four or 8.88 per cent of the teachers responding believed the
needs of society were the criteria for selecting the content
and the subject matter of the school curriculum. One or

TABLE VII

CRITERIA STATED BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FOR THE
SELECTION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE SUBJECT MATTER
OR CONTENT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Responses	Number	Per Cent
1. The needs of the individuals and the society	8	17.76
2. The need, interest, capacity and the growth of the child	19	42.18
3. Simplicity, usefulness and appropriateness to the understanding of the child	3	6.66
4. The needs of society	4	8.88
5. The capacity of the child, the needs of society and sciences	1	2.22
6. No answer and confused	10	22.20
Total	45	99.90

2.22 per cent mentioned the needs of society, the capacity of the child, and science, and ten or 22.20 per cent of these teachers were confused or did not answer.

These responses indicate that a large number of these teachers considered one criterion and neglected others. Several of them mentioned two criteria in general terms and most of them neglected some basic criteria.

It seems that in the problem of selection and organization of the content or the subject matter these points must be taken into account by teachers and others involved in the process of school curriculum building: (1) usefulness of the content or the subject matter in developing competencies which are necessary for social life and in giving an understanding of the cultural heritage and current issues of the society; (2) the curriculum organization and the content must be compatible with the principles of learning and of child growth and development; (3) the curriculum organization must be flexible enough to meet the needs and interests of children; and (4) it must be compatible with educational objectives.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to analyze the responses of the elementary school teachers who had completed the Normal School program in Shiraz.

The analysis of the responses of the above questions revealed that some of the elementary school teachers were familiar with certain concepts related to the theoretical aspects of the school curriculum. For example, some have a relative understanding of factors involved in the learning process, and purposes of education in Iran. However, most of the teachers do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding concerning basic aspects of child growth and development, characteristics of Iranian society, and the criteria of selection and organization of the school curriculum. These areas must be included in the preparation program of the elementary teachers if they are to understand the basic concepts of the school curriculum.

CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Cultural and Educational Background of Iran

1. <u>Philosophical ideas of Iranian thinkers</u>. Generally speaking, the philosophical thoughts of Iranian people are influenced by Islamic beliefs. With a very few exceptions all Iranian philosophers consider the principles of Islam as basic issues in philosophy. They believe that God is a necessary being, He does not need any cause and is the cause of all beings; His attributes do not add to His essence, and He is one in every respect, He is perfect, immaterialistic, eternal and purely good.

Most philosophical thought in Iran is dualistic in nature. Iranian philosophers discuss God and the universe, soul and body, essence and existence, matter and form, etc. They believe that soul is a single substance; some philosophers think that soul is produced materialistically, but it remains in spiritual form; others believe that soul does not come from a body, but it is in harmony with the body.

Iranian philosophers deny objective status to abstract ideas or universals in favor of Aristotelian realism. Under such a view all actual entities have been created by God.

Iranian thinkers use "reasoning" in philosophical studies, but Sufists consider "intuition" or direct experiential knowledge as a superior way for all religious certainty.

2. <u>Religious beliefs of Iranian people</u>. Zoroastrians believe that God (Ahurmazda) as an absolute, infinite existence is the source of all the material and spiritual causes. They believe that Ahurmazda wants people to be just, to obey laws and good government, to adhere to promises, to be diligent, to guide others, and to support peace and justice.

Moslem people believe in a single God as the creator of the universe, in prophecy and the prophecy of Mohammad, and in the day of judgment.

The basic precepts of Islam are as follows:

a. The importance of intelligence and its use in all social and individual affairs.

b. The importance of knowledge.

c. The importance of justice.

d. The importance of group decisions and activities.

e. The importance of social welfare and concern.

f. The importance of the support of democratic government and of opposition to tyranny.

The value system of the Iranian people indicates their belief in a social democracy which is strengthened by belief in God as a source of justice, knowledge, and kindness.

3. <u>Educational points of view in Iranian culture</u>.

a. Iranian philosophers emphasize moral and spiritual

training, health habits, vocational training, practical in-
struction, physical education, and the strengthening of
reasoning skill in the school program.

Furthermore, these philosophers point out that
teachers should consider the interests and capacities of chil-
dren in every teaching situation. They also discuss indi-
vidual differences among children, the effect of reward in
the learning situation, the influence of environment on chil-
dren, the usefulness of subject matters to be taught, the im-
portance of childhood in the growth of personality, and the
importance of the teacher's competency in teaching situations.

b. The primary purpose of education, according to
Zoroaster's teaching is to train the child to become a
learned person; to assume responsibility for social affairs;
to render service to his family, his city, and his country.

c. Islamic teachings emphasize the following pur-
poses in the education of children: (1) to develop children
physically, mentally, spiritually, morally, and socially, in
order that they may be able to assume responsibility, to make
sound judgment, and to control their own behavior; (2) to
foster an attitude of brotherhood, justice, and cooperation
in young people; (3) to help young people understand and ap-
preciate the importance and advantage of the use of intelli-
gence in all aspects of human life; (4) to encourage young
people to participate in social work and to contribute to the

welfare and good of the society; (5) to provide educational opportunity for every individual regardless of race, sex, economic status, and national background; and (6) to prepare young people through vocational training which will enable them to render valuable service to others and to earn their own living.

The Present Professional Program of the Normal School in Iran

The present program of the Normal School includes a two-year program after ninth grade. The professional part of this program consists of three courses, educational psychology, education, and ethics. Students are required to have three hours of educational courses per week in the first year--two hours of educational psychology and one hour of education. In the second year, students must have one hour of education (method of teaching) during the whole year, one hour of educational psychology in the first half of the year, and one hour of ethics in the second half of the year. Also, students must have five hours of teaching practice per week in the second year, but the total amount of teaching practice must not be more than 160 hours per year.

The theoretical aspects of school curriculum, as presented in the textbook used in the education course, include a presentation of the social purposes of education and a very brief discussion of principles in preparing the school curriculum.

The social purpose of education, as stated in the textbook, is to help the child become a useful and effective member of the society. If the child is to be an effective member of society: (1) he must be healthy, (2) he must have vocational training, (3) he must be encouraged to establish and maintain a family, (4) he must be religious, (5) he must be interested in civic responsibilities, (6) he must be able to use leisure time well, and (7) he must be able to express himself well, and to listen to others and understand them.

Three principles were discussed briefly in the textbook: first, social purposes of education; second, interest and desires of the learner; and third, the growth, age, and intelligence of the learner.

The responses of the elementary school teachers concerning the basic issues of the school curriculum seem to indicate that in general most of these teachers lack:

1. A clear-cut understanding of the basic factors involved in the learning process.

2. Knowledge concerning the various aspects of the child growth and development.

3. Understanding of the characteristics of Iranian society.

4. A full understanding of the general purpose of education and educational objectives of the elementary school in Iran.

5. Knowledge and understanding concerning the criteria of selection and organization of the school curriculum.

Conclusions

The present professional program of the Normal School in Iran does not include a single course relating to curriculum building and/or revision. A presentation of the social purposes of education does not acquaint students with the whole problem of educational objectives. It does not give them a clear understanding of the sources, functions and criteria of sound educational objectives.

The few pages devoted to the discussion of theoretical aspects of the school curriculum are not enough to familiarize students with the bases of the selection and organization of the subject matter or the content of the school experiences.

The analysis of teachers' responses revealed that these elementary school teachers were not well informed about the basic concepts of the school curriculum, such as the nature of the learner, the factors involved in the learning process, and the nature of the society. Also, this analysis indicated that these teachers were not in command of basic criteria for the selection of sound educational objectives. Not any of these teachers indicated that they had any clear-cut understanding of desirable criteria for the selection and organization of the school curriculum.

The present professional program of the Normal School
in Iran lacks the following basic areas:

1. Child growth and development--a course which con-
siders the nature of growth and the various aspects of child
growth and development, factors which affect the growth and
behavior of children, and the concept of behavior mechanism.

2. Educational psychology--a course which is con-
cerned with such topics as the learning process, different
theories of learning, and factors involved in the learning
process.

3. Introduction to philosophy of education--a course
which analyzes the cultural background of Iran and the value
system of Iranian society, explores their meaning for educa-
tion, and considers the roles and functions of the school in
Iranian society.

4. Curriculum theory--a course which covers the
essential elements in developing the school curriculum, the
basic approaches in curriculum improvement, and the socio-
logical, psychological, and philosophical bases of the school
curriculum.

5. Guidance and counseling--a course which describes
the purpose and functions of the guidance program in the
school, how to help pupils realize their own needs, interests,
and abilities, how to deal with children who have difficulty
in adjusting themselves to the school situation, how to

encourage pupils toward further schooling, and how to help pupils in selecting a certain type of school and vocational training.

6. Scientific method and its use in class situations—a course which familiarizes students with reflective thinking or the problem solving method, and the use of this method in various aspects of the school activities.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this study the following recommendations have been made:

1. The Ministry of Education should elevate the Normal School from the secondary level to college level.

2. The areas that should be included in the Normal School program are: (a) child growth and development, (b) educational psychology including learning theories and evaluation, (c) introductory philosophy of education, (d) curriculum theory, (e) guidance and counseling, and (f) scientific method and its use in class situations.

3. The instructors of the Normal School should be selected from college professors in those cities where the Ministry of Education has established a department of education at college level. In other places, the instructors should have at least a master's degree in education in order to be eligible to teach in the Normal School. In support of

this recommendation (a) the Ministry of Education may establish a master's program in education through the cooperation of American consultants and some of the Iranian professors, and (b) the instructors of the Normal School in small cities may be included among visiting teachers sent to America to get master's degree in education.

4. Those who work toward curriculum improvement in the High Council or in the curriculum department in the Ministry of Education in Iran should be selected from those who have attained a doctorate degree in education, majoring in curriculum and instruction.

5. There should be an inservice education program for elementary school teachers and the Normal School instructors designed to help them to understand the basic issues of the school curriculum.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. List specific factors you consider important in the learning process.

2. What do you consider the important aspects of maturity in children?

   How do you explain individual differences in the growth and development of children?

3. What are the characteristics of Iranian society with regard to its economic, social, moral and religious aspects?

4. What is the general purpose of education in Iran?

5. What are the purposes of elementary education in Iran?

6. What are the criteria of selecting and organizing the content or the subject matter of the school curriculum?