

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING IRAN'S  
REFORM DOCUMENTS: A QUESTION OF COHERENCE

by  
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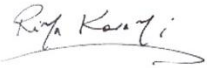


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# ABSTRACT

## OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: The Educational Philosophy underlying Iran's Educational Reform Documents: A Question of Coherence

The aim of this study is to determine the logical structure and level of coherence of the Iranian educational philosophy underlying its reform documents. The study uses a mixed methods approach to address the two research questions: (1) What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education underlying the reform documents? (2) What is the state of coherence of this philosophy? Data was collected from the three core reform documents - the "Theoretical Foundations" document, the "Fundamental Reform Document of Education," and the "National Curriculum - and was analyzed using Frankena's model for analyzing philosophies of education. Findings suggest that the educational philosophy within Iran's educational reform documents holds a logical structure that is primarily theoretical, and its coherence level is assessed at a "medium." The results indicate a satiated foundational base and a lack of coherence in the First Basic Competency where goal, foundational, and strategy statements are not connected to each other enough, hence the mediocre level of coherence. The philosophy's incoherence was mostly characterized by high levels of implicit statements, improper combinations of statements, vague language, and redundancy of statements. Aside from issues related directly to the logical flow of statements, there were issues in consistency of terms across documents and as well as organizational issues. Ultimately, the results show that the statements of the philosophy, within the scope of the First Basic Competency, are only partially coherent and lack their practical aspect. Recommendations developed based on the study can guide practitioners that design, implement and evaluate the reform programs in Iran's reform endeavor. The case adds to the growing body of literature on coherence in educational reform by providing an analysis of educational philosophy underlying the reform process in Iran.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

FRDE Fundamental Reform Document of Education

TF Theoretical Foundations document

NC National Curriculum

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Large-scale educational reform has been the subject of research for the past decades (Barber, 2008; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Earl et al. 2003, Fullan, 2000; 2006; 2009). Iran initiated its most recent efforts in systemic educational reform in 2011 through formulating a core document, the Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE), as well as other documents that branched from it among which was a Theoretical Foundations document and a National Curriculum. The aim of this thesis is to determine the logical structure of the educational philosophy underlying Iran's educational reform documents, in addition to examining the state of coherence of the philosophy. Studying these core documents can give researchers and practitioners an inkling regarding the potential strengths and/or weaknesses held by its philosophy, which in turn is expected to impact the implementation process of the reform (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Bain & Moje, 2012; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Luttenberg et al. 2013).

### **Background and Rationale**

The first attempts at educational reform go all the way back to the 1950's in the West (Fullan, 2009). The target of this study, the Iranian reform endeavor, which commenced back in 2011, is a large-scale reform project that involves the government and all its schools, communities, and regions. The important implications that seem to be resulting from "large-scale" efforts academically (McKinsey Report, 2003) and nationally in its effect on the progress of societies (Fullan, 2009), makes it a phenomenon worth observing and investigating on many levels, especially when it is happening within our own Middle-Eastern context.

Coherence is a concept that has often been the target of studies in different educational endeavors including systemic reform (Fullan, 2016; Guskey & Oldham, 1997; Hargreaves et al., 2009), educational policy (Fuhrman, 1993), curricular programs (Fortus et al., 2015; Schmidt et al., 2005), teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hammerness, 2019; Hansén et al., 2015), strategic programs (Bryson, 2018), and reform sustainability (Desimone, 2013; Lutzenberg, 2013; Timperley & Parr, 2005).

Coherence is the topic of interest in this study due to its significant impact on reforms. Lutzenberg et al. (2013) declared that for a reform to be successful, it is crucial to maintain coherence inside the components of a curriculum as well as between the curriculum and reform process. Studies show that without coherence in curriculum, learners' performance cannot be improved (Fortus et al., 2015; Newmann et al., 2001; Schmidt et al., 2005; Shwartz et al., 2008). Moreover, offering a foundation that is coherent for the development of a "shared understanding" of a curriculum's objectives (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Hallinger & Heck, 2002) is significant for the establishment of a reform. According to Desimone (2013) and Timperley and Parr (2005), the curriculum must offer a basis that makes it easier to create a coherent understanding of the curriculum in order to sustain coherence between the endeavors of the reform and the local performance of not only schools but also educators.

It is significant to draw upon the relationship between coherence and "sense-making" which represents another concept that frames the base of this study. The theory of sense-making represents the common ground that exists among all the aforementioned studies involving coherence, since they all fundamentally discuss the

extent to which stakeholders understand the program they are interacting with, i.e. the programs under large-scale reform, namely reform documents, the curriculum, policies, teacher education programs, etc.

Sense-making is the interactive process through which individuals and groups construct meaning (Ketelaar, Beijgaard, Boshuizen, & Den Brok, 2012; Marz & Kelchtermans, 2013) from the relationship between themselves and their environment. Scientifically speaking, it is an active cognitive and emotional process in which a person tries to fit new information into existing knowledge and beliefs, which in turn results in the maintenance or a change in the existing frame of reference of the individual (Ketelaar, et al., 2012; Van Veen & Lasky, 2005). It is this newly constructed meaning which will orient their actions - i.e. in the case of reform, the *meaning* of curricular reform, its goals, objectives, and strategies, and the significance behind it will be constructed in the minds of practitioners through a sense-making process. Hence, the “perceived” meaning and significance of (curriculum) reform will guide the actions of the stakeholders involved in the process (Hargreaves et al., 2009). Moreover, the quality of the sense-making process is said to affect the degree of ownership a practitioner senses towards an innovation (Ketelaar et al., 2012). It has been demonstrated that educators’ proprietorship over the execution of reform is linked to them having a more holistic perception about the objects of a reform and an understanding of the importance of its determined orientation (Pyhalto et al., 2012; Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2005).

Having established the importance of coherence and its relation to the concept of sense-making, our attention must turn towards philosophy since our study targets coherence in the educational philosophy underlying the Iranian reform documents.

Ogwora (2013) states that philosophy is a significant instrument in establishing a curriculum, educational policy, objectives, goals of education, and the vision and mission of education. Carr (2004) stresses that education has become “insulated” from philosophy in contemporary Western societies; i.e. philosophy is not being used as a proper foundation in educational efforts. Nonetheless, some scholars (Carr, 2004; Griffiths, 2014; Standish, 2007) emphasize the important role philosophy plays as a compass in education, the lack of which can cause unclarity (Wiles & Bondi, 2011). More so, Bagheri (Peters, 2013) expresses that “the present state of philosophy of education in Iran ... unlike the recent fall of this discipline in some countries, such as UK ... is well and alive in Iran.

A well-known model for analyzing philosophies of education, which is adopted in this study, is Frankena’s model, initially formulated back in 1965. The model measures coherence by revealing the internal logic and the sequence of reasoning taken within an educational philosophy from its highly philosophical and theoretical components to its more tangible concepts addressing educational practice. In other words, it helps delineate the kinds of knowledge that exist in a given educational philosophy in addition to revealing the extent of its logical flow. Ultimately, this model helps in both the creation as well as evaluation of a philosophy of education, while also opening ground to comparative studies through which comparisons of different philosophies of education can be made.

Studies have used Frankena’s model across different areas ranging across workplace learning (Hager, 1999), physical education (English, 1983), educational communication and technology (Januszewski, 2001), applied branches of education (Martin, 2011), reflection on education (Covaleski, 2007), teacher training (Ainsworth



& Johnson, 2000), to a multitude of studies in religious education (Aron, 1986; Habermas & Issler, 1992; Plueddemann & Pleudemann, 1990; Pyun 2017; Reck 2012; Sell, 1992; Setran & Ramler, 2012; Thigpen, 2005).

This study will use Frankena's framework to analyze coherence in Iran's educational philosophy underlying the reform documents. Analyzing coherence in Iran's educational philosophy will allow us to know to what extent the content flows logically and provides a smooth sense-making process for the readers, in particular teachers, who require to have, as Fullan (2016) puts it, a crucial "shared-depth of understanding," for the successful implementation of reform. Moreover, since reform documents represent compasses for the reform movement, it is of utmost importance that these compasses are presented in a coherent form. Therefore, this can act as a tool to predict hardships or ease faced during the implementation process based on the potential stakeholder sense-making process (Pyhalto et al., 2012; Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2005) in addition to reform sustainability (Desimone, 2013; Luttenberg, 2013; Timperley & Parr, 2005). Lastly, this study aims to suggest recommendations that may attend to these inconsistencies, if any, to open the path to a more coherent reform process.

The focus of the present endeavor, 'logical structure and coherence in the educational philosophy underlying the Iranian reform documents' fills a gap in the literature covering the Iranian educational reform process. Additionally, the study represents a unique case where coherence is analyzed specifically in the educational "philosophy" of a reform, thus presenting a new perspective on measuring coherence in large-scale reforms.

## **Defining key terminologies**

A few terms need to be defined to help the reader understand the aim of this endeavor. The following are some of the main terms used.

### **Coherence**

Coherence is defined as “an internal, logical criterion that assesses whether a philosophy ‘hangs together’ and is free from internal contradiction” (Sell, 1992, p. 8). In other words, coherence does not assess whether the claims of a philosophy of education agree with reality; it rather determines whether these claims are self-contradictory or not. In philosophical terms, “negatively,” coherence assesses if the statements of concepts of a philosophy of education are contradictory, while “positively,” coherence measures if statements or ideas are well in line with each other even if there isn’t an absolute contradiction. The term consistency is sometimes used in place of “positive” coherence. For the purpose of this study, both “consistency” and “coherence” will be entailed under the “coherence assessment” of Iran’s philosophy of education.

### **Internal vs. external logical structure**

The term internal logical structure is used in this study because we are studying an internal criterion (coherence) which will evaluate if the text “hangs” well together and if it is free from contradiction. This is in contrast to an external logical structure which relates to the logical connection between the document and reality - i.e. whether or not the text is in line with reality.

### **Syllogisms and “practical syllogisms”**

In philosophy, a syllogism is defined as a “three-proposition argument consisting of a major premise stating some universal truth, a minor premise stating

some particular truth, and a conclusion derived from these two premises.” Aristotle explains the concept of a practical syllogism as practical reasoning that takes the form of a syllogism which concludes with an action. “An example might be that the major premise *food cures hunger* and the minor premise *I am hungry* leads to the practical conclusion of my eating food” (Sparknotes, Nicomachean Ethics terms).

### **Some historical background on Iran’s education journey**

In 1979, the Islamic Revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini overthrew the Shah of the time, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, ending a monarch dynasty that had lasted 3000 years. After the revolution, a decision was made to restructure the curriculum to suit an education that is in line with the aims of the newly established Islamic Revolution. The curricula at the time drew on large philosophical perspectives, such as Marxism and Liberalism; none were guided by an Islamic perspective. Efforts were put to formulate a modern Islamic educational document. However, the work that had been carried out in these past decades does not seem to have met Iran’s needs (Sajjadi, 2015). It wasn’t before 2011 that a rather novel step was taken towards reform. An official educational document, the ‘Fundamental Reform Document of Education’ (FRDE) was formulated that commenced an attempt at large-scale reform and fundamental change in the country’s educational system. The document was built upon the country’s Islamic philosophy of education focusing on the Islamic-Iranian identity of the people. The document was officially published in 2011 with the understanding that it was to be evaluated and modified every 10 years. Other documents were also published all written with the intention of being in accordance with the FRDE.

## **Outlining the Reform Documents**

Based on the objectives of the FRDE, reform specialists divided the education system into six sub-systems: (1) the national curriculum, (2) teacher training and providing human resources, (3) the supply and allocation of financial resources, (4) leadership and management, (5) research and evaluation, and (6) providing space, equipment, and technology. Moreover, there is a document called the Theoretical Foundations document that consists of the theoretical perspectives, in addition to an Executive Document that combines the six sub-systems into one strategic document where it gives a strategic outline of the actions that are to take place, the departments assigned to carry out the actions, and the time interval during which these actions are to be completed. The documents used in this study are the FRDE, the Theoretical Foundations document and the National Curriculum. It is important to note that there are other documents relating to the reform that were not analyzed which may contain information on methods of instruction for the curriculum.

### **The Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE)**

The FRDE is the “umbrella” document that guides the reform movement. The FRDE consists of a vision, a mission, values, goals, and operational objectives and strategies. It states eight major goals, 15 major guidelines, 23 operational objectives, and 131 strategies. Briefly, the aim of education from the philosophy reflected in the FRDE is “to instruct individuals to be prepared for consciously and willingly achieving the stages of *Hayate Tayyebah (The Pure Life)* in all its aspects and to pave the ground for an on-going evolution and promotion of their identity to shape and advance the Islamic society” (p. 10).

A significant framework present in the FRDE's educational perspective is what is referred to as the 4X5X6 framework, where each number signifies a concept: '4' stands for the four different relationships of a human being: his/her relationship with God, with themselves, with others and with nature; the number '5' represents the five main characteristics of a human being: thinking, reasoning, knowledge, action, and morality; and '6' is the number of educational domains they have specified, the Islamic (ideological) and moral education, social-political education, biological-physical education, aesthetic-artistic education, economic-vocational education, and scientific-technological education.

### **The National Curriculum document**

The document is made up of 15 sections ranging from a brief listing of the scientific and philosophical foundations, the vision, principles, the basic competencies, areas of education and learning, to policies and executive requirements, and an evaluation plan for the National Curriculum.

### **The Theoretical Foundations document**

The theoretical foundations document is as the name implies the theoretical basis for the reform in Iran's formal public schools. The document is divided into three sections. The first section delves into the philosophy of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where the main foundations of education are laid out, as well the 'what' (epistemology), 'why,' and 'how' of education. The second section addresses, more specifically, the philosophy of education within the area of formal, public education in Iran, following the same order and format of the first section (epistemology, etc.). The third section is a guide to the "system" and "subsystems" to be followed within the formal and public education system of Iran; the managerial

characteristics of the education system as well as the theoretical models suggested for subsystems.

### **Purpose Statement**

This study will aim to (1) determine the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education held by the reform documents, and (2) evaluate its state of coherence.

Briefly, a logical structure is the logical components that make up a philosophy of education, namely the goals, competencies, foundations, and strategies. The study will determine the structure this philosophy holds, i.e. the components it holds. Coherence is how well the philosophy “hangs together;” i.e. to what extent its statements (represented by the logical structure) are in harmony with each other.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education underlying the reform documents?
2. What is the state of coherence of this philosophy?

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this thesis will be a summary account of the logical structure and the state of coherence of Iran’s philosophy of education, represented by three core documents. Since philosophy is a significant instrument in establishing a curriculum, educational policy, objectives, goals of education, and the vision and mission of education (Ogwora, 2013), this can reflect the state of the programs that are built on this philosophy, such as teacher training programs, the curriculum, educational policies, etc. Moreover, this will reflect the extent to which stakeholders interacting with the

document will be able to interpret it effectively. Additionally, it provides a guide for the documents' officials to improve its coherence in a future revision of these documents by identifying areas of incoherence and gaps. This ultimately improves the chances of better implementation of the documents and will aid in understanding potential obstacles the reform process may face during implementation.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter commences relaying a brief historical account on system reform, the purpose of our study being the Iranian reform endeavor. Subsequently, the concept of coherence is introduced and its significant effect in educational reforms, namely in large-scale reform, curriculum, teacher training programs, educational policy-making, strategic management, and sustainability, is discussed. The chapter then moves to the significance of philosophy in education showing it as the base of all educational programs to propose a framework to measure coherence in the philosophy of education of Iran's educational reform documents. The chapter ends with a review on some works done on the official documents of Iran's reform process to show the niche this study will occupy in the growing knowledge base, where it is show to fill a gap, creating new ground for future researchers to build upon.

#### **A Brief History on System Reform**

In a historical review done by Fullan (2009) on educational reform in the West specifically, it is shown that the first attempts were witnessed before the 1950's where noted intellectuals such as John Dewey were developing ideas as to how schools can be different than the form existing at their time. The pre-1950's was labeled as the progressive period where progressive reformers believed that "good ideas would travel, of their own volition, into U.S. classrooms and schools" (Elmore, 1995, p. 10). According to Fullan (2009), good practice did not spread through such a strategy. The resulting failure the US faced was ignored and was instead met with a new set of large-scale curriculum reform initiatives with the aim of extensively spreading innovative practices. By the beginning of the 1970's, it was clear that the effect of such a move



was limited. The pressure coming from being innovative lead to schools adopting reforms that were out of their capacity both individually and organizationally. Consequently, superficial changes to structure and language were made and nothing really altered the core practices of a school.

This kind of large-scale reform is defined as a deliberate attempt to use policy and strategy to change the system as a whole (Fullan, 2009). Fullan defines a “system” to include a government and all its schools; schools and their communities, districts or region, and state; hence the term tri-level which translates into school/district/government. Countries known to have engaged in this endeavor and who have shown interesting results are Finland, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Canada (Ontario, Alberta, Quebec), and South Korea (The McKinsey Report, McKinsey Report, 2003).

The target of our study, the Iranian reform endeavor is also a whole-system reform project that involves the government and all its schools, communities, and regions. Having seen the important implications that seem to be resulting from such “large-scale” efforts academically (McKinsey Report, 2003) and nationally in its effect on the progress of societies (Fullan, 2009) makes it a phenomenon worth observing and investigating on many levels, especially when it is happening within our own Middle-Eastern context.

### **Coherence and Reform**

Coherence is a concept that has often been the target of studies in different educational processes due to its crucial impact on the success of reforms. Coherence has been studied in educational efforts including systemic reform (Fullan, 2016; Guskey & Oldham, 1997; Hargreaves et al., 2009), educational policy (Fuhrman, 1993), curricular

programs (Fortus et al., 2015; Schmidt et al., 2005), teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hammerness, 2019; Hansén et al., 2015), strategic programs (Bryson, 2018), and reform sustainability (Desimone, 2013; Lutzenberg, 2013; Timperley & Parr, 2005). The studies discussed here convey the effect of coherence in some of the aforementioned programs, to substantiate the importance of measuring coherence in the current Iranian reform endeavor.

Around three decades ago, numerous programs both in Europe and in the U.S. executed reforms specifically emphasizing coherence (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Buchmann & Floden, 1991; Clarà, 2015; Holmes Group, 1986; Smeby & Heggen, 2014; Tatto, 1996).

First, it is significant to draw upon the relationship between coherence and sense-making which frames the base of this study. The theory of sense-making represents the common ground that exists among all the aforementioned studies involving coherence, since they all fundamentally discuss the extent to which stakeholders understand the program they are interacting with, i.e. the programs under large-scale reform, namely reform documents, the curriculum, policies, teacher education programs, etc.

Sense-making is the interactive process through which individuals and groups construct meaning (Ketelaar, Beijgaard, Boshuizen, & Den Brok, 2012; Marz & Kelchtermans, 2013) from the relationship between themselves and their environment. Scientifically speaking, it is an active cognitive and emotional process in which a person tries to fit new information into existing knowledge and beliefs, which in turn results in the maintenance or a change in the existing frame of reference of the individual (Ketelaar, et al., 2012; Van Veen & Lasky, 2005). It is this newly constructed

meaning is what will orient their actions. In the case of curricular reform for example, it is suggested that the meaning of curricular reform, its goals, objectives, and strategies, and the significance behind it will be constructed in the minds of practitioners through a sense-making process. Hence, the “perceived” meaning and significance of the reform will guide the actions of the stakeholders involved in the process (Hargreaves et al., 2009). Moreover, the quality of the sense-making process is said to affect the degree of ownership a practitioner senses towards an innovation (Ketelaar et al., 2012). It has been demonstrated that educators’ proprietorship over the execution of reform is linked to them having a more holistic perception about the objects of a reform and an understanding of the importance of its determined orientation (Pyhalto et al., 2012; Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2005).

In coherence studies done on curricula, alignment and sequencing have been linked with higher student performance (Fortus et al., 2015; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Schmidt et al., 2005; Shwartz et al., 2008). Studies show that without coherence in curriculum, learners’ performance cannot be improved. This is due to a lack of alignment between and within educational goals, materials, evaluations as well as teaching (Newmann, et al., 2001; Schmidt, Wang, & McKnight, 2005; Shwartz, Weizman, Fortus, Krajcik, & Reiser, 2008). Moreover, offering a foundation that is coherent for the development of a “shared understanding” of a curriculum’s objectives (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Hallinger & Heck, 2002) is significant for the establishment of a reform. According to Schmidt (2002), teachers in the highest achieving countries have coherent guidelines in the form of a national curriculum, which is the reason traced back to their success. In other words, the alignment that exists between the components of Iran’s educational

philosophy, which underlies the national curriculum, is predicted to affect the efficiency witnessed in learners' performance.

Additionally, it is suggested that absence of clarity towards a curriculum reform's objectives and interactions enhancing the growth of coherent conceptions of the curriculum among educators, curriculum planners, and other stakeholders, is said to lead to an undermined influence of the reform (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Fernandez, Ritchie, & Barker, 2008; Timperley & Parr, 2005). In a study led by Sullanmaa, Pyhältö, Pietarinen, and Soini (2019), a scale for estimating the recognition of curriculum coherence was presented. They proposed that coherence, in a more comprehensive sense, is a crucial element for sustainable school development (see e.g. Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Honig & Hatch, 2004; Newmann et al., 2001). Their outcomes highlight the importance of curriculum coherence in broad curriculum reform by insinuating curriculum coherence is essential for sustainable school development. Therefore, guaranteeing the coherence of the standard core curriculum document at the national level and making active sense-making and development of coherent comprehension at the district level would seem to enhance the educational stakeholders' recognition of the possible impacts of curriculum work at the local level, and more so, to elevate the possibility of the curriculum reform to bring about actual modifications in the daily practices at schools. Nonetheless, coherence consists of numerous complementary elements, thereby suggesting that developing coherence means improving all the components at the same time throughout the academic system. In other words, focusing solely on one dimension will probably lower school development sustainability. Furthermore, it is suggested that for a sustained school development,

support is required in sustaining the joint competence for bringing about coherence between and inside schools (Sullanmaa, Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2019).

Penuel, Fishman, Gallagher, Korbak, and Lopez-Prado (2009) conducted research on educators' recognition of curriculum alignment and curriculum execution. Empirical data was gathered from learners in kindergarten to eighth grade. According to the findings, there are some cases where alignment of curriculum content with national policies is not enough to advance educators sensing that specific curricular innovations are consistent with their own objectives or to advance universal execution of the innovation. They concluded that the effectiveness of alignment policies is contingent on educators' interpretation of the connection between criteria and curriculum contents.

Teacher education programs are known to be plagued by fragmentation within their programs as well as between theory and practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hansén et al., 2015). Bain and Moje (2012) have described the players in teacher education programs as “disconnected continents,” (p. 62), emphasizing the absence of connection existing between schools of education and classrooms. Bain and Moje (2012) relate this lack of coherence as one that may lead to a possible fragmentation in knowledge and skills.

Canrinus, Klette, and Hammerness (2019) examined the degree to which candidates from three teacher education programs discerned their programs as coherent and the degree to which these discernments were identical and contrasting across the three programs. Using past analyses (Canrinus et al., 2017), three scopes of coherence were utilized: “perceived coherence between courses”, “opportunities to connect parts of the program”, and “perceived coherence between field experiences and courses.” The researchers suggested that each are equally significant for developing a coherent teacher

education program; therefore, they did not distinguish between the significance of the scopes. Candidates across all three programs discerned their program as fairly coherent. However, the chances for enhancement remained since candidates did not completely agree to statements regarding coherence among courses or coherence between courses and field encounters. Furthermore, according to their findings, teacher education programs may be different in the degree to which they are discerned as coherent by the candidates participating in these programs. It was also discovered that programs may have great degrees of coherence (e.g., coherence among courses) and lower ones in other dimensions (e.g., coherence that between field placement and campus courses). The researchers conclude that a significant dimension of possible enhancement of program coherence resides in association and cooperation between the different stakeholders inside teacher education programs.

Even in countries known for strong teacher education programs, policymakers and educators are focusing upon strengthening the links between theory and practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hansén et al., 2015), which further emphasizes the importance of coherence in systemic reform in general. Therefore, depending on the state of coherence of a philosophy of education, teacher education programs that are relying on such a philosophy can also be affected. In other words, the state of coherence [resent in theory will affect the state of coherence of programs being implemented in practice that are founded upon that theory. Consequently, coherence can lead to a positive impact in practice, while incoherence can to lead to fragmentation in the knowledge gained from this philosophy and in turn may lead to fragmented action in implementing this philosophy in programs, including teacher education programs.

Another theme that comes across when discussing coherence is sustainability. Lutzenberg et al. (2013) declared that for a reform to be successful, it is crucial to maintain coherence inside the components of a curriculum as well as between the curriculum and reform process. Moreover, when sustainability is mentioned, context-dependent development is insinuated. This means that the precursors of meaningful education are emphasized when carrying out the process of development (see Coburn, 2003; Fullan, 2007). This involves developing a “shared understanding” with regard to the objectives of reform between various levels of the educational system (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2007; Slegers, Thoonen, Oort, & Peetsma, 2014).

According to Desimone (2013) and Timperley and Parr (2005), the curriculum must offer a basis that makes it easier to create a coherent understanding of the curriculum in order to sustain coherence between the endeavors of the reform and the local performance of not only schools but also educators. This could be related to the focus of our study in the sense that the more coherent the philosophy of education, the stronger the “basis” for developing coherent comprehension of the documents, especially since philosophy is the “foundation” upon which educational efforts are built (Ogwora, 2013). This basis in turn has the potential to decide the level of sustainability of coherence between reform implementation and the performance of schools. It is further suggested that, for an effective curriculum reform, a coherent basis is significant specifically to create a common vision for the objectives of a curriculum and for the alignment of activities between various stakeholders (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Fuhrman, 1993; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Honig & Hatch, 2004).

As has been witnessed, coherence is a phenomenon that has shown to be of interest across different programs in educational reform endeavors. Moreover, it has

been understood by now that the extent to which educational leaders and practitioners engage with reform and implement changes is determined by their sense-making. Thus, the state of coherence present within documents and programs determines the efficiency of the sense-making process. In other words, coherence in reform documents can affect the understanding practitioners have of the reform process, which in turn has the potential to transform the coherence on paper into coherence in the “shared-depth of understanding,” as Fullan (2016) puts it, among individuals who are imperative to the reform process, i.e. the stakeholders. Going back to our research focus, the level of coherence present within these documents, that are the compass of reform, will affect how stakeholders will interact with it, leading to an effect on the implementation process of reform. Consequently, the more coherent the philosophy underlying these reform documents, the more efficient the implementation process. Moreover, this demands that what is provided to practitioners, both in the form of documents and training, to be coherent in nature to allow for a smooth sense-making process, and henceforth, a smooth course of reform.

### **Philosophy and its Place in Education**

Since the target of this study is studying coherence within the Iranian educational philosophy that is underlying the reform documents, we must turn to discuss the importance of philosophies of education in reform and what definition coherence displays in them.

According to Ogwora (2013), philosophy is a significant instrument in establishing a curriculum, educational policy, objectives, goals of education, and the vision and mission of education. Philosophy is the theory about knowledge while education is the application of knowledge. Thus, in a sense, education is the application of the principles



articulated through philosophical considerations. Philosophy underpins all educational ideas. Aristotle argued that there is no doubt that education must be a public matter and that it should follow certain rules. But the question arises when determining how this education should be, and how individuals are to be educated. Ironically, what was a controversy at Aristotle's time seems to still be a debate in our present time. Currently, just as centuries ago, "we do not agree on the goals we should set and there exist different assumptions on what young people should learn in order to achieve virtue or the ability to lead useful lives; it is also not clear, whether education should aim rather at the development of the mind or the heart. It is not known whether one should teach young people what is of use for practical life, or what leads to virtue and great deeds" (from Aristotle's *Politics*).

There is a distinction that needs to be made here between 'philosophy of education' and 'educational philosophy.' Although used interchangeably throughout this study, the target of this study is that which is more commonly known as a 'philosophy of education;' 'educational philosophy' is commonly regarded as a teacher's personal statement; his or her guiding principles about their approach towards the education process that involves instruction, evaluation, discipline, etc. On the other hand, a 'philosophy of education' is the ideals, principles and values that justify the purpose and use of education. This study focusses on the latter.

According to Carr (2004), philosophy is no longer being used in education in contemporary western societies; i.e. education lacks an underlying philosophy nowadays. Carr explains that the lack of impact of philosophy on education currently is due to "nothing other than the inevitable manifestation of a fundamental intellectual disorder deeply rooted in our contemporary understanding of the philosophy of

education (p. 55).” Bagheri, a professor in Tehran University specialized in educational philosophy, in an interview carried out by Peters (2013) on the philosophy of education in Iran, expresses “the present state of philosophy of education in Iran, it should be stated that unlike the recent fall of this discipline in some countries, such as UK, it is well and alive in Iran. This can be observed in the considerable number of scholars and students of the field. Even though there is a growing problem in terms of the employment of the graduated people, the rate of entering students in the field is still relatively high” (p. 199).

This makes an even stronger point to turn our scrutiny towards the Iranian reform documents as they are expected to hold a philosophy of some sort. Moreover, the state of this philosophy could hold implications on the impact it may have on reform implementation, since as John Goodlad (1979) has stated, “philosophy is the beginning point in curriculum decision making and is the basis for all subsequent decisions regarding curriculum” (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017, p. 47). According to Wiles and Bondi (2011), the absence of a philosophy causes unclarity. This unclarity translates in action as a lack of direction, often resulting in a curriculum that “includes everything but accomplishes little” (p. 36).

Carr (2004), Griffiths (2014), and Standish (2007) support the importance of philosophy in education, stressing on the fact that a lot of the educational questions we face are often associated with philosophy rather than empirical research, highlighting the need for philosophy as a compass in education. A question may start with what the objectives of a class are, which is technically a short step from the question of what the aims of that subject are, to why we conceive the subject in this way, to why should we include the subject anyway? Eventually, “(W)e find ourselves almost inevitably

confronting questions concerning the aims of education, which in turn invite the consideration of what the good life, collective or individual, might be” (Standish, 2007, p. 337).

### **Philosophy as foundation**

Since philosophy is the foundation upon which education is built (Ogwo, 2013), it is important to elaborate how these foundations are the forces that direct the minds of curriculum makers, and thus affect the content and structure of the curriculum. These forces are beliefs, values, and principles, as well as conceptions on education and the needs of society; they form sources from which theories, principles, and ideas are derived. Curriculum foundation is engrained with the foundation of education (Shishigu, 2015). Some of the commonly used and accepted foundations in curriculum are the philosophical, historical, psychological, and social. However, it is important to note that other foundations, such as theological and meta-theological perspectives, may also be included as a source where the educational perspective of a national curriculum is also based on religion, especially in the case of religious education (Frankena, 1965).

### **Defining coherence in philosophies of education**

In philosophies of education, coherence measures how well a statement, and hence the ideas represented in such statements, “hangs together” with a “system” of other statements (Sell, 1992, p. 46). It does not measure the connection between the claims of a philosophy of education with reality, but rather determines whether these claims are self-contradictory or not, in addition to their consistency. Teacher educators have argued that creating structurally and conceptually coherent programs will result in more powerful learning for prospective teachers (Hammerness, 2006). According to Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), learning may be improved when ideas across

learning experiences are consistent rather than giving learners mixed messages on the phenomena and concepts they counter.

According to Wolfe (1982), any world view, and for that matter a philosophy of education, can be evaluated through a number of criteria in order to measure its usefulness and its “explaining power” (p. 44-45). These criteria are consistency (no contradiction within the interpretive scheme), coherence (how well the statements are internally related to each other within the interpretative scheme), comprehensiveness (how applicable the interpretive scheme is to all experiences) and congruity (how appropriate the interpretive scheme is to the experiences it covers). Wolfe states that if one is to measure these criteria all together, one can determine the explaining power and adequacy of any world view. It has been mentioned earlier that when coherence is studied positively, it basically evaluates consistency. Wolfe here gives them two separate labels while in other places, consistency is placed under coherence when studied “positively.” Therefore, for the purpose of this study, both “consistency” and “coherence” will be entailed under the “coherence assessment” of Iran’s philosophy of education.

### **A framework**

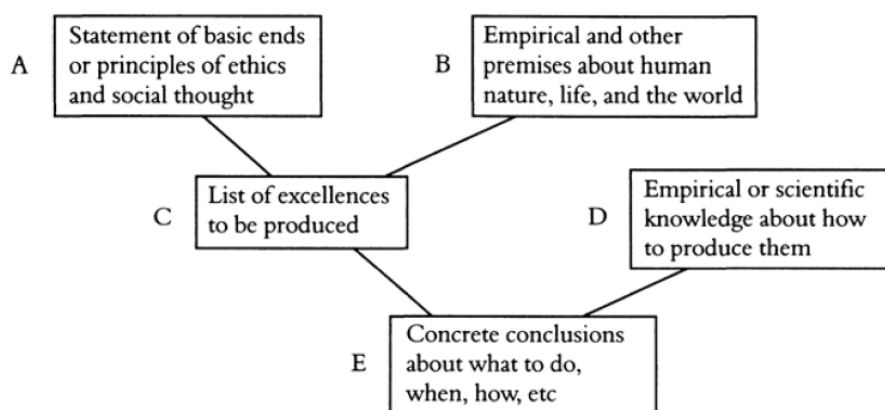
Among the celebrated scholars who have worked on the subject of coherence is William Frankena. Frankena was a significant scholar as well as a teacher of moral philosophy during the middle two quarters of the twentieth century. He was one of the leading moral philosophers of his time. His interests and writings covered almost every question in normative ethics and metaethics (Landesman, 2013).

Back in 1965, Frankena published a model built upon the frameworks of John Stuart Mill and Aristotle to argue that the “what,” the “why” and the “how” of

education can be determined using two practical syllogisms (Frankena, 1965). He proposed that the syllogisms of such a framework can be used for analyzing the logical coherence of any normative educational philosophy. He suggests that a normative philosophy of education is typically made up of two parts: a relatively philosophical and theoretical line of reasoning that shows what excellences are to be fostered in education (the first syllogism), and a practical line of reasoning that suggests how the said excellences are to be fostered (the second syllogism). To elaborate on this, according to Frankena (1965), the main tasks of an educational philosophy is to (a) formulate a list of positive dispositions or “excellencies” desired in student outcomes, (b) formulate a “line of thought” that explains why the said dispositions are desirable, (c) formulate a plan for the methods and curricula that would best develop these dispositions, and (d) formulate “a line of thought” to show why the mentioned methods are useful. Consequently, Frankena’s model assumes that any theory would typically include up to five different kinds of statements which represent the claims that the theory is making regarding different aspects of the focus that is being theorized. These statements are of different types and some serve as premises for others, hence the reason why they are arranged in levels (Figure 1): ‘A’ represents basic aims or values; ‘B’ is the factual or theoretical premises; ‘C’ includes knowledge, skills and attitudes to be fostered; ‘D’ mentions the methodological premises; and ‘E’ gives recommendations for practice.

Figure 1

Frankena's model (1965)



Ultimately, Frankena's model can help in the production of a philosophy of education, through allowing the individual to build a logical system where the aims, methods, and reasons behind an educational experience can be demonstrated, taking into consideration one's context, and empirical, philosophical and theological beliefs. Moreover, it can be used to evaluate philosophies of education, in addition to comparing and contrasting philosophies with each other. This methodology is adopted in this study and will be properly expanded upon in the following chapter on Methodology.

### **Frankena's model across different areas of education**

Numerous studies have used Frankena's model across different areas of education. The model has been applied to physical education (English, 1983), educational communication and technology (Januszewski, 2001), teacher education (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2000), workplace learning (Hager 1999), applied branches of education (Martin, 2011), reflection on education (Covaleski, 2007), with a multitude of studies that used Frankena in the area of religious education (Aron, 1986; Cohen, 2010; Habermas & Issler, 1992; Plueddemann & Plueddemann, 1990; Pyun, 2017; Reck 2012; Setran & Ramler, 2012; Thigpen, 2005).

A prominent effort made at analysis using Frankena's model was an analysis carried out on consultation proposals for teacher training in the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in England and Wales (1997). In 1996, Nick Tate, the chief executive of the School Curriculum Assessment Authority (SCAA) in England, proclaimed that

schooling was “failing to promote an adequate sense of moral values” (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2005, p. 159). As an answer to the outcry, consultation proposals were formulated by the TTA to address the ‘Standards and Requirements,’ also known as the ‘Competency’ model, for teacher training in England and Wales. In response, the consultation proposals were analyzed on different levels to see if they tackled Tate’s stress on moral education and educational values, in addition to any racial biases, absence of needed policies, and so forth. Among the analyses made, was an attempt to analyze the documents through Frankena’s model to reach a philosophical analysis. The analysis showed that the documents almost entirely concentrated on standards and requirements relating to D and E (the empirical knowledge that supports what action to take and the action to be taken), with E focusing mainly on the what and how of subject content, leaving out any mention of the relationship between A, B, and C, i.e. the principles, supporting premises, and the excellencies (Gardner, 2000). In other words, they included nothing regarding teachers developing an understanding of any values they are supposed to foster, (the importance of which had been previously stressed by Tate and was the main reason behind the outcry) and there was no allusion made to “teachers developing as reflective professionals who should be critically concerned with the ethical justification of their practice” (Gardner, 2000, p. 161). Issit (1995) argues that the reflective professional, by contrast, must be concerned with the holistic and dynamic complexity of teaching contexts which are more than simply a sum of their parts. For example, teachers may well have a full and proper understanding of the technical requirements of how to teach topic X or Y. If, however, there is no requirement for them to acknowledge the principles involved in, for example, eliminating the self-fulfilling prophecy or understanding the social and cultural

dynamics of labeling in the school and classroom, then there is much evidence to indicate that outcomes for certain pupils will be iniquitous.

Hager (1999) analyzed several educational theories using Frankena's model to compare the commonalities and differences across these theories about workplace learning. Hager analyzed Berryman's theory on 'human capital,' Experience-based learning, Dewey's theory of learning, Argyris and Schön's work on professional practice, Marsick and Watkins' theory of informal and incidental learning, and the 'generic skills and economics' perspective of Carnevale and Berryman. From this analysis, Hager was able to extract two types of theories about the values that should underly workplace learning: (1) theories about the general prospering of human beings, for instance "personal growth and development is an ultimate good, (p.71)," and (2) theories that address the needs of the economy, such as "the development of human capital is needed for a flourishing economy (p. 71)." Further, Hager discovered that among the five theories on workplace learning analyzed, the contents of their Box B focused majorly on two theoretical statements: (1) learning from experience is crucial for personal growth and development, and (2) enterprises look for individuals with broad generic skills since the world is constantly changing. Moving on to Box D, Hager (1999) discovered that the theories shared much less commonality in the contents of this Box, however a common theme among all of them was that the strategies mentioned are not the same strategies that promote learning within traditional classrooms. Instead, they are the forms of learning that are usually not given proper recognition, such as prior experiential learning; hence showing workplace learning to be quite different from the more traditional classroom learning.



The studies that were relayed are an example of how Frankena's model can be used in analyzing philosophies of education. One determined the philosophy's logical structure where the philosophy focused on its practical aspect only, leaving out its philosophy's theoretical aspect (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2005), while the other (Hager, 1999) was able to extract common important points found in learning theories. This shows the potential in Frankena's model in unearthing the structure and content of a philosophy of education, proving its potential usefulness in our research endeavor.

### **Frankena and Religious Education**

Among the studies found to have used Frankena's model are studies revolving around religious education (Pyun 2017; Reck 2012; Sell, 1992; Setran & Ramler, 2012). Since the Iranian philosophy of education consists of theological and metaphysical foundations, this makes it similar to studies addressing philosophy in religious education. This could further support the suitability of this framework for this kind of study since the Iranian educational philosophy heavily relies on Islamic religious text to formulate its foundations, and Frankena's framework happens to fully acknowledge the theoretical aspect of a philosophy of education that includes all types of foundational statements, including theological statements. In Christian education specifically, a number of schools and textbooks have adopted Frankena's model to help frame their philosophical tasks (Habermas & Issler, 1992; Plueddemann & Plueddemann, 1990; Thigpen, 2005).

In a study carried out by Sell (1992), the comprehensiveness and coherence of Lawrence O' Richard's philosophy of Christian education was analyzed using Frankena's model. Sell expanded the basic structure of the model, and this in turn determined a set of questions tailored to be answered by an Evangelical philosophy of

education. Although Frankena's model can be used to analyze *any* normative philosophy of education, this elaborated version was specifically produced for use within the Evangelical context specifically. Comprehensiveness of the philosophy was assessed based on the number of questions that it answered, while coherence was assessed according to how well these answers were in logical harmony. Richards' philosophy of Christian education was comprehensive in the sense that it answered all the major questions, however, it was shown that the answers to the CDE syllogism (the practical aspect) were more detailed than the answers to questions regarding the ABC syllogism (the theoretical aspect). As for coherence, his philosophy was very coherent regarding the concept of "relationship" and how it was used as a foundation to many of his core educational ideas. Yet, among the coherence problems that were witnessed in different parts of the document were: (1) a confusion as to whether the key changer in Christian life is man's relationship with God or his relationships with the Christian community; (2) Richard's contradicted himself where on one hand he emphasized human fault and yet insisted on absolute consensus in church decision-making; (3) he calls for a fundamental renewal in church while maintaining a socialization concept of learning and education (i.e. traditions decide what is to be taught).

In a study done for Korean immigrant churches, Pyun (2017) worked on creating a K-12 educational ministry model using Frankena's philosophy of education. Pyun used Frankena's work to create a model rather than to analyze one. He states that Frankena's model can help Christian educators "be more intentional in what, why, and how education is developed at the church" (p. 310). According to Kim (2010), 80% of Korean immigrants in the US attend church, making it even more crucial for ministers to carry out their educative role. However, what they lacked was an educational

philosophy that takes the Korean-American cultural context into consideration. And this is where Frankena's model was able to meet the needs for such an endeavor. Estep (2012) states that the five elements in Frankena's model and how they relate to each other "illustrate the process of integrating educational theories and Christian worldview into a distinctively Christian curriculum" (p.310). Moreover, the clear logical connections between these elements (or boxes) is what allows a smooth flow from the ultimate purpose of the ministry to its practices. Pyun discussed the "perspectives" or the "empirical and other premises about human nature, life, and the world," as well as strategies to address these perceptions. The perspectives were discussed in light of the Korean immigrant church because what may differ between Korean churches and churches of other ethnicities is their perspectives on the implementation of educational objectives which is in turn dictated to a large extent by the context. The same logic goes for learning theories. Learning theories are transcultural, however when it comes to applying them, different churches will apply them differently based on cultural factors. Hence, the element of "perspectives" gives direction to a ministry by outlining the context which includes culture, expectations, and problems characteristically faced by the ministry. Accordingly, through Frankena's model, Pyun came up with several major conflicts Korean immigrants face in their American context and matched these with what he found as suitable educational practices that can address them properly.

Setran & Ramler (2012) also built on Frankena's model in order to develop a more comprehensive and individualized model that would better fulfill the purposes of Christian education. Setran and Ramler highlight the importance of a philosophy of education stating, "A philosophy can guard against thoughtless ministry practices that reflect mere capitulation to fads, ruts, pragmatism, popularity, or traditional cultural

forms” (p. 7). It can be used as a rubric to evaluate the degree of success or failure of any religious ministry’s endeavor, and it can “structure and guide leaders’ planning all the way from presuppositions to practices” (p. 8). Working for 10 years with Frankena’s model as a reference point, Setran was well aware of its issues and limitations. Discussing the model’s limitations and alternative potentials, Setran and his student Ramler pinpointed the main weaknesses of Frankena’s model to be (1) a narrow ministry focus, and (2) inattention to philosophy activation. Therefore, they created a model based on Frankena’s model that addresses these weaknesses. Moreover, this updated version takes a more comprehensive approach and highlights four distinct ministry domains: learners, leaders, external communities, and systems. They outlined the aims, practices, and missions for all four categories through focusing on the theological, philosophical, and empirical details of each domain. At the end, they showed a “philosophy activation” model that can be used to implement the established philosophy; a model tailored specifically for this ministry’s endeavors.

### **Studies that have addressed the reform process in Iran**

Research targeting the components of the reform process in Iran cover different topics ranging from philosophical concepts, such as ‘the concept of sublimation in the National Curriculum’ (Sobhaninejad, Najafi, Nourabadi, 2017), ‘the concept of Pure Life in the National Curriculum’ (Mohammadzadeh & Foroughi Abari, 2017), ‘national identity in the FRDE’ (Rahbari, Belbasi, & Ghorbi, 2014), ‘educational theories’ (Qamsari & Ramezani, 2014), ‘teachers and notions in the curriculum’ (Zeinali & Hatam, 2015), comparisons made between textbooks and the curriculum, and ‘curriculum compatibility’ (Khandaghi & Baraie, 2017) to topics like ‘cultural and social needs’ (Basiri et al., 2015), and ‘supervision’ (Moghadam, Shoghi, &

Rahmankhah, 2016). The studies mentioned may not necessarily share direct relevance with the current study; however what they do have in common is that most of them are document analyses and focus on the content of these documents theoretically.

A study examined the educational foundations of ‘Pure Life,’ one of the key concepts within the National Curriculum, to determine if they are in line with the theoretical knowledge present in key sources that explain the notion of ‘pure life’ (Mohammadzadeh & Foroughi Abari, 2017). These sources included primary sources in the form of Qur’anic interpretation books namely, “Nemooneh” and “Al Mizan,” books on the philosophy of Islamic education, as well as secondary sources in the form of books, magazines and lastly, relevant published papers. The content analysis and theoretical inference revealed that among the five sections of philosophical foundations in the National Curriculum, 28 cases were neglected, i.e. there was no mention of them in the National Curriculum while they are important notions in the original theoretical knowledge text. For example, in the epistemology section 1-3-2 of the National Curriculum, the different levels of knowledge have been discussed. The three levels related to ‘knowledge by correspondence’ (or acquired knowledge), namely the sensory, imagination, and rational, were only discussed, leaving out the levels of ‘knowledge by presence.’ The notions were mostly lacking in the sections related to foundations on axiology (knowing values), and anthropology (knowing the human being).

A study carried out by Bijnavand, Salehi, and Moumivand (2015), targeted the Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE), looking into its six educational domains, namely: Islamic (ideological) and moral education, social-political education, biological-physical education, aesthetic-artistic education, economic-vocational education, and scientific-technological education. The study was an attempt to find

evidence of notions present in the content of these domains to the content of Nahjul Balaghah, a book on Ali Ibn Abi Taleb's sermons. The six domains were dissected into their corresponding 48 components for analysis. Corresponding evidence of all the components was found in the text of Nahjul Balaghah, signifying a solid relationship between the contents of these six domains and the book. For example, evidence of a component in the domain of scientific-technological education about "integrating science and technology" was found and or implied in 10 different places in Nahjul Balaghah. The researcher concludes that there is a strong relationship between the contents of these two texts and that such research endeavors (relating the documents to valuable religious text) can be a tool to further enrich these official educational documents.

Another concept put under scrutiny is 'national identity' in the FRDE. Rahbari, Belbasi, and Ghorbi (2014) questioned the status of national identity in the FRDE as a means to see how and to what extent it is portrayed in the country's official compass document, the FRDE. According to historical reasons, the identity of Iranians consists of several layers (Rahbari et al., 2014). When it comes to Iran's national identity, different thinkers have looked at it from different perspectives. Motahhari has emphasized Iran's Iranian and Islamic dimensions as the country's major identity-building factors. Abdolkarim Soroush believes that the Iranian identity consists of three components: being Iranian, Islam and modernity. Raja'i believes that there are four components: Islam, Iran, modernity, and tradition. In the last decade, among these layers, there has always been more emphasis on three important layers, which include a layer of Islamic culture and identity, a layer of Iranian culture and identity, and a layer of world culture and civilization. Studying the introduction and the eight chapters of the

FRDE using qualitative and quantitative analysis, the study revealed that “national identity” is not addressed as a single layered entity in this document. The definition given to identity in the FRDE is as follows: “Identity is a set of insights, beliefs, tendencies, actions and personality traits. Identity is not a fixed and predetermined concept but the outcome of one’s effort and success and to some extent affected by the social circumstances (p. 11).” The study showed that the term “identity” has appeared 27 times both individually and in combination with an adjective within the document, such as, “Islamic-Iranian identity,” “Islamic-Revolutionary identity,” “collective identity,” “professional identity,” “national identity,” and more. This reflects the amount of attention the designers of this document have given to the status of identity and more specifically, national identity. The three layers witnessed in the document are the ‘Islamic,’ ‘Iranian,’ and ‘Modern and Global’ identities, with the Islamic identity being more evident. There are many concepts in the FRDE through which the layer of Islamic identity can be deduced. These include: (1) Monotheism, (2) Islamic principles and teachings, (3) the Pure Life, (4) Justice and Equality, (5) belief in Mahdism (the savior of mankind), (6) Enjoining good and forbidding evil, (7) ‘Wilayat Al Faqih’ (roughly translated to supreme leadership), and (8) Chastity and the Religious Veil. The second layer of identity, being “Iranian,” included the following concepts in the FRDE through which it was deduced: (1) Indigenous development, (2) National unity, (3) common language, (4) the culture of defending national dignity and authority (revolutionary and jihadist spirit), (5) Cultural and Civilizational heritage, (6) National patriotic symbols (national anthem and national flag), (7) blending ‘value’ and ‘indigenous’ teachings in the Iranian lifestyle, and (8) the geography and land of Iran.

The third layer, the Modern and Global identity was deduced from concepts like (1) use of new technologies, (2) media, and (3) foreign language.

The focus of the present endeavor, “analyzing coherence in the Iranian reform documents,” has not been covered in the literature targeted at Iran’s Reform process. This study is thus filling a gap in the literature on Iranian reform and can thus add knowledge to the already present and growing knowledge base on Iran’s educational reform process.

### **Using Frankena’s model to measure coherence in the educational philosophy underlying Iran’s educational reform documents**

As has been clearly defined by now, in philosophies of education, coherence measures how well a statement, and hence the ideas represented in such statements, “hangs together” with a “system” of other statements (Sell, 1992, p. 46). It does not measure the connection between the claims of a philosophy of education with reality, but rather determines whether these claims are self-contradictory or not, in addition to their consistency. Teacher educators have argued that creating structurally and conceptually coherent programs will result in more powerful learning for prospective teachers (Hammerness, 2006). According to Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), learning may be improved when ideas across learning experiences are consistent rather than giving learners mixed messages on the phenomena and concepts they counter. Using Frankena’s framework on the three core reform documents, it is hoped that an idea can be formulated about this document’s logical coherence and thus the potential positive and/or negative impact coherence and/or incoherencies can have in the sense making process of stakeholders.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter draws the path taken to answer the research questions of this study. It aims to determine the philosophy's structure and to what extent it is theoretical and/or practical by determining its logical structure, and the extent to which the components of this philosophy of education, namely its goals, foundations, principles, and strategies, are aligned with each other. The results of this study will show the structure of the philosophy in addition to any inconsistencies present in this philosophy. This study considered the following research questions:

1. What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education held by the Iranian educational reform documents?
2. What is the state of coherence of this philosophy?

#### **Research Design**

This study is a mixed methods study; it adopted an interpretive methodology that follows a qualitative approach, as well as a quantitative methodology (Creswell, 2013). The issue at hand is the level of coherence of the philosophy of education underlying Iran's reform documents. The study followed a qualitative design initially using content analysis to collect and analyze data, followed by an analysis through Frankena's framework (1965). Additionally, the study used quantitative analysis to quantify the "level of coherence" of the philosophy.

#### **Data Sources**

The sources that will be used for this study are the three core reform documents, namely the Theoretical Foundations (TF) document, the Fundamental Reform Document of

Education (FRDE) and the National Curriculum (NC). The content of each document is briefly explained below:

### **The Theoretical Foundations document**

The theoretical foundations document is the theoretical basis for the reform in Iran's formal public schools. The document is divided into three sections. The first section delves into the philosophy of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where the main foundations of education are laid out, as well the 'what' (epistemology), 'why,' and 'how' of education. The second section addresses, more specifically, the philosophy of education within the area of formal, public education in Iran, following the same order and format of the first section (epistemology, etc.). The third section is a guide to the "system" and "subsystems" to be followed within the formal and public education system of Iran; the managerial characteristics of the education system as well as the theoretical models suggested for subsystems.

### **The Fundamental Reform Document of Education**

The FRDE is the "umbrella" document that guides the reform movement. The FRDE consists of a vision, a mission, values, goals, and operational objectives and strategies. It states eight major goals, 15 major guidelines, 23 operational objectives, and 131 strategies. Briefly, the aim of education from the philosophy reflected in the FRDE is "to instruct individuals to be prepared for consciously and willingly achieving the stages of *Hayate Tayyebah (The Pure Life)* in all its aspects and to pave the ground for an on-going evolution and promotion of their identity to shape and advance the Islamic society" (p. 10).

## **The National Curriculum**

The document is made up of 15 sections ranging from a brief listing of the scientific and philosophical foundations, the vision, principles, the basic competencies, areas of education and learning, to policies and executive requirements, and an evaluation plan for the National Curriculum.

## **Other relevant literature**

Relevant literature involved any external literature that helped better understand the concepts present in the documents and research done on the documents. This was in the form of books on Islamic educational philosophy, and research articles relating to the reform in Iran, respectively.

## **Data Analysis**

This section under data analysis presents the analytic framework and procedure that carries out the data analysis of this study. The analytic framework chosen is Frankena's model (1965) that will be described in detail. The analytic procedure walks us through content analysis as a prerequisite step for using Frankena's model for analysis. The steps suggested by Frankena for carrying out the analysis are displayed as a means to find the logical structure of the Iranian reform documents' philosophy of education, in addition to its state of coherence. An additional quantitative analysis is explained that is used to quantify the level of coherence.

## **Analytical Framework**

As has been previously introduced, Frankena's model, developed back in the 1960s, on one hand, can be used to analyze an existing educational philosophy where logical connections among the different components are revealed and understood; we are thus able to understand how it's been put together, what it says and what its

arguments are (Frankena, 1966). On the other hand, it can also help construct educational philosophy through providing a framework that helps frame these philosophical tasks, i.e., the theological, philosophical, and empirical convictions are identified, integrated, and then inferred into practices (Setran & Ramler, 2012). In this study, it will be used for analysis of Iran's educational philosophy as is portrayed within its National Curriculum.

Frankena's model is composed of five different components. Each component is either a normative or a descriptive statement which serve as premises for each other, hence they are arranged in levels within the model: 'A' represents basic aims or values; 'B' is the factual or theoretical premises; 'C' includes knowledge, skills and attitudes to be fostered; 'D' mentions the methodological premises; and 'E' gives recommendations for practice. Boxes A, C, and E are the normative statements that state what "ought" to be done in the educational process, while boxes B and D are descriptive statements providing rationales using empirical, philosophical, and theological statements to explain why and how A, C, and E could be achieved. As previously explained, the model is made up of two practical syllogisms. The first is the ABC syllogism and the second is the CDE syllogism.

At this point it is important to clarify what certain terminologies used here mean, namely normative and descriptive statements, premises, excellencies, principles, and foundations.

### ***Normative and Descriptive statements***

*Descriptive* statements present an account of how the world is. The word is connected to 'description' (Govert Valkenburg, n.d.). It is a claim that asserts that such-and-such IS the case. Descriptive claims do not make value judgments (Critical Thinker

Academy, n.d.). Descriptive statements make up the contents of Boxes B and D in Frankena's model.

*Normative* statements present an evaluative account, or an account of how the world should be. The word contains the stem 'norm': something that should be lived up to; or that should be pursued. It is a claim that asserts that such-and-such OUGHT to be the case. Normative claims make value judgments (Critical Thinker Academy, n.d.). A normative statement expresses a value judgment about whether a situation is desirable or undesirable. It is characterized by the modal verbs "should", "would", "could" or "must" (Wikipedia, n.d.). Normative statements make up the contents of Boxes A, C and E of Frankena's model.

### ***Premise***

The definition of a premise is a statement or idea taken to be true and on which an argument or reasoning may be based (Merriam Webster, n.d.). The source of this premise could be philosophical, theological, empirical, etc.

### ***Principle***

“A principle is a fundamental, well-settled rule of law. A basic truth or undisputed legal doctrine; a given legal proposition that is clear and does not need to be proved” (Dictionary definition). Moreover, a principle provides a basis for the evolving of other laws and regulations. In the case of education, principles become the values that are believed to give both children and the community the best chance of succeeding, and what they know to be right, given its context.

### ***Foundations***

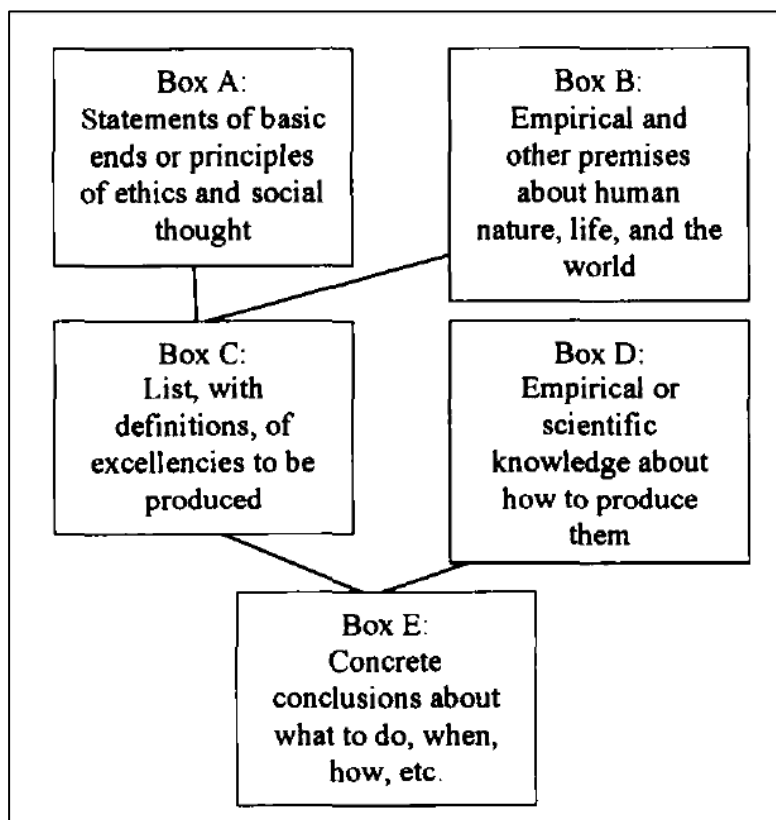
Foundations are the historical, psychological, theological, social, and philosophical underpinnings of any perspective.

## *Excellencies*

An excellency is defined as an outstanding feature or quality (Dictionary). For the sake of consistency and clarity, the term “competency” will be used instead of “excellency” throughout this study since it is the term used within the language of the reform documents.

Figure 2

Frankena's model (1965)



An example Frankena (1965) provides us with for his model is as follows:

“Box A: We ought to promote the greatest general happiness.

Box B: Dispositions of honesty, etc., promote the greatest general happiness.

Box C: Therefore, we ought to cultivate honesty, etc.

Box D: Looks of contempt help to cultivate honesty.

Box E: Therefore, if a child lies, we should give him a look of contempt” (p. 10).

Once we place the content of the Iranian national curriculum into Frankena’s framework, it opens ground for critique. We can criticize what statements are missing, e.g., a normative statement may be present, but its factual/descriptive statement may be absent. It can be analyzed if the combination of statements were concluded correctly; whether statements were reflecting a logical flow in the way they were expressed, and so forth. In other words, it tells us about the document’s structural and logical coherence. This analysis can also show us what basic concepts the chosen scope was rich in, and implications regarding its philosophical and or practical richness or deficiency.

### **Analytical Procedure**

This section outlines the analytical process. It explains how content analysis was used for both data collection and analysis. It then explains how the Frankena model was applied. It ends with an explanation of a quantitative analysis that was carried out to give a quantified value for the degree of coherence of this philosophy.

### ***Data collection***

Data was obtained from three of the reform documents: the Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE), the Theoretical Foundations document (TF), and the National Curriculum (NC). The scope of such a study can be very large since it involves documents that are voluminous in their content (FRDE: 70 pages; TF: 300 pages; NC: 70 pages). Therefore, the scope had to be limited to a size that would be appropriate for the researcher’s available time and one that would better fit the requirements of a master’s thesis.

The scope-limiting process involved two main steps: (1) the sections that were analyzed were chosen based on their relevance to the types of statements involved in the chosen framework (Frankena's model), i.e., goal, competency, foundational, and strategy statements; (2) since Frankena's analysis begins with looking into the competency statements of a philosophy of education, the researcher chose that as an entryway to select an appropriate scope for this study. The competencies mentioned in the National Curriculum come in the form of five 'Basic' competencies titled, 'Rationalization,' 'Faith,' 'Knowledge,' 'Action,' and 'Ethics,' each of which hold a number of competency statements revolving around them. The 'Basic' competency of 'Knowledge' was chosen as the scope for this study, which consists of seven competency statements. The seven competency statements under the chosen scope of 'Knowledge' are as follows:

1. Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.
2. Knowledge of the Almighty, attributes, divine actions and signs, religious teachings, and their sources.
3. Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of creation and how human beings relate to them and make optimal use of them.
4. Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.
5. Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.
6. Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.



7. Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art.

Content analysis was primarily used as a means to label the seven target competency statements. Based on the concepts held by every statement, one or more labels were given which represented the themes held by these statements. For example, for Competency One, the labels “self,” “identity,” and “capacity” were used to collect relevant data throughout the text. Data was collected relating to these seven competency statements within the sections of the three core documents (TF, FRDE, and NC) that were expected to hold goals, foundations, principles, and strategy statements.

### ***Data analysis***

For analysis, the collected data was condensed, also using content analysis, into shorter “meaning units” that were in turn inserted into tables (see Table 1) that represent Frankena’s model. The table, as is displayed below in Table 1, holds the components of a philosophy of education according to Frankena’s model. Subsequently, the collected statements were inserted into their corresponding compartments for analysis, i.e. Box A: Goal statements; Box B: Foundations supporting and relating goals to the competency; Box C: The target Competency statement; Box D: Foundations on how to achieve the said competency; and Box E: Strategies.

Table 1

Example table used for analysis, also known as a logical structure

Competency X	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	
Foundations (B)	
Competency (C)	
Foundations (D)	
Strategies (E)	
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence

Afterwards, these tables, or “logical structures,” were analyzed according to the steps suggested by Frankena. See Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

Frankena's suggested steps for implementing the model

- (1) One must first look to see what dispositions it says education should foster (Box C).**
- (2) Next, one must try to determine the rationale given to show that education should foster those dispositions. To do this one must:**
  - (a) See what its basic normative premises are—its basic values, principles, or ends (Box A).**
  - (b) See what factual premises are brought in (implicitly or explicitly), empirical, theological, or philosophical (Box B).**
  - (c) See how these go together to make a line of argument of the ABC pattern to show that the dispositions listed should be cultivated.**
- (3) Then one should look for recommendations about ways and means of teaching, administering, etc. (Box E).**
- (4) Fourthly, one must seek to discover the rationales for these recommendations. To do this one must:**
  - (a) See what factual statements based on observation and experience are brought in (possibly borrowed from psychology, etc.) (Box D).**
  - (b) See if any premises from Boxes A or B are used here.**
  - (c) See how these go together to make a line of argument (or a battery of separate arguments) to show that the ways and means recommended should be used in the cultivation of the dispositions listed (Pattern CDE).**
- (5) All along, of course, one should notice any definitions or bits of analysis that occur and see how they fit into the discussion.**

This evaluation determines the logical structure of the philosophy and analyses the strengths and weaknesses present within the logical structure (of every Competency) that are affecting the level of coherence. An additional quantitative analysis was carried out to give a systematic evaluation of the “level of coherence” held by these logical structures. Consequently, the researcher has come up with a measuring scheme (High,

Medium, and Low) for the quantitative evaluation. The criteria followed to determine the level of coherence of each analysis is as follows:

Each Box (A, B, D, and E) will be given a score between 0 and 2, 0 being low coherence, 1 being medium, and 2 being high coherence. After evaluating every Box's coherence, an overall assessment is made through calculating the sum of the coherence scores of the Boxes (A, B, D, and E). If the sum of boxes score anywhere between a 6 and an 8, the coherence level is considered 'High;' if the score is between a 4 and 5, then it is a 'Medium;' and if the components score 3 or below, then they are labeled as 'Low.' The details of the measuring scheme are elaborated upon in the following Results Chapter for better understanding.

### **Validity and Reliability**

#### **1. Declaring my underlying values and assumptions**

This section is where I examine and declare my underlying values and assumptions in light of the research situation so that they can be considered when reading the research. I believe in the important role religion plays in forming a philosophy of education. I believe in the values the target document aims to foster within children since, at its root, it portrays universal values which every divine religion has called for to lead a healthy mental life and to reach true happiness. However, the "how" in achieving such excellencies is a question every educator/religious scholar is to ask himself and be critical of, for the "how" can change everything and can be the reason for the demise of excellencies rather than their growth.

A point I need to make here is to re-emphasize how this research is not addressing the content and criticizing if it complies with reality, but rather, it aims to

portray how much sense a reader can make when reading it. Thus, we are not criticizing the content but rather how well the content is flowing logically, i.e. the extent of its coherence and consistency.

2. Clear, detailed design and careful documentation.

I assume that having clearly presented my method and described the strategies I will use in data collection, in addition to the careful documentation of my notes throughout my research experience, will aid in increasing the validity and reliability of my work.

3. Triangulation

Since we are dealing with a document in this research, I will be referring to a peer and a philosophy professor to check randomly chosen samples of my work as a means to increase the validation of my process and results.

4. Reaching data satiation

The analysis will involve clear descriptions satiated with evidence, and strong arguments will be made for the interpretations in order to maintain the value of the conclusions that will be made.

5. My choice of framework aids in achieving better validity and reliability

The framework I have chosen aids in achieving reliability and validity since this model categorizes the data by itself, i.e. the framework itself has given clear categories for the statements that are expected to be found: philosophical, foundational, theological, practical, technical, etc., making it more reliable as a methodology. Therefore, the fact that it is providing us with more specificity increases the chance of the results' validity.

The framework I have chosen aids in achieving reliability and validity since (1) it can be applied to *any* normative philosophy of education and can be used for comparative studies because it is not tied to any particular philosophy of education. (2) Having been vastly used among religious education endeavors, using it on the Iranian national curriculum that is based on the religion of Islam makes this framework a strong match for the target being studied and hence increases the validity and reliability of both the process and the results. (3) This model categorizes the data by itself, i.e. the framework itself has given clear categories for the statements that are expected to be found: philosophical, foundational, theological, practical, technical, etc. this increases the precision of results avoiding general results and vagueness, giving us more reliable and valid results as a methodology.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis to address the two research questions posed in this study:

1. What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education held by the reform documents guiding the Iranian educational reform process?
2. What is the state of coherence of this philosophy?

As explained in Chapter 3, data was obtained from three of the reform documents: the Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE), the Theoretical Foundations document (TF), and the National Curriculum (NC). Given the focus of this study, the analysis targeted sections relevant to the types of statements present in the Frankena model, i.e., goal, competency, foundational, and strategy statements. Since analysis using Frankena's model begins with looking into the competency statements of a philosophy of education, the researcher chose that as a starting point to guide data collection for content analysis. The 'Basic' competency of 'Knowledge' was chosen as the scope for this study, which consists of seven competency statements. Text relating to these seven competencies within the identified in the documents listed above (that were expected to hold the goals, foundations, principles, and strategy statements) were subjected to content analysis and then analyzed using Frankena's framework (1965). The seven competency statements under 'Knowledge' are as follows:

1. Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.

2. Knowledge of the Almighty, attributes, divine actions and signs, religious teachings, and their sources.
3. Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of creation and how human beings relate to them and make optimal use of them.
4. Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.
5. Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.
6. Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.
7. Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art.

The research questions will be answered for each competency. The collected data were condensed (through content analysis) and placed within tables that represent Frankena's framework and were analyzed according to the steps Frankena has suggested. Most of the competencies hold multiple concepts and were thus divided into 'parts' for analysis. Therefore, due to the large amount of data, one or two parts of each competency will be presented in this chapter followed by their analysis. The analysis gives the coherence level of the competency 'part' labeling it as high, medium, or low, in addition to its logical structure, which shows the components each competency part has in the form of letters A (goals), B (foundations), and E (strategies). The rest of the tables and their analyses can be found in the Appendix. After the example analysis, a table summarizing all the results of that competency's parts will be presented with an



overview of the overall coherence and logical structure of the competency and the types of strengths and shortcomings that were found within the data of that competency.

### **Method of analysis for each competency**

A qualitative and a quantitative analysis will be carried out for each competency. The qualitative evaluation determines and analyses the strengths and weaknesses present within the logical structure of each competency, while a quantitative evaluation for the ‘level of coherence’ is also given as a means to provide a quantified perspective of the logical coherence present. Subsequently, the researcher has come up with a measuring scheme (High, Medium, and Low) for the quantitative evaluation. The criteria followed to determine the level of coherence of each analysis is as follows:

Each box (A, B, D, and E) will be given a score between 0 and 2, 0 being low coherence, 1 being medium, and 2 being high coherence. If the contents of a Box show explicitly stated statements that can be directly related to the competency statement (in Box C), then its coherence is measured as ‘High’ and is given a score of 2. For example, if a competency is promoting the cultivation of the “knowledge of social rules,” and a goal statement is expressing that “knowledge of social rules” must be taught among learners, then this relationship is considered explicit because the competency and goal statement are said to be in line with each other.

If there exists an issue with the statement in the form of an ‘implicitly stated sentence,’ or an ‘improper combination,’ or ‘multiple goal statements,’ then it is given a score of 1 and is evaluated as ‘Medium.’ To further elaborate on the types of issues

mentioned, an example will be given here of each so that the reader would have a clearer idea of what these terms mean moving forward into this chapter.

First, an example of ‘implicitly related statements’ is when for example, a goal states “developing one’s identity” as an aim in education while its corresponding competency is “knowledge of one’s identity;” thus, the goal statement is implicitly related to the competency because “developing one’s identity” implies “knowledge of one’s identity” as a prerequisite. Therefore, since two different verbs “develop” and “knowing” are used, they are not explicitly related but rather they reflect an implicit relationship where a concept is presented within the text, but just not as explicitly as it is supposed to be present.

Another issue is that of an “improper combination.” An ‘improper combination’ is a term that will be used throughout to explain an issue where a sentence consists of two types of statements in one statement. In the case of this study, there were many cases of a goal and a strategy statement combined into one statement, which makes it difficult for the reader to follow and comprehend, and hence affects the sense-making process. An example would be the following statement that has two goal statements and a strategy statement:

Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.

‘Multiple goal statements’ is when, as the name implies, there is more than one goal mentioned in one statement, which also makes it more difficult for the reader to follow the stream of thought and concepts presented. An example of multiple goal statements is the following that has two goals in one statement:

Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.

Cases that show more than one issue from the issues mentioned above (such as, ‘implicitness’ and an ‘improper combination’), or consist of a ‘contradiction,’ or a ‘gap’ where the statement that is supposed to correspond with the competency statement (Box C) is absent, then a score of 0 will be assigned to that box, meaning that its coherence level is ‘Low.’ An example for contradiction would be if a statement claims that “knowledge of the self is the most important kind of knowledge,” while in another place, another statement claims that “knowledge of phenomena is the most important form of knowledge.” A gap is simply when a corresponding statement is missing altogether. For example, the goal statement “knowledge of the self” may lack foundational statements that would support it as a competency to be cultivated among learners, thus creating a gap in the logical structure of this concept.

After evaluating every Box’s coherence, an overall assessment is made through calculating the sum of the coherence scores that the components of the Frankena model (A, B, D, and E) have displayed with regards to the chosen competency (C). If the sum of boxes score anywhere between a 6 and 8, the coherence level is considered ‘High.’ If the score is between a 4 and 5, then it is a ‘Medium.’ If the components score 3 or below, then they are labeled as ‘Low.’ In other words, if the Boxes each display for

example the following levels of coherence: Box A: 2, Box B: 1, Box D: 1, Box E: 1, the sum of these give a 5, thus the coherence is evaluated as medium overall.

## **Competency One**

### **Location of data**

The first competency under the Basic Competency 'Knowledge,' is "Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity." Data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document was primarily located under the sections titled "Foundations on Knowledge of Man," the rest were located under "Epistemological Foundations," and "Psychological Foundations." Furthermore, the fields of education this competency statement related to, were sections entitled "Field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, "Economic and Professional education," and "Biological and Physical education." Within the National Curriculum, relevant data was mainly found under the section "Educational Approaches."

### **Analysis of data**

Segments from the text were primarily identified and summarized through content analysis. The competency statements were given labels according to the concepts they hold; i.e. for competency one, labels such as "self," "identity," and "capacity," were used to collect relevant data throughout the text. Subsequently, the collected data was condensed into shorter "meaning units" that were in turn inserted into Frankena's model into their corresponding compartments (Box A: Goal; Box B: Foundations supporting and relating goals to the competency; Box D: Foundations on how to achieve the said competency; and Box E: Strategy) for analysis.

As mentioned above, when applying Frankena’s model, some competencies were divided into parts for a more organized analysis since the content of these competency statements can be very long. Consequently, competency one was divided into two sub-parts: (1) Knowledge of the self and one’s capacities, and (2) Knowledge of one’s identity. Since knowledge of one’s ‘self’ and ‘capacities’ are very intertwined, they were grouped into one category, leaving knowledge of one’s ‘identity’ as a category by itself.

***Example analysis for Competency One***

One of the analysis tables is inserted here (the rest of which can be found in the Appendix) to show an example of how the evaluation of this competency was carried out. The sources of the text are mentioned in parentheses in an italic font. The following analysis, Table 1, is on the sub-part ‘Knowledge of the self and one’s capacities’ (Box C), which has been italicized to show what part of the competency is the target of the analysis. Portions of text in the Boxes have also been italicized to show which parts specifically are relevant to the competency at hand. The table consists of the text corresponding to each Box (A: Goals, B: Foundations supporting and connecting A and C, D: foundations relating C to E, and E: strategies) and the analysis is carried out in written format after the table. The documents and document sections from which the text has been extracted from are mentioned after the statements in parentheses and in italic form.

Table 2

Analysis of sub-part One of Competency One

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<i>Knowledge of the self</i> and others to responsibly respond to the needs,

	<p>limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system. (<i>Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, TF</i>)</p>
<p>Foundations (B)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge and the knower have a fundamental role in Islamic society and culture; knowledge is at the top of virtues, the root of all goodness, the inseparable companion of faith, the lamp of reason, and the source of human values, and therefore seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty for all and having respect for the knower (knowledgeable) is an indisputable and inviolable principle. (<i>Axiological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> <li>● Islam considers knowledge as light and ignorance as darkness, knowledge as vision, and ignorance as blindness. Islam perceives the pursuit of knowledge as obligatory... The best knowledge is that which leads to <i>self-knowledge</i> and reform and shows the way to happiness; and the worst knowledge is that which does not correct man and keeps him in his spot (unchanging). (<i>Axiological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> <li>● In the Islamic realist view, the existence of the world is a given matter. That is, the universe is an interconnected set of very different realities, in which there is no doubt as to its very existence. In the divine worldview of Islam, the presumption of this basis is quite clear and prominent and in Islamic teachings, man is asked to know everything as it is, with all its real characteristics, in knowing himself and his environment. To know reality with all its different dimensions and connections and dependencies. (<i>Ontological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> </ul> <p><i>The essence of Man</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man is a being composed of body and soul: two intertwined entities. Human existence has both material and immaterial aspects (body and soul). These two aspects are not alien to one another; rather, despite the differences, there is a close connection between them, and they are mutually influential. In fact, the body and the soul are levels of a single being. They have a continuous and reciprocal effect on each other.</li> <li>● The truth of man is his soul, and the perfection of man is related to the perfection of the soul. The addressee of God is the soul of man, which originates from the command of God, and his life continues after death in the world of Purgatory and the Hereafter.</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF</i>)</p> <p><i>Man's nature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man has a divine nature that can be flourished or forgotten. The primordial nature (الفطرة) is a divine nature in humans. Man has a non-acquired knowledge and tendency towards the origin of existence. Instinct, in its epistemological aspect, is the man's knowledge of God's presence, and desire for worship, truth-seeking, and love for beauty, are among the most important instinctual inclinations of man. Also, this God-given capital can never be destroyed.</li> <li>● Man, by nature and creation, seeks all levels of perfection (to infinity).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man has both inherent dignity and can attain acquired dignity, and it is through his choices that make him either fall or rise to reach the status of being the caliph of God on earth (His image, His representative). <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Characteristics of man</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man is a free being who has free will and has been given this freedom by God.</li> <li>● Man is a creature with diverse natural talents and emotions and desires that can be actualized and effective in any direction (positive or negative).</li> <li>● Humans, while having a common nature and instinct, have different characteristics.</li> <li>● Human beings, while having many talents, have all kinds of limitations and face many external and internal threats.</li> <li>● Man is a social being. Therefore, human existence is significantly affected by the conditions of society and can communicate with others through his/her existential development and influence society.</li> <li>● Human existence is always evolving, moving, and changing. <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man is under the influence of complex interactions; interaction of internal factors (nature and nature), external factors (environment) and his experiences.</li> <li>● Man, fundamentally has an active nature. <i>(Psychological Foundations, TF)</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Man's abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, both in opinion and in action, has the ability of reason (rationalization), which plays an essential role in knowing the truth of existence and achieving eternal happiness. <i>(Epistemological Foundations, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man has the ability to know existence and its various dimensions. <i>(Combining the Basic Foundations, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man is always in the "situation" and can understand and change it. <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> <li>● Learning is one of the existential capacities of man and the main source of many changes in his existential dimensions. <i>(Psychological Foundations, TF)</i></li> </ul>
Competency (C)	<i>Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.</i>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, as a rational, believing creature, with will, is the main source of action (i.e., voluntary action arising from knowledge, belief, will) <i>and by acquiring knowledge</i> and carrying out individual or collective action (right or wrong), is effective in understanding and changing the situation of oneself and others through faith (or disbelief) and righteous (or unrighteous) will and action, and its repetition and improvement, in the continuous development of individual and collective identity of oneself and others, as well as in the formation and continuous change of the</li> </ul>

	natural and social environment. ( <i>Combining the Basic Foundations, TF</i> )
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The general approach and orientation of curricula is "monotheistic primordial naturalism." Adopting this approach means laying the groundwork for the flourishing of students' divine nature through the continuous <i>understanding</i> and improvement <i>of their position</i> in order to achieve a far greater degree of good life. (<i>Introduction, NC</i>).</li> <li>• <i>The development and excellence of all existential capacities of learners</i> in order to continuously improve their position and that of others in all fields,...is undoubtedly one of the grounds for the realization of good life in individual and social dimensions. (<i>Principles, Economic and Professional education, TF</i>)</li> <li>• Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities <i>through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.</i> (<i>Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, TF</i>)</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Low

This approach to analyzing logical coherence of a philosophy of education using Frankena’s model can be illustrated using the first part of the first competency presented in Table 1. The analysis begins by first looking at the competency of the philosophy (Box C): In this case the competency is “Knowledge of the self and one’s capacities.” Then the model looks at the goal statements provided. The goal statement “(Learners must have) knowledge of the self...” (Box A) is an explicit goal statement corresponding to this sub-part. However, there isn’t a goal statement that corresponds to the sub-part “knowledge of one’s capacities.” The goal statement, present under the section entitled ‘Goals of the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education,’ is in fact made up of two goals and one strategy, giving it a score of 1 out of 2. “Knowledge of the self...” is the intermediate goal that leads to “...responding to the needs, limitations, and development of one’s existential capacities,” and this is



accomplished through the strategy, “understanding and correcting the position of oneself.” This combination of different types of statements (goals and strategy) in one statement that is supposed to solely be a goal statement can cause confusion for the reader. This issue of finding a combination of different kinds of statements in one statement, as previously mentioned will be referred to as an ‘improper combination.’” This makes the contents of this box lacking, giving it a score of 1 out of 2. Franekna’s model then directs our attention towards the foundational statements (Box B) supporting the goals in Box A and that relate these concepts to the competency in Box C. All the relevant foundational statements are identified and listed in Box B. These support the goal of self-knowledge and are all written descriptively, i.e. they use a language that expresses factual statements, which is what is expected of foundational statements, and is thus a strength in this logical structure. Although the importance of knowing in general is emphasized upon and it is said that “the best of knowledge is that which leads to self-knowledge” (1.4.14), there isn’t a statement that directly justifies the importance of self-knowledge. Moreover, there are many foundational statements clarifying what man is (soul and body), his nature (divine primordial nature), his characteristics (free, social, etc.), his destination (the Hereafter), and his abilities (knowing existence, reasoning, learning, knowing one’s position and correcting it, etc.), which imply that there is a lot to know about oneself and that the presence of this many foundations implies that it is a matter of importance. Thus, although these foundations are many in number, they correspond to the sub-part on the ‘self’ and ‘capacities’ implicitly as they do not clearly state that, or more importantly, why knowledge of the self is important. Therefore this Box scores a 1 out of 2.

Frankena then moves on to the practical component of the model, CDE. There were no practical strategies identified that could be inserted in Box E, however there were principles that give an idea as to what the strategies might look like. These principles were only implicitly related to the sub-part of the competency being analyzed. That is, it suggests an education that revolves around learners' primordial nature and focuses on developing one's existential capacities which in turn requires knowledge of these capacities, however it does not clearly mention that learners need to know their capacities; it just suggests that these capacities need to be developed. Moreover, the principle is written descriptively when it is supposed to be written prescriptively. The presence of two issues in one Box grants this a score of 0 according to our evaluation criteria. A foundation (Box D) supporting the principle on correcting oneself is only present, displaying gaps in regards to the other concepts conveyed, thus giving this Box a score of 0.

An important point that has to be made here is that there were no practical methods, as is expected to fill the contents of Box E; instead there were statements that were written in the form of principles that can devise what strategies are needed to reach a competency. For example, the statement "primordial naturalism must be an approach used in Ideological education," is giving an idea as to what direction the strategies need to take, but they are not written as practical methods; i.e. they are still theoretical. The way this translates in Frankena's model is that there are strategic statements present that are expected to fall under Box E, however, they are not as practical as is expected of the contents of Box E. Because according to Frankena's model, the CDE section is characterized as being concrete unlike its ABC counterpart, which is characterized for being abstract. Therefore, a distinction must be made for a more accurate analysis in

determining the state of the logical structure held by the philosophy of education, the answer to our first research question. To make this distinction, the strategies found in the text and their corresponding foundations, will be labeled with the number ‘1’ as a superscript, i.e. as E<sup>1</sup> and D<sup>1</sup> respectively, while practical methods and their foundations will be given the superscript number ‘2,’ i.e., E<sup>2</sup> and D<sup>2</sup>. This will help do justice to the content that is present while retaining accuracy in displaying what this content really is (strategic principles and not practical methods). Overall, the coherence of this sub-part is evaluated as low (since ABC is medium and CDE is very low) and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### **Summary of results of the Frankena analysis on Competency One**

Table 2 presents the summary of results of the Frankena analysis that has been carried out on Competency One. Each row presents a qualitative and quantitative examination of the components of each competency sub-part, ending with an overall verdict on coherence determined by the sum of the coherence levels of the individual Frankena components. The logical structure is also given in a column at the end.

Table 3

Summary of results of the Frankena analysis for Competency One

Competency One: “Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure

Knowing yourself and your capacities	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	One explicit foundation + missing many others (score = 0)	A few implicit principles + one principle is written descriptively (score = 0)	Low (sum = 2 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowing your identity	Implicit + improper combinations (score = 0)	Many foundations but implicit (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Low (sum = 3)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 2.5; Low			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

***An overview***

The notions presented in this competency, “the self,” “capacities,” and “identity,” were difficult to work with because of their abstract and general nature and thus were related to many statements, i.e., the word “self” could have many meanings; it could be referring to one’s nature, one’s abilities, one’s soul, etc. The same is the case for the term “identity,” especially since a lot of importance was given to identity within the documents. For one, it is present within the ‘Core Goal of Education,’ a section displayed in the FRDE. Second, different types of identities were addressed; these included national, divine, Iranian, Islamic, and global identity, as well as the individual and collective identity.

The analysis showed that the verb “knowing,” is not found among goal, foundation and principle statements in regard to the concepts of capacity and identity; instead, verbs like “development” were found, i.e. “developing learners’ existential capacities,” “development of one’s identity,” and “promoting the common dimensions

of identity.” Instead, knowing one’s capacities and identity is implied as a prerequisite to the action of developing them, making almost all of the statements found, implicit. Other problems found in this competency, other than a clear level of implicitness, is the presence of “improper combinations” of statements where goal and strategy statements were written together in one place. Additionally, there was a problem with the language used in one of the principles where it was written descriptively, when it is supposed to be written prescriptively. On a positive note, what stood out in this competency is that it reflected a large number of foundations that supported the concepts they discussed; the presence of so many philosophical foundations can be seen as a strength in the sense that this educational philosophy has a good number of foundations it is relying on, even though the rest of the components of the philosophy of education were lacking. Overall, the average coherence in competency one is low with a score of 2.5 out of 8, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

## **Competency Two**

### **Location of data**

The second competency under the Basic Competency ‘Knowledge,’ is the “Knowledge of the Almighty (God), His attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings and their sources.” Textual data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document was mainly located within the ‘Ontological Foundations’ section. The other sections that had relevant data were the sections on ‘Epistemological,’ ‘Axiological,’ ‘Theological,’ foundations, as well as the foundations on the ‘Knowledge of Man.’ The competency is related to the field titled ‘Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education’ and so most of its goals and principles were identified in the textual data dealing with this field. Within the National Curriculum, relevant data

was found under the subject matters headings ‘Islamic Knowledge and Wisdom,’ ‘Qur’an and Arabic’ education as well as the ‘Arts.’

**Analysis of data according to Frankena’s model**

The content analysis that took place used labels corresponding to the sub-parts of the competency: (1) knowledge of the Almighty (God) and His attributes, (2) God’s divine actions and signs, (3) religious teachings, and (4) religious sources. Data on these sub-parts was gathered from the predetermined relevant sections of the documents and condensed into meaning units that were inserted into the Frankena model for further analysis to determine the degree of logical coherence. The example analysis chosen to be presented here is an analysis using Frankena’s framework of the sub-part ‘Knowledge of God and His attributes,’ (signified in italics in Box C). The rest of the analyses for this competency are found in the Appendix (\*) but with the outcomes of those analyses presented in Table X below.

***Example analysis for Competency Two***

Analysis of part one of Competency Two is used here as an example to show the kinds of results achieved from the Frankena analysis on Competency Two. Table 3 presents the content found regarding each component relating to part one of this competency, namely “knowledge of the Almighty and His attributes.”

Table 4

Example analysis for Competency Two

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	The field of ideological, devotional, and moral education is concerned with self-knowledge and <i>knowledge of God Almighty</i> , resurrection, prophethood, acceptance of the guardianship of religious leaders (the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams) and following them, for they are truly the perfect human beings of the

	<p>highest stature throughout history.  <i>(Ideological, Devotional, and Moral Education)</i></p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● God is the origin and the purpose of existence.</li> <li>● God is the Creator of the universe and the Owner, the Mastermind, and the true Lord of all beings in the universe.</li> <li>● God has the highest order of perfection.</li> <li>● God is free from all defects, impoverishment, poverty, and need.</li> <li>● God is superior to time and space, omniscient and omnipotent, a benevolent giver, and at the same time a just judge.</li> <li>● God's relationship with the world of creation is that of creation (i.e., He is the Creator), lordship, ownership, protection, mercy, support, and guardianship.</li> <li>● God is the fundamental good, the foundation of goodness, and guides all beings in the universe to their worthy perfection.</li> <li>● God is the fundamental good of existence and guides all beings in existence to their proper perfection.</li> <li>● God, in addition to being pure goodness and perfection, is also the source of every goodness and perfection.</li> <li>● God has given each creature what it needs, deserves, and is meant to have, and has intended a specific destination for it, and has fully equipped that creature to reach the purpose of its creation.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ontological Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	<p><i>Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings and their sources.</i></p>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, both in theory and in action, has the ability of reasoning (rationalization), which plays an essential role in knowing the truth of existence and achieving eternal happiness.</li> <li>● Reasoning (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms).</li> </ul> <p><i>(Epistemological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The truth of existence in its essence is the Obligatory Existence (God, واجب الوجود).</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ontological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man's primordial nature is the knowledge of and tendency towards God which is embedded in man's existence.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Theological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reasoning is the most important human activity and is present in all activities, including hearing, seeing, observations of the heart, as well as producing concepts, making inferences, evaluations, generalizations, ... and reaching certainty.</li> <li>● The mind can enter both the realms of theoretical perceptions (i.e., knowledge of facts and beings) and practical perceptions (i.e., knowledge of good and bad, or should and should not) as well as practical obligation (will and action) to adhere to the tools of one's theoretical and practical perceptions.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></p>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● (Learning that is) oriented around one's primordial nature (starting from knowledge and desire for the divine that is embedded in learners' existence).</li> <li>● Rationalism (giving originality to reason and rationality, which is considered the skeleton and axis of ideological, devotional, and moral education), while paying attention to the emotional and practical dimensions (avoiding purely</li> </ul>

	<p>emotional confrontation or choosing religion based on reluctance and pure indoctrination); this means emphasizing on the acquisition of religious insight (البصيرة).</p> <p><i>(Approaches (of) Ideological, Devotional, and Moral Education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prioritizing reasoning over worship.</li> <li>● Principle of continuous transformation: Moving from indoctrination and habit to explanation, choice, and reasoning. Moving from suspicion (uncertainty, الظن) to certainty.</li> <li>● Balanced emphasis on explanation, reasoning, sensitivity (showing care and being considerate towards sensitive topics), and moral action.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Principles (of) Ideological, Devotional, and Moral Education)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

The statement in Box A, “knowledge of God,” relates explicitly to the chosen sub-part of the competency list in Box C, making the coherence between these two boxes high, giving it a score of 2 according to the pre-designated evaluation criteria. The many ontological statements (Box B) are rich in providing knowledge of God, His attributes, and His relationship towards creation, signifying the importance of learners having knowledge of God and His attributes (Box C), giving this Box a score of 2. The principle statements in Box E, although mentioned under the field of Ideological education, are very general and do not reflect the explicitness present in the foundational statements that explain how man can come to know God through his divine primordial nature (*Theological foundations*) and through the power of reasoning (*Knowledge of Man and Epistemological foundations*) and hence ultimately reach certainty (*Knowledge of Man*). Box E, accordingly, scores a 1 out of 2. Another point to make is that there were strategic principles, but there were no practical methods mentioned. The foundational statement in Box D is explicit enough in making the connection between reasoning and knowing God. It mentions that reasoning is the tool



to know the “truth of existence,” which “in its essence is the Obligatory Existence,” i.e., God Almighty. The rest of the foundations talk about what reasoning is as an ability, expanding upon the concept of reasoning in a general sense and not necessarily directly relating it to knowing God. Hence, Box D is assessed with a score of 2 out of 2. Overall, half of the structure (ABC) is coherent (high), while the other half (C D<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>) is partially coherent (medium-high). The coherence of this sub-part can be evaluated as high with a score of 7 out of 8, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

In simple words, based on the data and the logical order provided by the framework, we understand that knowledge of God (Box A) is a goal supported by the foundations that He is to man the Creator, the Provider, etc. (Box B), and thus learners must have knowledge of God and His attributes as a competency. Learners can achieve this through an education that uses the power of reason and rationality in addition to being exposed to an education that is oriented around bringing about learners’ primordial nature (Box E). This in turn is supported by the fact that reasoning is the most important human activity, that man through reason can reach the ultimate truth about God and existence, and that man has something called a primordial nature that is his tendency towards God which is embedded within his existence.

### **Summary of results of the Frankena analysis for Competency Two**

Table 4 displays the results of the multiple Frankena analyses that were carried out on the sub-parts of Competency Two.

Table 5

Results of Frankena's analysis of Competency Two

<p>Competency Two:  “Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings</p>
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and their sources.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation of coherence	Logical Structure
Knowledge of God and His attributes	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	High (score = 7 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of God’s divine actions and signs	Implicit + improper combination (score = 0)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of religious teachings	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	High (score = 7)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of religious sources	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit + one explicit principle (score = 1)	High (score = 6)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 6; High				Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>		

### *An overview*

The results of the Frankena analysis (Table 4) shows that overall coherence in this competency is ‘high’ for three of its sub-parts and ‘medium’ in one, and it has an overall logical structure of ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>. A clear pattern in this competency is that its Box B foundational statements are all coherently and explicitly linked to the goals (Box A) and competency statement (Box C). This competency showed problems in the form of implicitness in six of its statements and had two improper combinations. The improper combinations, where goals and strategies are stated together, make the sense-making process more difficult for the reader since according to Frankena’s logical model, they

are not supposed to be stated together in one statement. Moreover, these statements were found under sections titled “goals,” which gives more reason that these strategies are located in the wrong place and can thus be confusing for someone who is expecting to read statements that are stated solely as goals. Another finding is that there were no practical methods found, instead there were principles that guide action, giving a logical structure that lacks practicality. Overall, the coherence in Competency Two can be said to be high, with an average score of 6 out of 8, and its logical structure holding the form ABCD<sup>1E</sup><sup>1</sup>.

### **Competency Three**

#### **Location of data**

The third competency under the Basic Competency ‘Knowledge,’ is the “Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation and how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them.” Data relevant to this competency was found in the Theoretical Foundations document mainly under the sections titled “Axiological Foundations,” in addition to some under “Epistemological” and “Ontological” foundations. The competency’s data were mainly found under the content related to the “Field of Aesthetic and Artistic Education.” Data in the National curriculum was found under the subject matter ‘Arts.’

#### **Analysis**

Again, as with the other competencies, the first step taken towards analysis was content analysis. Competency Three was divided into the two sub-parts: (1) knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation, and (2) how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them, for a more organized analysis. Labels were generated to correspond to these sub-parts. These included words

and phrases such as “phenomena,” “events,” “relations,” “laws” (of the world of creation), as well as “man’s relationship with creation,” and “man’s use of creation.” These labels were used to identify relevant data throughout the text. Subsequently, the collected data was condensed into shorter “meaning units” that were in turn inserted into Frankena’s model into their corresponding compartments (Box A: Goal; Box B: Foundations supporting and relating goals to the competency; Box D: Foundations on how to achieve the said competency; and Box E: Strategy) for analysis.

***Example analysis for Competency Three***

Table 5 below is has compiled the statements relating to part one of Competency Three, namely “knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation.”

Table 6

Analysis of sub-part One of Competency Three

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Understanding phenomena and its purpose</i> to understand existence and one’s place in it.</li> <li>ii. <i>Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events</i> in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.</li> <li>iii. Cultivate the senses and imagination...<i>to receive the manifestations of God throughout nature/existence.</i></li> <li>iv. <i>Understanding the beauties of the world of creation as manifestations of divine beauty and perfection</i> and fostering one’s aesthetic taste.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Goals, Aesthetic and Artistic education, TF)</i></p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All beings are signs of the truth of existence, i.e., Almighty God. And the world of creation is real, objective, and a permanent sign of God. The Qur’an has spoken of natural phenomena in more than seven hundred and fifty verses and man is invited to know and understand nature. This knowledge is meant as knowledge of signs so that one can look at divine signs and reach the owner of these signs.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ontological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God’s authority, wisdom, grace, and mercy, and according to the Qur’an, they are divine signs, and their</li> </ul>

	<p>knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the Islamic view, God is the absolute beauty and lover of beauty. God has created everything in its best form and has given the best fit and harmony to existence. The love of beauty is created instinctively in human beings by God, so an important part of life is to pay attention to the internal and external beauty of things.</li> <li>● Beauty and art are manifestations of the transcendence of human life. In Islamic aesthetics, the principle of exaltation of aesthetic emotions is discussed so that the real beauties of life are not hidden behind outward beauties. Thus, art is the manifestation of human creativity, the knowledge of which has a profound effect on the evolutionary movement of man towards God - the creator of artistic talents.</li> <li>● Aesthetic value has been proposed in Islamic texts with an objective and a subjective criterion (individual's perception). The objective element in beauty means that the beautiful object itself has real properties that make it beautiful.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Axiological Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	<i>Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation and how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them.</i>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The senses are the most pervasive tool of knowledge. The exoteric senses provide man with a broad knowledge of the natural world. The esoteric senses help in understanding meaning, and mental forms (1.3.6).</li> <li>● Reason (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms). Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. In various verses, the Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who notice these signs are those who have a heart and a mind. (1.3.7)</li> </ul>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Cultivate the senses and imagination...to receive the manifestations of God throughout nature/existence.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Goal under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasis on cultivating the senses.</li> <li>● Providing suitable grounds for cultivating imagination.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Principles, Aesthetic and Artistic education, TF)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

There are four goal statements that can be related to this competency, the first two being the most directly explicit. The first goal statement ‘i’ is an intermediate goal (*understanding phenomena and its purpose*) that leads to an ultimate goal of “...*understand(ing) existence and one’s place in it.*” The presence of multiple goals in one statement can cause confusion in Frankena’s logical flow. Statement ‘ii’ also has the same problem as goal statement ‘i.’ Moreover, this statement lacks other key terms namely “relations,” “events,” and “laws” of the world of creation, as it only mentions the word “phenomena.” Goals ‘iii’ and ‘iv’ are related implicitly to the competency, where goal iii uses the verb “receive,” when our competency is concerned with “knowing” these manifestations, and goal ‘iv’ states its focus on “understanding the beauties” of the world of creation specifically and so it is more specific than what is stated in the competency statement concerned with “knowing” these phenomena. The reason why these two goals (iii and iv) are mentioned even though the first two goals explicitly correspond to the competency statement is because this is the closest competency statement they can relate to, i.e. no other competency statement corresponds to them. This reflects an issue in the philosophy where multiple goal statements can be traced to one competency when originally the model calls for a more one-on-one relationship. Goal ‘iii’ displays an additional issue where it consists of both the goal statement and its strategy, while goal ‘iv’ has two goals in one statement which can also cause confusion for the reader. Overall the level of coherence of Box A is evaluated as medium due to the aforementioned analysis, giving it a score of 1 on the devised coherence measuring scale. The content of Box B includes ontological and axiological statements that explicitly support how man is invited to understand phenomena in nature. However, in one of the foundations (“Nature and

phenomena...*must* be considered”), the statement has been worded prescriptively rather than descriptively, signified by the word “must.” Foundations (Box B) supporting goals ‘iii’ and ‘iv’ are explicit. Although Box B had a problem with wording in one of its statements, it expressed explicitness in its statements giving it an overall score of 1. The strategies mentioned (Box E) are very generic and do not clearly explain their role in achieving the said competency. These strategies were related to the competency through goal statement ‘iii.’ Goal statement ‘iii’ explicitly states that cultivating the senses and imagination are needed to healthily perceive the manifestations around us. A problem with this, clearly, is that it is a strategy mentioned within a goal statement and not under principles and strategies in the Theoretical Foundations document. The analysis gives us a 1 and thus a medium level of coherence in this Box. Box D is also generic and implies that the senses are a means to understand phenomena. “Reasoning” is mentioned foundationally (Box D) as a tool for encrypting and decrypting phenomena; however, it is not mentioned as a guiding principle in Box E. Box D also lacks foundational data on “imagination” being a tool for witnessing phenomena. Since information is present on multiple concepts, and only information on “imagination” is lacking, this Box gets a score of 1 out of 2 with a level of medium. It is important to note that the wording in the way principles are stated is rather superfluous; i.e. terms like “emphasis on” and “providing ground for” are rather unnecessary. Overall, the coherence of this structure is assessed as medium with a score of 4 out of 8 and a logical structure of ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### **Summary of results of the Frankena analysis of Competency Three**

Table 6 summarizes the results for Competency Three. It lays out the two parts that make up this competency while mentioning the qualitative analysis results of each

of Franekna’s components. An overall score for the quantitative analysis for the level of coherence is also given.

Table 7

Summary of results for Competency Three

Competency Three: “Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation and how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting the principles (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation	Explicit + multiple goal statements + improper combinations (score = 1)	Explicit + one prescriptive foundation (score = 1)	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Mostly implicit (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Man’s relationship with phenomena, ... and making optimal use of them	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit + one foundation is prescriptive + a missing concept (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	High (score = 6)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 5; Medium				Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>		

**An Overview**

Competency Three displayed issues in the form of multiple goal statements relating to the same competency, displaying a lack of one-on-one relationship between goal statements *and* competency statements which can thus create incoherence. There was a case of redundancy, where two goal statements (goals ‘i’ and ‘ii’ in the first sub-



competency) were basically conveying the same concept of “understanding phenomena.” This can be especially problematic due to the fact that these statements (goals i and ii) that are very similar to each other were found under the same field of Aesthetic and Artistic education. These two statements could have easily been combined as one goal statement. There were also “improper” combinations of statements, where goals and principles were placed in one statement under the title “goals” within the Theoretical foundations document, which also creates confusion for the reader. The foundation that is supposed to support the concept on the ‘power of imagination,’ was missing. Moreover, there was a prescriptively written foundation, and implicitly stated strategic principles. And like the previous competencies, there were no practical methods mentioned. Overall, the coherence in competency three is leaning towards medium with an average score of 5 out of 8, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1E</sup><sup>1</sup>.

### **Competency Four**

#### **Location of data**

The fourth competency is ‘Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.’ Data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document was majorly located within the sections titled “Foundations on Knowledge of Man,” “Epistemological Foundations,” “Axiological Foundations,” in addition to “Sociological” and “Psychological Foundations.” The rest of the data was found under the “Field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education,” “Social and Political education,” “Biological and Physical education,” and “Economic education.” Within the National Curriculum, relevant data was found under the subject matter “Humanities and Social Sciences.”

### **Analysis of data according to Frankena’s model**

The fourth competency “Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life” reflects a broad concept. Using content analysis, the labels “relationships,” “roles,” “rights,” and “duties,” were used to collect data. Data collected on this competency generated different themes under the umbrella of relationships, roles, rights, and duties of oneself and others. These themes touched upon different concepts namely, (1) one’s responsibility towards his own and others’ spiritual dimension, (2) one’s responsibility towards his own and others’ existential status, (3) social and political education (which involves, more specifically, interaction with others and public institutions), and (4) one’s responsibility towards one’s own and others’ health and safety. To facilitate the process of analysis, these themes were used to organize the data and make them more manageable for the Frankena analysis. The data collected through content analysis was inserted into the Frankena model for analysis. The example analysis given below addresses the third theme on social and political education.

#### ***Example analysis for Competency Four***

Table 7 below displays data found relating to part three of Competency Four, that relates to the theme “social and political education and interaction with others and public institutions.”

Table 8

Analysis of sub-part Three of Competency Four

Sub-part Three	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<i>i.</i> The field of social and political education is part of the formal and public education process to acquire competencies that enable learners to be active and knowledgeable citizens and to participate in political and social

	<p>activities. The parameters of socio-political education includes the following: <i>proper communication with others</i> (family members, relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues, etc.), <i>proper interaction with the government and other civil and political institutions</i> (observance of law, responsibility, participation) social and political protection of social values, <i>acquisition of social knowledge and ethics and communication skills</i> (tolerance, harmony and empathy, social understanding, peace seeking, political understanding, social justice, intercultural understanding and interaction, maintaining unity and understanding the capabilities of the national language (Persian) as well as global languages (Arabic, English, etc.)).</p> <p>(<i>Scope, The Field of Social and Political education, TF</i>)</p> <p>ii. <i>Proper understanding of one's and society's social and political position and wise confrontation with social and political developments</i> based on the Islamic standard system in order to build a bright future and influence the future of oneself and society at the national and global levels.</p> <p>iii. <i>Effective collective participation in social and political life</i> by observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</p> <p>iv. <i>Appropriate interaction with the government and other civil and political institutions and the acquisition of competencies such as law enforcement, accountability, social and political participation, and protection of social values</i> to form a competent society and its continuous development according to the Islamic standard system.</p> <p>(<i>Goals of the field of Social and Political education, TF</i>)</p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education is one of the basic functions of the Islamic government and what is considered to be the goals of the government (such as the implementation of divine commandments, welfare, and justice) is in fact the means for the realization of good life and the desired process of education in society. Laying the groundwork for the education of the people is both the purpose of the Islamic State and the guarantor of its survival. The participation in the sphere of social and political life by members of the society is considered as guiding the people. Educational institutions are the basis for the active participation of the public in social and political life.</li> <li>● Council is one of the basic principles of politics and leadership in Islamic government and management. The Holy Qur'an, in verses one of Surah Al-Imran and four of Surah Shura, has instructed the Prophet and the Muslims to carry out Shura (meaning collective council). There is a lot of emphasis on it in narrations (for example, see the translation of Al-Hayat, Volume I, Chapter Forty-two from the first chapter). These recommendations indicate the vital role of this principle in improving the affairs of society in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres. Opinion polls, councils, and participation of individuals in social life (collective wisdom) are among the basic teachings of the religion of Islam, and this is more necessary and vital for the leaders and managers of society.</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Political Foundations, TF</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All human beings are created equal and have equal rights and duties. All human beings are descended from the same origin. No human being is superior to another in terms of the principle of creation. Therefore, the natural</li> </ul>

	<p>differences (racial, ethnic, sexual, hereditary, etc.) are based on divine wisdom and to identify humans, which, cannot be a criterion of superiority. The equality of human beings (in society and before the law) means that all human beings have fair rights and duties (based on their abilities and the amount of effort they put forth).</p> <p><i>(Legal Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Society has laws and traditions independent of its components as it involves a kind of life independent of individual life. At the same time, the components of society (human beings) are independent, because individual life and individual acquisitions of one's nature are not solved within the collective life. Man lives with two lives and two souls (selves): the individual who is born of nature and his personal will and action, and the other life and collective soul that is born of social life and as a collective identity of each person, where one's actions emerge based on one's collective choice. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a real relationship between the individual and society.</li> <li>● Communication with family is one of the most basic components of communication that plays an undeniable role in shaping the foundations of human identity. Family life, preparation for it, and the formation and continuation of this form of social life is a major component of social education. In formal and public education, aside from the emphasis on basic competencies, factors that lead to the strengthening of the family institution and gender roles such as maternal role, are also given serious attention.</li> <li>● The social dimension of the good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society.</li> <li>● Man actively interacts with the environment (society) and its members. The Islamic perspective distances itself from environmentalism (unlike contemporary social sciences) in terms of its emphasis on individual responsibility. In terms of situational attention, it is also fundamentally different from individualism and warns us that we have to interact with the environment, but we are not allowed to give ourselves completely to the environment to change it.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Sociological Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The main purpose of religion is to regulate and guide human life in the context of the four original and fixed relations that each individual must establish as a conscious and independent being with existence (relationship with oneself, relationship with God, relationship with other human beings, and relationship with nature).</li> <li>● In Islamic teachings, justice is the most fundamental moral and social value in the path of nearness to God. Carrying out just actions is connected to the happiness of man and society. The standard of justice is the observance of the rights of individuals. But the rights of different people can be the same or equal, or different and unequal. In cases where the rights of individuals are the same, then justice means the establishment of equality between individuals.</li> </ul>

	<p>Equality does not only mean the same level of enjoyment of individuals. In the case of inequality and injustice between individuals (who are under the same conditions), the realization of justice and equality of social opportunities requires access to different benefits. Therefore, if the rights and duties of individuals (due to differences in the amount of action and the type of individual characteristics) are unequal and different, then the realization of justice is associated with inequality. But this kind of inequality never means oppression, but can be combined with justice; that is, everyone should enjoy the reward or receive appropriate punishment according to the result of their efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society.</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Sociological Foundations, TF</i>)</p>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effective collective participation in social and political life by <i>observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</i></li> </ul> <p>(<i>Goals of the field of Social and Political education, TF</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social and political education is “virtue-oriented.” Such an approach indicates the importance of paying attention to value and ethical issues and including them in this type of education. Ethics is a code that obliges man, in terms of being human, to abide by it. Religion, which is the all-encompassing sphere of social and political structures and the source of norm in social and political education, should be considered, and it plays an irreplaceable role in promoting social relations at the family and social level; this is because the correction of the relationship with God, which corrects the relationship with oneself, others and nature, is a key element in social and political education.</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Approach, The Field of Social and Political education, TF</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing ground for learners to get out of self-centeredness, authoritarianism, and despotism.</li> <li>● Looking at family and social rights and responsibilities as two complementary elements.</li> <li>● Emphasis on legality and respecting and observing the rule of law (acceptance of the country's constitution as a national covenant).</li> <li>● Emphasis on a common identity (human, Islamic, Iranian) for national unity and social cohesion.</li> <li>● Emphasis on (Iran’s) global mission and human responsibility (towards one another) and the spread of justice in the world.</li> <li>● Emphasis on tolerance towards opposing beliefs and subcultures at the national and global levels.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasis on anti-oppression (fighting against oppression that is inflicted upon others) and non-oppression (not accepting oppression upon yourself)</li> <li>● Acquisition of appropriate competencies in learners in order to solve their individual and group problems in relation to family, community, and work environment.</li> <li>● Rejecting the distinction between religion and politics, rights and responsibilities, authority and duty, and worship and work.</li> <li>● Moving from individual reform to social reform.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Principles, The Field of Social and Political education, TF)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

The goal statements (Box A) are all under a similar category of learners' role in social and political life which entails their interaction with others, with governmental institutions, and so forth, making them explicit to the competency statement. Statements (ii) and (iii) consist of more than one goal, while statement (iv) has a goal and strategy in one statement creating a confusing combination of statements in what is expected of the content of Box A in the logical flow of Franekena's model. Statements (iii) and (iv) are very similar to each other displaying some redundancy in the concepts that the Social and Political field of education is trying to convey. Moreover, within the goal statements, there is a clear connection made between the social and political education learners are to receive. Consequently, the level of coherence of Box A can be evaluated as medium with a score of 1. The characteristics of what a righteous society would look like are more pronounced within the goal statements than the foundations. Concepts that haven't been addressed include what man's "social and political confrontation" would look like and how he has a global responsibility socially and politically speaking. On the other hand, concepts such as communication with family, law observance, and social justice are all axiological statements mentioned within the foundations, making

the contents of this box (B) partially strong, giving this Box a score of 1 out of 2, or in other words, medium. The strategy statements (Box E) explicitly mention concepts regarding observing duties and the rules of law and acquiring knowledge for the promotion of social life, but involve a case of improper combination of goal and strategy statements. The coherence level of this Box is evaluated as 1, i.e. medium. Foundational statements (Box D) supporting these principles are lacking, only meeting some concepts. In a way, the goal and principle statements are more in line with each other than they are with the foundations, also giving this Box a score of 1. Overall, the coherence in this sub-analysis can be evaluated as medium signified by a score of 4 out of 8, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

Another example is presented in Table 8 to reflect the variety of results found on this competency.

Table 9

Analysis of sub-part Four of Competency Four

Sub-part Four	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	i. Continuous efforts to <i>maintain and promote the physical and mental health of oneself and others</i> based on the Islamic standard system. ii. Individual and collective efforts to maintain and promote the health and safety of society at the local, national, and global levels based on the Islamic standard system. <i>(Goals of the field of Biological and Physical education, TF)</i>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The social dimension of the good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society.</li> </ul> <i>(Sociological Foundations, TF)</i>
Competency (C)	Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights, and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.

Foundations (D)	
Strategies (E)	
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABC	Low

The goal statement (Box A) touches upon the importance of maintaining health of the self and others, showing an additional social responsibility, scoring a 2. The foundational statements (Box B) that are present state in general how the individual holds a form of responsibility towards the other; however, there is no mention as to how this responsibility also involves others' health, making the relationship very implicit and weak, giving it a score of 1 Principles (Box E) and foundational statements that would support these principles are absent, giving each a 0. Overall, the coherence of this sub-competency is evaluated at 3, meaning low, and its logical structure as ABC.

**Summary of results of the Frankena analysis for Competency Four**

The results presented below in Table 9 sum up the Frankena analysis for Competency Four according to the four themes that were generated from the data collected on this competency. The qualitative results in each box are accompanied by a quantitative score that determines the level of coherence.

Table 10

Summary of results for Competency Four

<p>Competency Four:  “Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights, and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.”</p>
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Competency sub-part (C)*	Goal (A)	Foundations connecting goal to competency (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
One's and others' spiritual dimension	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Partially explicit + lacking multiple concepts	Explicit + improper combination + absent in appropriate location (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
One's and others' existential status	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Mostly explicit (score = 2)	Partially explicit + missing some data (score = 1)	Explicit enough + missing some principles (score = 1)	Medium (score = 5)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Social and political education + interaction with others and public institutions	Explicit + multiple goals in one statement + improper combination (score = 1)	Partially explicit (absence of some foundations) (score = 1)	Partially explicit (absence of some foundations) (score = 1)	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
One's and others' health and safety	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Absent (score = 0)	Absent (score = 0)	Low (score = 3)	ABC
Average coherence = 4; Medium			Logical structure = leaning towards ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

### *An overview*

The competency is stated in a general voice where it is referring to the concept of learners having to know “duties and responsibilities” without mentioning what these duties and responsibilities look like. The goal statements found lay out these duties and

responsibilities towards the self and others involve the spiritual dimension of individuals, their existential status, their social and political education and participation, and their health and safety, reflecting the different areas which every individual's responsibility touches upon. The concepts displayed were one too many in number, however, if we are to state them as briefly as possible, they include proper communication with others (family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, etc.), proper interaction with the government and other civil and political institutions (in the form of observing the law, accepting responsibility, etc.), social and political protection of social values, wise confrontation with social and political developments, having a proper understanding of one's and society's social and political position, and influencing the future of oneself and others nationally and globally. Two concepts held a long list of activities that fall under their umbrella. One is "social and political participation," which involved "observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression ... respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, etc." And the other concept, the "acquisition of social knowledge and ethics and communication skills" involved characteristics and actions in the form of tolerance, harmony and empathy, social understanding, peace seeking, political understanding, etc. (the rest of which are listed in the table above). There were also concepts of being responsible for one's and others' health and safety as well as their spiritual status signified by the importance of carrying out the act of "enjoining good and forbidding evil," also known in Arabic as الامر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر.

Foundations varied between being generic and specific; however some were missing, creating gaps in the logical flow. Other issues that were present were cases of

improper combinations of goal and strategy statements. Additionally, there were cases of overlap where certain concepts such as competencies of harmony, tolerance, peace-seeking, etc. have been mentioned in more than one goal statement which creates redundancy and thus reflects a disorganized display of data, making the sense-making process difficult. These concepts could have been better organized to exist in one goal statement instead of multiple goal statements. Overall, the coherence of Competency Four is leaning towards medium, due to an average score of 4 out of 8 on the assigned coherence scale, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>, except for the last theme that is characterized by an “AC” structure.

### **Competency Five**

#### **Location of Data**

The fifth competency under the Basic Competency ‘Knowledge,’ is the “Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.” Data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document was located under “Theological,” “Axiological,” and “Political Foundations,” as well as under the section relating to “The Field of Social and Political education.” Moreover, relevant principles were found under the section “Key Principles of Education.” Within the National Curriculum, relevant data was present under the subject matters “Culture and Art” as well as the “Humanities and Social Sciences.”

#### **Analysis of data according to Frankena’s model**

The fifth competency under the Basic Competency of ‘Knowledge’ is “Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran” reflects one specific concept. Subsequently, this competency was not divided into any parts. The labels used through content analysis to

collect data were the “past and present of civilizations” (in general) and the “past and present of Islam and Iran’s culture and civilization” (more specifically). The data collected through content analysis was condensed into shorter meaning units to ease analysis. The condensed format of data was inserted into the Frankena model for analysis. An example analysis is given below for this competency.

***Example analysis for Competency Five***

The contents for Competency Five, “knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran,” are presented below in Table 10 in one sub-analysis.

Table 11

Analysis of Competency Five

Competency Five	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<i>Recognition of Islamic culture and civilization, with regard to the present and future needs of society and efforts to achieve a single Islamic nation based on the standard Islamic system.</i> <i>(Goals, The Field of Social and Political education, TF)</i>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The religion of Islam promises a bright future for human beings - the society of world justice - which requires the efforts of a righteous religious society to establish a new Islamic civilization based on the standard Islamic system. Continuing the mission of the prophets, Islam has presented a transcendent plan for human life and for building a future. This plan has not been fully realized in the past of Islam, nor does it conform to modern material patterns. Rather, it will emerge with the efforts of Muslims, and its full realization must be expected in the promised future (a world ideal society based on Mahdavi justice). The Qur'an promises that the righteous will be the caliphates of the earth, and Islamic texts paint a picture of the world community, in which prosperity, justice, freedom, tranquility, and other manifestations of material and spiritual happiness can be achieved. According to the Qur'an, a righteous Islamic society envisions such a future and considers itself responsible to change its destiny towards the realization of such a world.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Theological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge and the Knower (person receiving knowledge) have a fundamental role in Islamic society and culture; knowledge is at the top of</li> </ul>

	<p>virtues, the root of all goodness, the beacon of reason and the value of humans; thus, seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty for all.</p> <p><i>(Axiological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the presuppositions and theological principles described in the Principles of the Philosophy of Education section in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to face modernity and its manifestations and effects, the civilization-building approach is preferable to approaches such as modernism and traditionalism. In this approach, in addition to spirituality, reason is emphasized. Religion is not only in the realm of individual life but is considered a comprehensive life program that has fundamental presence in various political and social arenas. The use of human knowledge and its development within the framework of religious principles is of value. Muslims should take a step towards the establishment of a new Islamic civilization based on the interpretation of the book and tradition and methodical and dynamic ijtehad in Islamic society.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Political Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	<i>Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.</i>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iran's formal and public education model has general and common features that are in common with other models (such as being mandatory, systematic, universal, school-oriented, etc.) and these characteristics are compatible with the foundations of the philosophy of formal and public education. At the same time, the "justice-oriented" aspect of this model has distinctive features that make it different from common models. Some features such as the emphasis on "national unity and social cohesion while accepting pluralism and diversity" and the appropriateness of culture "and" compliance with the religious standard system," highlight the distinguishing features of this model. However, there are more specific aspects of this new model (in this reform endeavor) that focuses more on the Islamic-Iranian identity and opts to respond to the requirements of today's Iranian society, which makes it different from the current models of formal and public education. On one hand, this new model refers to the key role and guidance of the Islamic standard system in all its dimensions and the components of formal and public education, and on the other hand, it focuses on the historical feature of this model.</li> </ul>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paying attention to the valuable heritage of Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization in order to create a common Iranian and Islamic identity.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Principles, The Field of Social and Political education, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Attention to Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization." The process of education as a social practice, inevitably takes place in the context of society's culture and with its support, and therefore the transfer of culture and its promotion is one of the main functions of education. Therefore, proper use of valuable resources of Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization in all stages and types of education, as well as paving the way for active interaction of indigenous culture with other cultures, will be one of the most important</li> </ul>

	<p>mechanisms for developing and transcending the national identity of learners. "</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The desired model of formal and public education should also have clear signs of dependence on the Islamic-Iranian civilization. The desired model of formal and public education should be appropriate to the cultural, social, political, historical, and even economic requirements of Iran. This feature also provides a favorable model for today's Iranian society. Therefore, the emphasis on Persian culture, language and literature and the emphasis on Iranian national identity should also be considered as distinguishing features of formal and public education.</li> <li>• Futurism. Education, while paying attention to the past of the individual and society and their current conditions, is basically facing the future and is a collective plan to build and deal with the future of human society. Therefore, educators at all levels of policy-making, planning and action not only need to achieve a relatively accurate and realistic forecast of the future of society and the challenges ahead by conducting studies relating to the future, but also by adopting an approach that is active and one that looks forward (i.e. explains the desired future) in relation to future cultural, political and social developments, chooses appropriate educational strategies to meet the educational system and learners with the challenges ahead and uses the strengths and opportunities present and transforms threats and weaknesses.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Key Principles of education, TF)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

The goal statement (Box A) expresses that Islamic culture and civilization must be recognized among learners, making it explicit, however it only mentions knowing the past and present of the Islamic civilization and culture when the competency refers to societies in general in addition to the Islamic civilization, giving this Box medium coherence, or a 1 out of 2. The foundational statements are implicit. These statements explain well the role man plays in building civilization, more specifically an Islamic civilization, and what such a society looks like, implying the importance of having knowledge of such a civilization (to be able to build it). Box B is also evaluated as medium due to a score of 1. The strategic principles (Box E) are very explicitly

connected to the competency highlighting the importance of having an education model oriented around the Islamic-Iranian culture and the importance of futurism, i.e., knowing the past and present circumstances of societies to understand their future, giving a highly coherent Box E, or in other words a 2 on the coherence scale. Foundational statements (Box D) supporting this are implicit and multiple concepts; in other words, this Box is scored 0, i.e. it holds low coherence. Overall, this competency scored an average of 4 out of 8, i.e. a medium level of coherence, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### Summary of results of the Frankena analysis on Competency Five

Table 11 below presents the results of the Frankena analysis for Competency Five. The qualitative and quantitative results are placed in each box of the Frankena components.

Table 12

#### Analysis of Competency Five

Competency Five: “Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Knowledge about the past ... culture and civilization of Islam and Iran	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Implicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Implicit + missing concepts (score = 0)	Explicit (score = 2)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>

Average coherence = 4; Medium	Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
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*An overview*

Competency five displayed cases of missing concepts and implicitness on one hand, which affected its structure's coherence, while it had strong strategic principles on the other hand, which strengthened the structure, giving a medium level of coherence overall. The content displayed within the goal statements refer to the present state of civilization but none about the past. Some of the foundations of this competency are implicit, while others are absent. The present foundations speak of what an Islamic civilization looks like, implying the importance of having knowledge on what this civilization is about and thus how to achieve it. The strategic principles giving guidelines for action in learners gaining knowledge of the Islamic-Iranian culture and civilization emphasized the importance of focusing on an education that values the Islamic-Iranian heritage (as a means to create a common Islamic-Iranian identity) and that meets Iran's cultural, political, historical, social, and economic needs. It also highlighted the concept of futurism which involves thinking forward and strategically planning for the future to equip learners against challenges that lie ahead and make use of the potential strengths and opportunities and to remove any threats and weaknesses. Overall, this competency's coherence is evaluated as medium due to an average score of 4 out of 8, with a logical structure of ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.



## Competency Six

### Location of data

The sixth competency under the Basic Competency ‘Knowledge’ is “Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.” Data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document were mostly in the “Political Foundations” section, in addition to “Axiological” and “Theological Foundations.” Data was also found under “The Field of Social and Political education.”

### Analysis of data according to Frankena’s model

The sixth competency “Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran” holds the concepts of “religious democracy” and “the global status and mission of Iran.” Accordingly, these were the labels used in content analysis to collect and distill data. The condensed format of data that was inserted into the Frankena model for analysis is shown below in Table 12.

Table 13

### Analysis of Competency Six

Competency Six	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<p>i. <i>Effective collective participation in social and political life by observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</i> <i>(Goals, The Field of Social and Political education, TF)</i></p> <p>ii. Expanding the constructive participation and role of the general public in the expected social and political developments in the socio-political system</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>based on religious democracy.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Goals, The common goals of Formal and Public education, TF)</i></p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The religion of Islam promises a bright future for human beings - the society of world justice - which requires the efforts of a righteous religious society to establish a new Islamic civilization based on the standard Islamic system. Continuing the mission of the prophets, Islam has presented a transcendent plan for human life and for building a future. This plan has not been fully realized in the past of Islam, nor does it conform to modern material patterns. Rather, it will emerge with the efforts of Muslims, and its full realization must be expected in the promised future (a world ideal society based on Mahdavi justice). The Qur'an promises that the righteous will be the caliphates of the earth, and Islamic texts paint a picture of the world community, in which prosperity, justice, freedom, tranquility, and other manifestations of human material and spiritual happiness can be achieved. According to the Qur'an, a righteous Islamic society envisions such a future and considers itself responsible to change its destiny towards the realization of such a world.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Theological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Islamic teachings, justice is the most fundamental moral and social value in the path of nearness to God. Carrying out just actions is connected to the happiness of man and society. The standard of justice is the observance of the rights of individuals. But the rights of different people can be the same or equal, or different and unequal. In cases where the rights of individuals are the same, then justice means the establishment of equality between individuals. Equality does not only mean the same level of enjoyment of individuals. In the case of inequality and injustice between individuals (who are under the same conditions), the realization of justice and equality of social opportunities requires access to different benefits. Therefore, if the rights and duties of individuals (due to differences in the amount of action and the type of individual characteristics) are unequal and different, then the realization of justice is associated with inequality. But this kind of inequality never means oppression, but can be combined with justice; that is, everyone should enjoy the reward or receive appropriate punishment according to the result of their efforts.</li> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Sociological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proper education of the public in terms of the principle of <i>religious democracy</i> in the Islamic government is one of the goals of forming a government and considering the reliance of this type of government on the election of the people is the main strategy to maintain the desired political</li> </ul>

	<p>system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education is one of the basic functions of the Islamic government and what is considered to be the goals of the government (such as the implementation of divine commandments, welfare, and justice) is in fact the means for the realization of the good life and the desired process of education in society. Laying the groundwork for the education of people is both the purpose of the Islamic State and the guarantor of its survival. Participation in the sphere of social and political life by members of the society is perceived as a form of guidance that is coming from the people. Educational institutions are the basis for the active participation of the public in social and political life.</li> <li>● Council is one of the basic principles of politics and leadership in Islamic government and management. The Holy Qur'an, in verses one of Surah Al-Imran and four of Surah Shura, has instructed the Prophet and the Muslims to the Shura. There is a lot of emphasis on it in narrations (for example, see the translation of Al-Hayat, Volume I, Chapter Forty-two from the first section). These recommendations indicate the vital role of this principle in improving the affairs of society in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres. Opinion polls, councils, and participation of individuals in social life (collective wisdom) are among the basic teachings of the religion of Islam, and this is more necessary and vital for the leaders and managers of society.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Political Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	<i>Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.</i>
Foundations (D)	Box B and D can be the same in this case.
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasis on (Iran's) global mission and human responsibility (towards one another) and the spread of justice in the world.</li> <li>● Emphasis on a common identity (human, Islamic, Iranian) for national unity and social cohesion.</li> <li>● Emphasis on anti-oppression (fighting against oppression that is inflicted upon others) and non-oppression (not accepting oppression upon yourself).</li> <li>● Rejecting the distinction between religion and politics, rights and responsibilities, authority and duty, worship, and work.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Principles, The Field of Social and Political education, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relying on an Iranian Islamic culture and civilization and being appropriate to today's Iranian society. According to this feature, the desired model of public education should have clear signs of dependence on an Islamic-Iranian civilization. It should be appropriate to the social, political, historical, and even economic requirements of Iran. Therefore, the emphasis on Persian culture, language, literature, and on national identity should also be considered as distinguishing features of public education.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Specific features of Formal and Public education, TF)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence

ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High
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The competency (Box C) states that learners must be familiar with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Iran. The goal statements (Box A) speak of promoting religious democracy and to involve the public in the affairs of the country based on this democracy, suggesting the need for the disposition that learners need to be “familiar” with the concept of a religious democracy as a prerequisite to achieve these goals, making the content coherent with a score of 2. Foundational statements (Box B) are replete with describing the kind of society Iran aims for, “a society of world justice,” also known as a Mahdavi state, emphasizing the mission of Iran, and it highlights the importance of having a religious democracy and concepts like collective council as is encouraged within the Qur’an and the Islamic culture reflecting the importance of involving the public in the affairs of society and the country at large. Accordingly, the contents of Box B can be given a score of 2 and thus evaluated as high in coherence in relation to the competency. There are no practical strategies; instead, there are strategic principles. Some of the principles (Box E) are directly related to the competency reflecting the importance of learners knowing the “global mission” of Iran, and the importance of achieving global justice, while others are absent, i.e., there is no mention of religious democracy, i.e., it is only implied in the inseparability of religion from politics. Hence, Box E is assigned a score of 1. The foundations that would support these principles (Box D) in this case are the same as the contents of Box B, and are thus high in coherence with a score of 2. Overall, the coherence of this competency can be evaluated as leaning towards high, with an average score of 7 out of 8, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

## Summary of results of the Frankena analysis on Competency Six

Competency six, also being specific, had a smaller amount of data relating to it.

The results of the analysis are placed in Table 13 below.

Table 14

### Summary of results for Competency Six

Competency Six: “Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Familiarity with ... the global status and mission of Islamic Iran	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit + missing a few Concepts (score = 1)	High (score = 7 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 7; High				Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>		

### *An overview*

Competency six overall displayed strength in its level of coherence. The present issue was in the absence of the concept of democracy in the content of its box E and this concept could've been more elaborated upon in the foundations in Box B. However, overall, it showed good coherence. Through this competency, we understand that Iran's philosophy of education aims to have individuals who participate collectively and effectively in the social and political matters in society based on a religious democracy, making the familiarity with this concept a needed disposition to be fostered in learners.

The philosophy supports this concept by explaining what an Islamic-Iranian society believes in, i.e. the active participation of the public through opinion polls, councils and so forth, its reliance on the public in the election process, and how educational institutions are the basis for the active participation of the public in social and political life. Its strategic principles guided action that revolves around highlighting Iran's mission in the educational process, highlight its social global values of peace-seeking and being against oppression, and relying on an educational model that highlights the Iranian-Islamic culture and civilization that holds the concepts of a religious democracy and its global values at its core. However, the term religious democracy was not mentioned among the strategic principles, which makes the coherence of this Box medium. Therefore, it can be evaluated that this competency's coherence level leans towards high with an average of 7 out of 8 on the devised coherency scale, with a logical structure of ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### **Competency Seven**

#### **Location of data**

The seventh competency under the Basic Competency 'Knowledge,' is "Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art." Data found regarding this competency in the Theoretical Foundations document ranged among "Ontological," "Epistemological," and "Axiological Foundations," in addition to "The Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education" where it gets its goals, approach and principles from. Moreover, data was found under the subject matter of 'Arts' in the National curriculum.

## Analysis of data

The seventh competency “Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art” holds two concepts: “methods of encoding and decoding phenomena” and “expressing phenomena in the language of arts.” Accordingly, these were the labels used in content analysis to collect and distill data. The condensed format of data that was inserted into the Frankena model for analysis is shown in Table 14 below.

Table 15

### Analysis of Competency Seven

Competency Seven	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Decrypting and encrypting overt and covert phenomena of nature/existence and expressing it in artistic language.</i></li> <li>ii. Understanding the beauties of the world of creation as manifestations of divine beauty and perfection and <i>fostering one’s aesthetic taste.</i></li> <li>iii. Utilizing the power of one’s imagination in <i>creating works of art with the aim of preserving and promoting artistic heritage at the national and global levels.</i></li> <li>iv. Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events to <i>decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>(Goals, The Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education, TF)</i></p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. The Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural events and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who can perceive and notice these signs are people who have a heart and mind.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Epistemological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Aesthetic and artistic dignity refers to the activity of the imagination and the enjoyment of emotions, feelings, and aesthetic tastes (ability to understand and appreciate subjects and actions with material or spiritual beauty) and the ability to create works of art and appreciate works of art and values.</li> <li>● Beauty and art are manifestations of the transcendence of human life. God has created the love for beauty within human beings, so that an important part of human life is to pay attention to the beautiful things inside and out. In Islamic aesthetics and art, the principle of exaltation of aesthetic emotions is discussed so that the real beauties of life are not hidden behind outward beauties. Thus, art is the manifestation of human creativity, the knowledge of which has a profound effect on the evolutionary movement of man towards God.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Axiological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All beings are signs of the truth of existence, i.e. Almighty God.</li> <li>• The world of creation has an integrated system, all of which are signs and symbols of God's infinite knowledge, power, wisdom, and love. The world of creation is a real, objective and permanent sign of God.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ontological Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Competency (C)	<i>Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art.</i>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Qur'an invites man to know and understand nature.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ontological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Axiological Foundations, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reason (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms). Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. In various verses, the Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who notice these signs are those who have a heart and a mind.</li> <li>• The senses are the most pervasive tool of knowledge. The exoteric senses provide man with a broad knowledge of the natural world. The esoteric senses help in understanding meaning, and mental forms and creating new forms and artistic and poetic creations.</li> <li>• Acquired knowledge includes three levels, the sensory, imaginary, and intellectual.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Epistemological Foundations, TF)</i></p>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of art is an encoding and decoding process while understanding and receiving art is decoding. Adopting the approach of receiving meaning includes two processes of creating and discovering meaning. The creation of art is a kind of encoding or decoding and understanding and receiving art is a kind of decoding. The creation of meaning or coding is specific to the artist and the discovery of meaning or decoding is reserved for ordinary people. The purpose of art education is not to cultivate a professional artist, but to cultivate an aesthetic perception in all learners. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning, and these should be the basis of policy-making and planning.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Approach, The Field of Artistic and Aesthetic education, TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> <li>• Paying attention to the perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning</li> <li>• Emphasis on cultivating the senses.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing suitable grounds for cultivating imagination.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> <li>● Providing the background and conditions for creating and creativity for educators.</li> <li>● <i>Utilizing the power of one's imagination in creating works of art</i> with the aim of preserving and promoting artistic heritage at the national and global levels. (Principles, The Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education, TF)</li> <li>● Through appreciation and aesthetic understanding of divine creation and human artistic artifacts, understanding of cultural and intercultural concepts and using the power of imagination, (learners) acquire the necessary capabilities to create cultural and artistic works and ... to preserve and promote cultural, civilizational, and artistic heritage at the national and global levels. (FRDE)</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

Goal statement (i) is the corresponding goal statement of this competency, giving a strongly coherent Box A. There are other goals (ii, iii, and iv) that do not relate directly to other competencies and can only be related to this competency. Although there is an explicit goal statement, the presence of multiple goal statements gives this Box a score of 1 out of 2. Foundational statements in Box B talk about the decipherment of phenomena and the importance of the aesthetics and art as manifestations of human creativity, strongly supporting the contents of Box A and C. Accordingly, Box B scores a 2 out of 2. The statement “creation of art is an encoding and decoding process...” (Box E) is the fitting descriptive foundational statement that links the goal statement (i) to this competency, when it comes to linking the creation of art to the decipherment of phenomena, meeting the concept of “expressing phenomena in the language of aesthetics and art” (Box C); however, such a statement is only clearly mentioned under the approach of aesthetic and artistic education and is absent within

the foundations. Thus, as a principle, it makes the content of Box E very directly explicit and strengthens the logical flow on its end, giving this Box a score of 2. Foundational statements in Box D imply how one may decrypt and encrypt phenomena through the senses; however, it is not clearly linked to the use of this decipherment in the arts, and is thus evaluated with a 1. The method reflects the ‘how’ of the competency stating that a “perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning” must be followed. Within goal statement (iii), imagination is mentioned as a clear tool for creating art. Other principles (in Box E), although are not explicitly expressed as relating to this competency, support what the paragraph on “perceptual approach” is conveying, as well as the idea of using the imagination to create art; in other words, they are implicitly stated. A statement within the FRDE, expresses additional means that would lead to artistic creation, expressing that “through appreciation and aesthetic understanding of divine creation and human artistic artifacts, understanding of cultural and intercultural concepts and using the power of imagination, (learners) acquire the necessary capabilities to create cultural and artistic works.” Hence, a score of 2 is befitting this Box since they address the mentioned concepts. Overall, the coherence can be evaluated as high due to an average coherence of 6 out of 8, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

It is important to mention that, as has been the case with all the competencies before this seventh final competency, the contents of Box E are principles that guide action and not practical methods as would be expected to be found based on Franekena’s model. Thus, since there is data relating to this competency, but it is not practical enough to be given the label E, a superscript is placed on the letter E, that is E<sup>1</sup> and its corresponding foundations D, i.e., D<sup>1</sup>, in order to reflect this distinction that

reflects the answer to research question one on this educational philosophy’s logical structure.

**Summary of results of the Frankena analysis on Competency Seven**

Table 15 sums up the results of Competency Seven in both qualitative and quantitative format, presenting the level of coherence and logical structure of this Competency.

Table 16

Summary of results for Competency Seven

Competency Seven: “Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Familiarity with methods ...expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art	One explicit goal + multiple implicit goals (score = 1)	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	High (score = 6 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 6; High				Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>		

**An overview**

Competency seven had medium coherence overall signified by its mostly explicitly related statements. Although the goal statement corresponded perfectly to the

competency, there were other goal statements that relate to this competency as well, suggesting a lack of statements among the competencies that would meet these goal statements. This however does not alter the fact that there is high coherence between the goal statement and its competency. Its foundations are also strong. The strategic principles were strong and explicitly related to the notions of the competency. Consequently, the coherence of competency seven is evaluated as high due to scoring 6 out of 8 on the devised coherence scale, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### **Summary of results**

This section summarizes the results of this study in a more comprehensible format that would give the reader a clear idea about the strengths and weaknesses that govern the philosophy of education at least within the chosen scope. The results will be presented according to the posed research questions:

1. What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education held by the reform documents guiding the Iranian educational reform process?
2. What is the state of coherence of this philosophy?

### **Iran's educational philosophy's internal logical structure**

The results of the study showed that the Iranian philosophy of education's logical structure is leaning towards an ABC structure. As has been previously explained, a logical structure according to Frankena has five basic components: A, the ends of education; B, the philosophical foundations of education; C, the competencies to be fostered; D, the foundations supporting the strategy to reach those competencies; and E, the practical strategies. These five components create a complete philosophy of education. According to Frankena, this structure may either be witnessed in its complete

form or either in the form of ABC, where the philosophy has mainly addressed its theoretical foundations, or as CDE, where the philosophy has only focused on its practical aspect. The study at hand has shown that the Iranian philosophy is very satiated in its foundations and is more theoretically driven than practically. Thus, it consists of a very prominent ABC section along with impractical strategies, or better say, an absence of practical methods.

### ***Factors strengthening the logical structure***

The strengths portrayed by this philosophy of education's logical structure is mainly its prominent foundational base, since after all, a philosophy is defined by its foundations. The model helped unravel the foundations upon which this philosophy stands. It displayed the diverse array the Iranian case holds which includes ontological, epistemological, foundations on knowledge of man, axiological, theological, political, social, psychological, and legal foundations. The foundational content is truly large, especially on the philosophical side (not that its scientific dimension is little in amount), which is a sign of high satiation in its philosophical thought.

### ***Factors weakening the logical structure***

**No practical strategies.** Although the fact that the philosophy has a heavy ABC segment is a strengthening factor, the shy presence of its CDE segment can be problematic. It focused greatly on the theoretical foundations of its philosophy leaving out its more practical application, while retaining strategic principles that are meant to guide action, which resulted in it "leaning" towards an ABC structure rather than being clear-cut an ABC structure.

**Gaps.** This was the least frequently found problem. Rarely would there exist a complete gap, i.e., even when there were missing concepts that are supposed to

correspond with a competency, a goal statement or any other component, only some concepts would be missing not all. The only case that showed a very clear gap was in competency four where there was no clear mention as to what strategic principles can promote and maintain one's and others' health.

### **Iran's educational philosophy's state of coherence**

Coherence in philosophies of education specifically is a concept that defines how well a group of statements and/or concepts hang together within a system with other statements and concepts (Sell, 1992, p. 46). Additionally, coherence in educational philosophy does not measure the connection between the claims of a philosophy of education with reality, but rather determines whether these claims are self-contradictory or not, in addition to their consistency. The quantitative results of this study showed that the overall coherence level of the philosophy, based on the chosen scope, is at a medium due to an overall calculated score of 5 out of 8. The qualitative evaluation demonstrated the factors that are leading to coherencies and incoherencies across the philosophy. This section will display the factors that created strengths and weaknesses in the Iranian educational philosophy from the lens of coherence.

#### ***Factors strengthening coherence***

The factors that increased the coherence of this philosophy of education mainly included descriptive foundations, high coherence among certain concepts, and statements free of contradictions.

**Descriptively-written foundations.** To support the concept conveyed in the goal statement (Box A) and as a justification for the competency (Box C) encouraged for cultivation, the foundational statements (Box B) of a philosophy of education are supposed to be written descriptively. Otherwise, this will cause distortion in the

structure's logical flow. A very noticeable strength in this philosophy is the fact that all the foundations were written descriptively. There was only one statement that was written normatively and that was the following statement:

Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace, and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), *must* be considered.

The word “must” has turned this statement into a prescriptive statement when this is in fact listed under foundations, describing how nature is looked upon in this educational philosophy. When looking at the statements altogether, a prescriptive foundational statement distorts the logical flow because it must have already been established in the goal statement that nature “must” be seen as a divine phenomenon. Thus, the foundations would be repeating the idea while they need to simply “describe” facts about nature and on what basis it is a divine phenomenon. In this case, a reference to the verses of the Qur'an has been made making this a ‘Theological’ foundation. Thus, having descriptive foundations positively affects the logical flow of concepts, giving this philosophy a strong base according to Frankena's perspective.

**Coherent concepts.** Another factor that has strengthened this philosophy is that there was high coherence in some of the concepts in the philosophy. This study demonstrated that the most coherent concepts present in the Iranian philosophy of education—within the chosen scope of the first Basic Competency—revolved around the notions of “God,” “religious teachings,” and “religious democracy and Iran's global

status and mission.” The following statements are the competencies that showed high coherence:

1. Knowledge of God and His attributes (Competency Two)
2. Knowledge of religious teachings (Competency Two)
3. Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran (Competency Six)

In other words, the goals, foundations and strategic principles of statements relating to these concepts were mostly in line with each other when placed in Frankena’s framework.

**No contradictions.** This study did not identify any conceptual contradictions within the scope of its analysis. This makes it an important strength in the structure of its philosophy.

#### ***Factors causing incoherence***

The types of issues found that attributed to a lower level of coherence were in the form of the implicitness of statements, improper combinations of statements, multiple goal statements corresponding to the same competency (whether implicitly or explicitly), multiple goals in one statement, similar goal statements creating redundancy of concepts, in addition to language issues in the form of vague writing and superfluous wordings. Moreover, aside from issues related directly to the logical flow, there were issues in consistency across documents and in the way the content has been organized.

**Implicitness.** Implicitness was a common issue affecting the logical coherence of the philosophy. There were cases where the components (A, B, D, and E) only implied the concept represented in the competency statement (C) rather than having



directly addressed it. Sometimes the implicitness existed in the form of different verbs used to express a concept; for example, the verb used to present a competency concept would be passive such as the verb “knowing one’s capacities” while its goal involved a more active role in the form of the word “developing one’s capacities.”

**Improper combinations of statements.** Another issue that affected the logical coherence of this philosophy was the presence of improper combinations of statements. These involved three types of cases. One, goal and strategy statements were combine into one statement; two, multiple goal statements were placed in one statement; three, both multiple goals and strategy statements would be found in one long statement. An example would be:

“Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.”

This is a prime example of the third case where multiple goals and a strategy statement are combined in one statement. As can be seen “knowledge of the self” is an intermediary goal, “respond to the needs, limitations ...existential capacities” is another goal, and “through understanding and correcting one’s position” is the corresponding strategy.

**Redundancy of concepts.** Goal and strategic statements displayed a redundancy in the concepts they conveyed, i.e. more than one goal statement would talk about the same concept, such as the examples below:

- i. *Understanding phenomena and its purpose* to understand existence and one's place in it.
- ii. *Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events* in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.

In the case above, understanding phenomena has been mentioned twice in goal statements belonging to the same field, the Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education. This can naturally be problematic since it presents a form of incoherence.

### ***Issues in language and writing style***

**Vague writing.** In many cases there was a level of vagueness felt in the way these statements were worded. It was difficult from first read to understand what these statements meant. An example is the following competency statement "Knowledge of the self, one's capacities and one's identity." Such a statement could easily be related to half the document because of its very general tone. The self could involve the human soul, the human psyche, our social dimension, etc. same goes for the term capacity, since one would wonder what is meant by capacity exactly, i.e. does it mean our capacity in any dimension of our existence? Therefore, this created a form of incoherence in the sense that logic cannot flow smoothly with such a tone of writing, making the sense-making process among readers more difficult.

**Superfluous wording.** Many strategic principle statements suffered from unnecessary wording in the language of its statements where a multitude of statements began with the phrase "emphasis on..." which is an unnecessary expression and thus creates a sense of weak language and wording for a reader.

### *Inconsistency*

**A lack of consistency across documents.** A very notable point was that in the national curriculum the five basic competencies are clearly stated (Rationalization, Faith, Knowledge, Action, and Ethics). However, in the Theoretical Foundations document they are just called the basic competencies, and we do not know how many they are or what they are called. The National curriculum was printed after the Theoretical Foundations document, which probably explains the reason behind this inconsistency.

### *Organizational issues*

**Disparateness.** Another issue is a sense of sporadicity felt in looking for statements that belong to each other based on Frankena's framework. The data does not seem to be properly organized in the sense that it is difficult to find relevant statements as there is no referencing system among them. There is no clear guide to use to know what goals go with what competency statements, foundations, and principles. Thus, it can be said that data is present however, it is scattered throughout these documents (the bulk of which is in the Theoretical Foundations document).

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

This chapter serves to discuss the overall results of the study carried out on the Iranian reform documents according to the following two research questions:

1. What is the internal logical structure of the philosophy of education held by the reform documents guiding the Iranian educational reform process?

## 2. What is the state of coherence of this philosophy?

First, I will discuss the results organized in terms of the two research questions. A section will be dedicated to showing what gap this study fills among studies on Iran's reform process. Second, the limitations of this study will be discussed. Third, I turn to the practical implications of this study: the implications for practice and implications for further research. This will help draw implications about what this entails in practice for the Iranian educational reform endeavor and gives practitioners and policy-makers recommendations for future revisions. Further this discussion can present future researchers with potential areas of focus to build on as a means to expand the knowledge base on the Iranian reform process in hopes that research would be a doorway for the growth of this process both in theory and practice. Finally, I summarize the main conclusions of this study, which give us an idea about the current state of Iran's philosophy of education in regards to two aspects: its logical structure and its coherence.

### **Discussion of results**

It is of utmost importance that a country's philosophy of education in theory is in line with its actions. However, written philosophy within a country's educational documents must be primarily in accordance with itself. There should be coherence among its components; that is, internal coherence. This study addresses internal coherence within Iran's educational reform documents using Frankena's framework for logical coherence. The framework has been adopted in different studies in the field of education, mainly showing its presence among studies on religious education. Moreover, the results of this study show the internal logical structure of Iran's philosophy of education, where its theoretical and practical aspects are unearthed.

## **Logical structure in Iran's philosophy of education**

The first research question addresses Iran's educational philosophy's internal logical structure. The results of the study showed that the Iranian philosophy of education's logical structure is leaning towards an ABC structure. As has been previously explained, a logical structure according to Frankena has five basic components: A, the ends of education; B, the philosophical foundations of education; C, the competencies to be fostered; D, the foundations supporting the strategy to reach those competencies; and E, the practical strategies. These five components create a complete philosophy of education. According to Frankena, this structure may either be witnessed in its complete form or either in the form of ABC, where the philosophy has mainly addressed its theoretical foundations, or as CDE, where the philosophy has only focused on its practical aspect. The study at hand has shown that the Iranian philosophy is very satiated in its foundations and is more theoretically driven than practically driven. Thus, it consists of a very prominent ABC section along with impractical strategies, or it might be better to say that there is an absence of practical methods.

### ***'A building half-built,'***

Since a philosophy is defined by its foundations (Ogwora, 2013), the major strength portrayed by Iran's philosophy of education is its prominent foundational base. The foundations of this philosophy were often explicitly connected with their corresponding components and displayed satiation in the data they offered making this component of the philosophy the component that is giving it the most strength. In other words, the philosophy has good foundations which it can rely on. Contrary to what is commonly witnessed among national educational philosophies, rarely do we see

countries rely on a holistic philosophy that would drive their reform endeavors (Carr, 2004; Peters, 2013). Similar to the works of Hager (1999) and Sell (1992), the model helped unravel the foundations upon which this philosophy stands. The philosophy showed a diverse array of foundations that included ontological, epistemological, foundations on knowledge of man, axiological, theological, political, social, psychological, and legal foundations. Moreover, some of these foundations do not seem to have a clear equivalent in philosophies of education like the foundations on “knowledge of man,” which basically gives descriptive facts on what man is (a soul, a free being, God’s image, etc.). Therefore, it can be confidently stated that the foundational content is without a doubt miscellaneous, in addition to it being substantial in amount. It was especially large in the philosophical aspect (without insinuating that the scientific aspect is lacking), signifying high saturation and depth in its philosophical thought. This is uncommon among nations’ philosophies of education nowadays (Carr, 2004), rendering it an exceptional example. This finding reflects what Bagheri (Peters, 2013) has expressed regarding the state of educational philosophy in Iran, “the present state of philosophy of education in Iran, it should be stated that unlike the recent fall of this discipline in some countries, such as UK, it is well and alive in Iran. This can be observed in the considerable number of scholars and students of the field. Even though there is a growing problem in terms of the employment of the graduated people, the rate of entering students in the field is still relatively high” (p. 199).

Moreover, as has been communicated in some studies (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2005; Ogwora, 2013; Sell, 1992), it can be problematic when educational philosophy analyses lack their philosophical aspect. According to Wiles and Bondi (2011), the absence of a philosophy causes unclarity. This unclarity translates in action as a lack of

direction, often resulting in a curriculum that “includes everything but accomplishes little” (p. 36). In Ainsworth and Johnson’s (2005) case, the analysis carried out on teacher training proposals, results of the study showed that they made no reference of any sort to the relationship between A, B and C, i.e. they did not address the philosophical aspect they were expected to address in order to attend to the national outcry on the issues present with moral education in England. This meant that they included nothing philosophically regarding teachers developing an understanding of values and there was no allusion made to “teachers developing as reflective professionals who should be critically concerned with the ethical justification of their practice” (Gardner, 2000, p. 161), all of which are supposed to be found in the foundations that make up the belief system of the country’s education. The findings of this study along with other studies namely Issit (1995), Sell (1992), Pyun (2017), Reck (2012), Setran and Ramler (2012) (that mainly revolve around religious education), reflect crucial points that acknowledge the importance of the ABC syllogism in philosophies of education. According to Issit (1995), teachers may be well informed about how to teach topics X and Y; however, there is no requirement for them to acknowledge the principles involved in it, such as, for example, eliminating the self-fulfilling prophecy, where or understanding the social and cultural dynamics of labeling in the school and classroom. Additionally, instilling values falls under the first syllogism (ABC), i.e. the theoretical foundations, which is what builds purpose, character, and personality in students.

The presence of foundations under ontological, epistemological, axiological, theological, and foundations on ‘knowledge of man,’ all show that the Iranian case inclines towards placing great importance on cultivating values, purpose, self-

knowledge (Competency One), knowledge of the divine (Competency Two, knowledge of the other (Competency Four), Knowledge of phenomena (Competency Three), all of which represent the four relationships the Iranian model focuses on in its educational philosophy (relationship of man with God, with himself, with others, and with nature). Hence, the Iranian case is academic education that has a religious basis. In a nutshell, what stands out is that the Iranian philosophy has placed religious thought at its core. That is, many foundations are explained through the lens of religion, or better say spring from religious knowledge. For example, the foundation that states man's essence is a soul, or that he is a free being, or the like, are explained in the foundations of this philosophy using religious textual evidence.

Therefore, while other studies (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2005; Sell, 1992) focused more on the practical aspect of their educational philosophy and did not give much data and foundation for the ABC syllogism that makes up the base of their educational philosophy, the Iranian case showed an opposite inclination. It focused greatly on the theoretical foundations of its philosophy leaving out its more practical application. While the philosophy did include "strategic principles" that are meant to guide action, they were not characteristic of practicality and so the logical structure is "leaning" towards an ABC structure rather than being a clear-cut ABC structure, which was displayed as  $ABCD^1E^1$ . The presence of these "strategic principles" did not seem to be very effective since they carried issues of their own that complicated the sense-making process in the form of implicitness, improper combinations and superfluous wording. It is important to note here that the result regarding the logical structure of this philosophy (that shows to lean towards an ABC structure) could have been more accurate if some other reform documents were addressed as well. In other words, it is possible that the



other documents may contain practical statements that better fill the D and E boxes in Frankena's model (the practical segment) which gives a more complete logical structure, and thus would contribute to a more accurate evaluation of the logical structure of this philosophy of education.

Lastly, like Setran and Ramler (2012) and Pyun (2017), the study proved that the Frankena (1965) framework can be used to unravel the contents of a philosophy of education to display the types of concepts that are held by this philosophy. In other words, it unearthed the 'what,' 'why,' and 'how' of this philosophy, within the chosen scope. It also proved that the model is a good instrument to measure coherence because it opens up the philosophy by exposing these fundamental statements in a way that would allow it to be assessed for coherence.

### **Coherence in Iran's philosophy of education**

The second research question addresses Iran's educational philosophy's state of coherence. Philosophy is a significant instrument in establishing a curriculum, educational policy, objectives, goals of education, the vision and mission of education (Ogwora, 2013). Evaluating the coherence in the educational philosophy underlying the reform documents gives us an idea as to how well the different aspects of reform can take shape during implementation. In other words, coherence of this philosophy is what determines the coherence in the programs that spring from it, namely, the curriculum, teacher education programs, policies, etc.

The coherence level displayed by the philosophy is at a medium, scoring 5 out of 8 quantitatively. The coherence-causing factors will be discussed first, demonstrating the potential aspects that strengthen a philosophy of education.

The factors that increased the coherence of this philosophy of education mainly included descriptive foundations, high coherence among certain concepts, and statements free of contradictions.

**Descriptively-written foundations.** To support the concept conveyed in the goal statement (Box A) and as a justification for the competency (Box C) encouraged for cultivation, the foundational statements (Box B) of a philosophy of education are supposed to be written descriptively (Frankena, 1965). Otherwise, this will cause distortion in the structure's logical flow. A very noticeable strength in this philosophy is the fact that all the foundations were written descriptively. This insinuates that the philosophy has a good logical flow of concepts in this regard in its foundations, giving this philosophy a strong base according to Frankena's perspective. Moreover, this shows that special attention has been given in the writing of these foundations where the authors have made sure to write the foundations "descriptively." In other words, the foundational aspect can be said to have been handled professionally. A strong foundation means that there is a good theoretical establishment upon which other concepts and programs can be built. It means that this philosophy of education actually has a philosophy, unlike what is common nowadays (Carr, 2004; Peters, 2013) where philosophies of education are scarcely witnessed, at least among Western educational efforts.

**Coherent concepts.** Another factor that has strengthened this philosophy is that there was high coherence in some of the concepts in the philosophy. Both this study and that conducted by Sell's (1992) study on Richard's evangelical philosophy of Christian education used Frankena's model and were both able to show what concepts were more coherent than others. Sell's study found the concept of "relationships" to be of most

coherence and that it was a core educational concept in Richard's philosophy. This study successfully demonstrated that the most coherent concept present in the Iranian philosophy of education—within the chosen scope of the first Basic Competency—revolved around the notion of “phenomena.” It was specifically concerned with the following:

4. Knowledge of God and His attributes (Competency Two)
5. Knowledge of religious teachings (Competency Two)
6. Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran (Competency Six)

In other words, the goals, foundations and strategic principles of statements relating to these concepts were mostly in line with each other when placed in Frankena's framework. This may reflect the importance and attention given to these concepts in the philosophy on one hand. On another hand, it is within these concepts that a proper sense-making process is expected, i.e. stakeholders are expected to understand these concepts more than others if they are to look at the content relating to these concepts.

**No contradictions.** Studies like Sell (1992) have found contradictions in educational philosophies. Sell, for example, found that Richard's philosophy of Christian education contradicts itself in that on one hand Richard emphasized human fault and yet insisted on absolute consensus in church decision-making. This study differed from Sell's (1992) study in that it did not identify any conceptual contradictions within the scope of its analysis.

### *'Disconnected continents'*

This study shows an array of issues that may exist in a philosophy of education. Similar to other studies that have investigated coherence (Fullan, 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Fortus et al., 2015) the current study has shown a level of fragmentation. Fragmentation is an issue found diversely among systemic reform (Fullan, 2016; Guskey & Oldham, 1997; Hargreaves et al., 2009), educational policy (Fuhrman, 1993), curricular programs (Fortus et al., 2015; Schmidt et al., 2005), teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hammerness, 2019; Hansén et al., 2015), strategic programs (Bryson, 2018), and so forth.

Fragmentation in this philosophy is due to the fact that the components under scrutiny for coherence are not well “connected” to each other, acting similar to “disconnected continents” (Bain & Moje, 2012, p. 62). These components that make up the philosophy of education, i.e. the goal, foundation, competency, and strategy statements, are “hanging together” mediocrely. The causes behind fragmentation can be characterized by different factors causing incoherence in the logical structures of the philosophy, issues in the way of writing, inconsistencies, and organization issues. The issues relayed in this section will discuss the problematic situation that arises in the readers’ sense-making process when they come across such shortcomings in the philosophy’s statements.

#### *Factors causing logical incoherencies*

Among the factors causing logical incoherence were implicitness, improper combinations of statements, and redundancy of concepts.

**Implicitness.** Implicitly related statements were a common issue affecting the logical coherence of the philosophy. This can cause an exhaustive process for the reader

in trying to understand if certain statements relate to each other in the first place, and if so, in what sense. Taking the example “knowing one’s capacities,” (the competency) and “developing one’s capacities” (the goal), it is safe to say that they are related in the sense that “knowing” is the prerequisite of “developing;” i.e. learners need to first gain knowledge and awareness of these capacities so that they can learn how to develop them. However, this implicitness requires a mental exercise to reach such a relational conclusion, making it difficult for a reader to have a smooth sense-making process.

**Improper combinations of statements.** Another issue that can affect the sense-making process in understanding any philosophy is the potential presence of improper combinations of statements. These involved three types of cases. One, goal and strategy statements were combine into one statement; two, multiple goal statements were placed in one statement; three, both multiple goals and strategy statements would be found in one long statement. An example would be:

“Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.”

As can be seen “knowledge of the self” is an intermediary goal and “through understanding and correcting one’s position” is the corresponding strategy. Not only does this statement have its goal and strategy mentioned together in one sentence, but also, it has involved two goals, one the intermediary “knowledge of the self...” of the other “to respond to the needs...” This kind of issue holds great potential in causing confusion for the reader’s sense-making process. For one, this statement will have to be read more than once to be understood. The presence of more than one goal in a

statement can be confusing because it is easy for the reader to lose track of the concept or better say concepts being conveyed. It does not represent a proper “stream of thought,” because logically, the way the concepts are connected to each other in the form of “intermediate” goals complicates our understanding of the concept in the first place. By the time the reader reaches the end of the paragraph, they have forgotten what the first stated goal was. Another aspect is the wordiness that exists due to the many “big” terms, such as “existential capacity,” and “correcting the position of oneself,” which are abstract notions that need thought for comprehension, all in all which distort a proper sense-making process.

**Redundancy of concepts.** The third issue causing logical incoherence was the presence of goal and strategic statements that would address the same concept multiple times, such as the example below:

- i. *Understanding phenomena and its purpose* to understand existence and one’s place in it.
- ii. *Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events* in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.

In the case above, understanding phenomena has been mentioned twice in goal statements belonging to the same field, the Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education. This can naturally be problematic since it can be confusing for the reader to see the same goal in two places. Moreover, the reader needs to put greater effort in comprehending that “understanding phenomena” doesn’t involve only one purpose (“to understand existence and one’s place in it”) but rather includes a second purpose which is “to decrypt and encrypt” phenomena as “divine sings.” This form of writing places high expectations on the reader where it requires too much unnecessary and unexpected

effort in trying to comprehend what such a goal is about. Moreover, the fact that such a repetition is made in this goal gives the reader a feeling that the choice of verbs made may have not been “chosen” carefully. Or in other words, it would seem as if there wasn’t enough attention given in writing these goals. This can leave the reader with two experiences: one, a difficult logic-building process, and two, it would make it difficult for the reader to take what they are reading seriously, since the statements imply lacking a needed level of professionalism.

### *Issues in language and writing style*

**Vague language.** A language issue found to affect the coherence of the statements was the use of vague language in writing. For example, the least coherent concept revolving around “knowing the self, one’s capacities and one’s identity,” displays the said vagueness. This is mainly due to the fact that the competency is formulated using a very general tone which makes it difficult to explicitly relate it to its corresponding goal, foundation and strategy statements. To elaborate, in the case of the “self,” this term could imply many concepts; it could be referring to knowing one’s soul, one’s psyche, one’s body, etc. The same issue is portrayed by the terms “capacity” and “identity.” Capacity could refer to man’s capacity throughout the multiple dimensions that define him, i.e. his emotional, social, divine capacities to name a few. Consequently, the vague language and abstractness in the terms used creates a form of incoherence in the sense that logic cannot flow well through such a form of writing, hence complicating the sense-making process.

**Superfluous wording.** Many strategic principle statements suffered from unnecessary wording in the language of its statements. A multitude of statements began with the phrase “emphasis on...” which is an unnecessary expression and thus creates a

sense of weak language and wording for a reader, creating further unnecessary obstacles in the course of building logic of the text.

### ***Inconsistency***

**A lack of consistency across documents.** A very notable point was that in the national curriculum the five basic competencies are clearly stated (Rationalization, Faith, Knowledge, Action, and Ethics). However, in the Theoretical Foundations document they are just called the basic competencies, and we do not know how many they are or what they are called. The National curriculum was printed after the Theoretical Foundations document, which probably explains the reason behind this inconsistency. This in turn can be very damaging in the sense that when a reader refers to the “mother” document, the Theoretical Foundations document, there is no clear mention of these terms which in turn makes it very difficult to find the foundations upon which the competencies (clearly stated in the NC) are established. Thus, the less the reader can clearly comprehend the orientation (Smith & O’Day, 1991) and the purpose of the philosophy, and by substitution, of the reform process, the less proprietorship they will feel towards the process, hence undermining the reform in itself (Pyhältö et al., 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2005)

### ***Organizational issues***

**Disparateness.** Another issue is a sense of sporadicity felt in looking for statements that belong to each other based on Frankena’s framework. The data does not seem to be properly organized in the sense that it is difficult to find relevant statements. This is due to the fact that there is no referencing system that connects them. Nor is there a clear guide to use to know what goals go with what competency statements,



foundations, and principles. Thus, it can be said that data is present however, it is scattered throughout these documents (the bulk of which is in the Theoretical Foundations document), or in other words, the data is “fragmented” to a certain extent with no clear connection between the components.

The factors summarized and discussed till now each play a role in either strengthening or weakening the current philosophy of education. The factors that are causing incoherence were more diverse.

The presence of implicitness in how the statements are written and expressed in addition to a lack of consistency in the concepts mentioned across the documents, inappropriate combinations of statements, to name a few, all exemplify a picture of “disconnected continents” that draws the state of coherence within these documents. Bain and Moje (2012) relate this lack of coherence as one that may lead to a possible fragmentation in knowledge and skills. Subsequently, it is safe to say that within the current study where the fragmentation that exists among statements is mediocre, may lead to a certain extent of fragmentation in the knowledge gained from this philosophy. In other words, assuming that a coherent document is likely to lead to a common shared understanding among stakeholder, the presence of fragmentation is expected to cause a difference in opinion about the interpretation of the statements of the philosophy among stakeholders, which makes it problematic to unify their perspectives. Moreover, it has the potential to lead to different individual understandings contrary to the preferred collective “shared understanding.”

Offering a foundation that is coherent for the development of a “shared understanding” of a curriculum’s objectives (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Hallinger & Heck, 2002) is implied as substantial for the

establishment of a reform. The Iranian philosophy of education, characterized by a mediocre level of coherence suggests a basis that is partially lacking for building shared understandings and is only reliable to some extent.

A third interpretation that can be made is that the mediocre level of coherence existing between the educational goals, foundations, competencies and strategies of the Iranian educational philosophy suggests an absence in clarity towards the reform's objectives. This is said to lead to an undermined influence of the reform (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Fernandez, Ritchie, & Barker, 2008; Timperley & Parr, 2005). In other words, a lack of coherence in the philosophy of a reform can be a cause that weakens a reform endeavor.

### **Contribution to the knowledge base**

Research revolving around philosophies of education seems scarce since philosophy is not a topic of high interest among educational endeavors (Carr, 2004). Moreover, philosophies of education seem to be mostly found among religious education efforts (Aron, 1986; Cohen, 2010; Habermas & Issler, 1992; Plueddemann & Plueddemann, 1990; Pyun, 2017; Reck 2012; Setran & Ramler, 2012; Thigpen, 2005), rather than in national large-scale reforms. Thus, this study could be filling an interesting gap where it is introducing the potential topic of measuring coherence in educational philosophies of reforms.

Research specifically targeting the components of the reform process in Iran cover different topics ranging from philosophical concepts, such as 'the concept of sublimation in the National Curriculum' (Sobhaninejad, Najafi, Nourabadi, 2017), 'the concept of Pure Life in the National Curriculum' (Mohammadzadeh & Foroughi Abari, 2017), 'national identity in the FRDE' (Rahbari, Belbasi, & Ghorbi, 2014), 'educational

theories' (Qamsari & Ramezani, 2014), 'teachers and notions in the curriculum' (Zeinali & Hatam, 2015), comparisons made between textbooks and the curriculum, and 'curriculum compatibility' (Khandaghi & Baraie, 2017) to topics like 'cultural and social needs' (Basiri et al., 2015), and 'supervision' (Moghadam, Shoghi, & Rahmankhah, 2016). The studies mentioned may not necessarily share direct relevance with the current study; however what they do have in common is that most of them are document analyses that focus on the theoretical content of these documents.

Unlike the current study that involved an examination of internal coherence, i.e. within the documents, a study examining the foundations of the concept of 'Pure Life' carried out an examination of "external alignment" to determine the extent to which the concepts in the philosophical foundations are in line with the theoretical knowledge on the notion of 'Pure life' (Mohammadzadeh & Foroughi Abari, 2017). The content analysis and theoretical inference revealed that among the five sections of philosophical foundations in the National Curriculum, 28 cases were neglected, i.e. there was no mention of them in the National Curriculum while they are important notions in the original theoretical knowledge text. For example, in the epistemology section 1-3-2 of the National Curriculum, the different levels of knowledge have been discussed. The three levels related to 'knowledge by correspondence' (or acquired knowledge), namely the sensory, imagination, and rational, were only discussed, leaving out the levels of 'knowledge by presence.' Moreover, the notions were mostly lacking in the sections related to foundations on axiology (knowing values), and anthropology (knowing the human being).

A study carried out by Bijnavand, Salehi, and Moumivand (2015), targeted the Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE), looking into its six educational

domains, namely: Ideological and moral education, social-political education, biological-physical education, aesthetic-artistic education, economic-vocational education, and scientific-technological education. The study was an attempt to find evidence of notions present in the content of these domains relating to the content of Nahjul Balaghah, a book on Ali Ibn Abi Taleb's sermons. The six domains were dissected into their corresponding 48 components for analysis. Corresponding evidence of all the components was found in the text of Nahjul Balaghah, signifying a solid relationship between the contents of these six domains and the book. For example, evidence of a component in the domain of scientific-technological education about "integrating science and technology" was found and or implied in 10 different places in Nahjul Balaghah. The researcher concludes that there is a strong relationship between the contents of these two texts and that such research endeavors (relating the documents to valuable religious text) can be a tool to further enrich these official educational documents.

Like the aforementioned studies, this current endeavor targeted the documents of the reform. No attempt was done on involving stakeholders, which could signify a gap in studies done on the Iranian reform process, where more studies involving stakeholder perceptions are needed to increase the diversity and body of knowledge on the reform process. The focus of the present endeavor, "analyzing the logical structure and coherence in the Iranian reform documents," not only isn't covered in the literature targeted at Iran's reform, but also none of the studies are relevant, making this a unique case study. This study is thus filling a gap in the literature on Iranian educational reform, and can thus add knowledge to the already present and growing knowledge base on Iran's educational reform process. This study is opening dialogue on the importance

of coherence in reforms. Moreover, it is opening ground for many potential studies involving coherence that can be studied administratively (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002), an area that could be of good use to the successful implementation of educational reform in Iran.

### **Limitations**

The first limitation is the scope of the study. Limiting the scope restricts the generalizability of the results. The sample collected and analyzed covered only one of the Five Basic Competencies and although this gives us an idea as to the logical structure and state of coherence present regarding one of the Basic Competencies, it cannot be generalized to give a verdict regarding the content in all of the documents. Moreover, aside from the three documents targeted, there are other relevant documents that may hold information relating to the methods of instruction to be used in the implementation of the curriculum, which weren't analyzed. This creates a further limitation in relying on the result of the first research question, the logical structure, which reflects the practical aspect of the philosophy of education.

Second, some of the meanings of the text may have been lost in translation. There are many terms that do not seem to have a very accurate equivalent in the English language. Upon consulting with a linguist, a list of these terms was made and help was received in their professional translation (there are equivalents commonly used for these terms). Arabic translations of the terms were also mentioned in some places to further help the readers understand what is meant. An example could be "Al-Fitra" which in English is translated into "man's primordial nature."

Third, the language and style of the documents analyzed presented difficulties in understanding. For example, it was sometimes difficult to understand what the

foundation statements were trying to convey given the abstract nature of the text and style. The language used needed a level of familiarity with certain terms to be better understood. Furthermore, the writing was characterized by a level of wordiness. Foot notes were present usually in such cases, however, it was still difficult to be certain of what I had understood. Therefore, what could be regarded as problematic is the way, language, and/or style in which the foundation statements were written.

### **Implications for future research**

This study has several implications for further research. On a theoretical level, this same study can be expanded in scope, possibly to include all seven competencies, for a more accurate evaluation of the philosophy of education in Iran's reform documents. The potential practical research endeavors are multiple in numbers. One could research how this philosophy is being implemented in practice. This would involve exploring implementation methods and steps. The sense-making process of stakeholders in relation to these documents could be evaluated to examine the state of coherence between these documents and stakeholders' understanding of them, as suggested by Fullan (2016), Allen & Penuel (2015), Datnow & Stringfield (2000), Hallinger & Heck (2002). This could involve a study of stakeholders' interpretations of the reform's objectives and other components. Moreover, the extent of ownership experienced by stakeholders towards the reform and the impact of this sense of ownership in the success of reform could be measured. Researchers could also investigate teacher candidates' perceptions in coherence of programs (e.g., Broad, Stewart Rose, Lopez, & Baxan, 2013; Hatlevik, 2014). Furthermore, the impact of this reform on schools could be examined. Finally, sustainability and the methods used to maintain it could be assessed.

### **Practical implications and recommendations**

This section outlines the potential practical implications this study leaves us with, supported and derived from the literature present on this topic. After which, this researcher proposes recommendations to the officials responsible for revising and improving the Iranian educational reform documents.

This study provides us with multiple implications. The implications range from stakeholder involvement (Bryson, 2018), stakeholder ownership (Pyhalto et al., 2012; Pyhalto, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2014), program sustainability (Desimone, 2013; Luttenberg, 2013; Timperley & Parr, 2005), learner performance (Fortus et al., 2015; Newmann et al., 2001; Schmidt et al., 2005; Shwartz et al., 2008), to curricular reform (Smith & O'Day).

Among the practical implications this study leaves us with is that due to the absence of practical strategies in the philosophy, this may cause hardships in the practicality of the implementation process. The absence of practical statements cannot draw action guidelines for stakeholders which in turn affects the implementation process, or in other words coherence in practice (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002). Overall, incoherencies in the documents can lead to a distorted understanding of the reform process among practitioners, which in turn has the potential to consequently transform the incoherence on paper into possible incoherence in the “shared-depth of understanding,” as Fullan (2016) puts it, among individuals who are imperative to the reform process. It is important to note that this consequential relationship between coherence and “shared understating” is an assumption made by the researcher.

Bryson (2018) discusses the importance of stakeholder involvement in the success of organizations. To further elaborate on stakeholder involvement, it must be mentioned that the meaning of curricular reform, its goals, objectives, and strategies, and the significance behind it are constructed in the minds of practitioners through a sense-making process (Ketelaar, et al., 2012; Van Veen & Lasky, 2005). Thus, if the connection between these statements is characterized by issues in the form of implicitness, and redundant statements, to name a couple, then it is only expected that the confusion caused by these issues can lead to a distorted sense-making process, and thus difficulties in implementation. Moreover, the better the quality of the sense-making process, the higher the degree of ownership a practitioner senses towards an innovation (Ketelaar et al., 2012). Pyhalto et al. (2012) and Pyhalto, Pietarinen, and Soini (2014), for instance, showed that teachers who had developed a more holistic perception about the objects of a reform were also more likely to experience ownership of it.

Lack of coherence among the components of the Iranian educational philosophy implies incoherencies in the curriculum which in turn affects student performance. In curricula, alignment and sequencing have been linked with higher student performance (Fortus et al., 2015; Newmann et al., 2001; Schmidt et al., 2005; Schwartz et al., 2008). Studies show that without coherence in curriculum, learners' performance cannot be improved. This is due to a lack of alignment between and within educational goals, materials, evaluations as well as teaching (Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Schmidt, Wang, & McKnight, 2005; Schwartz, Weizman, Fortus, Krajcik, & Reiser, 2008). Moreover, offering a foundation that is coherent for the development of a "shared understanding" of a curriculum's objectives (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Hallinger & Heck, 2002) is suggested to be significant for the



establishment of a reform. In other words, if there is a lack of coherence between and within the educational goals and components of the Iranian educational philosophy, then this means that the efficiency in learners' performance is expected to be affected in Iran's efforts at reform.

Additionally, absence of clarity towards a curriculum reform's objectives and interactions enhancing the growth of coherent conceptions of the curriculum among educators, curriculum planners, and other stakeholders, is said to lead to an undermined influence of the reform (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Fernandez, Ritchie, & Barker, 2008; Timperley & Parr, 2005).

Luttenberg et al. (2013) declared that for a reform to be successful, it is crucial to maintain coherence inside the components of a curriculum as well as between the curriculum and reform process. Moreover, when sustainability is mentioned, context-dependent development is insinuated. This involves developing a "shared understanding" with regard to the objectives of reform between various levels of the educational system (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2007; Slegers, Thoonen, Oort, & Peetsma, 2014). As per our findings, insufficient coherence means insufficient sustainability. Therefore, it can be expected that the precursors of meaningful education may not be emphasized enough during practice with the current state of the reform documents. Also, since the coherence level of this study's educational philosophy scored a medium, this means that the implementation of this reform may not be optimized in such a circumstance and there is need for greater sustainable coherence.

According to Desimone (2013) and Timperley and Parr (2005), the curriculum must offer a basis that makes it easier to create a coherent understanding of the curriculum in order to sustain coherence between the endeavors of the reform and the

local performance of not only schools but also educators. Medium coherence of the educational philosophy in our study could imply a relatively mediocre basis for developing coherent comprehension of the reform documents, which in turn has the potential to lead to an unsustainable coherence between reform implementation and the performance of schools.

It is further suggested that, for an effective curriculum reform, a coherent basis is significant to create a common vision for the objectives of a curriculum and for the alignment of activities between various stakeholders (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Fuhrman, 1993; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Honig & Hatch, 2004). Since this paper's outcome suggests a relatively medium basis, this may result in a lacking common vision for a curriculum's objective. Smith and O'Day (1991) have stated that clarity in the orientation and goal of school activities offer coherence in the reform. Therefore, one could suggest that a potential effect that can be caused from the medium coherence this study has concluded with is that it can lead to insufficient transparency with regard to the reform's orientation and objective. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that educators' proprietorship over the execution of the reform is linked to perceiving the objective of educational reform as comprehensive and giving importance to the determined orientation (Pyhältö et al., 2014; Timperley and Parr, 2005).

### **Using Frankena to alleviate the philosophy's shortcomings**

According to Setran and Ramler (2012), Frankena's framework can be used as a rubric to "structure and guide leaders' planning all the way from presuppositions to practices" (p. 8). This researcher recommends officials to modify them according to Frankena's model, i.e. to attend to any deficiencies in the philosophy of education through placing it into this model. In this way, they can use it as a guide to ensure that

the necessary components are present and that there is a proper logical flow among these components for a smooth sense-making process among stakeholders. Similar to the efforts made by Setran and Ramler (2012) and Pyun (2017), the model can be modified to become specifically tailored for their own philosophy, in this case the Iranian-Islamic philosophy of education. Estep (2012) states that the five elements in Frankena's model and how they relate to each other "illustrate the process of integrating educational theories and (Christian) worldview into a distinctively (Christian) curriculum" (p.310).

### ***Rewriting statements for explicitness***

Since implicit cases were witnessed often in the logical flow of the chosen scope, it can be predicted that these problems are present across the documents. Therefore, statements need to be revised and rewritten to create an explicit relationship between them and their remaining counterparts within the Frankena model.

### ***Combining similar or redundant statements into one clear statement***

There were a couple of cases where there existed similar goal statements that held redundant concepts displayed, such as the following:

- i. *Understanding phenomena and its purpose* to understand existence and one's place in it.
- ii. *Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events* in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.

These statements, especially that they are under the same field, the Field of Aesthetic and Artistic education, should either be combined into one, or they should be turned into two distinct statements that are different from one another. Naturally, the rest of the components must be in line with this new statement as well.

### ***Filling gaps with new statements***

Although few, there were cases that were characterized as gaps in the philosophy where statements of some components would be missing altogether, or a concept out of two (or more) concepts presented would be missing. Clearly for such a situation new statements must be devised to fill these gaps.

### ***Increasing practicality***

Strategies need to be devised that are very practical in nature, i.e. can truly be implemented in action. There could be satiated explanations under these strategies in a way that would allow practitioners understand how to apply these strategies. There could even be a separate practical document, like an attachment to the national curriculum that would provide the best strategies with the proper scientific and theoretical foundations referenced, so that the practitioner would understand what tools are being referred to.

### ***Attending to language and writing style***

This sixth recommendation is related to the vagueness felt in the way these statements were worded. Additionally, among almost all the principle strategies displayed, the term “emphasis upon...” at the beginning of these statements which could be very unnecessary, or in other words superfluous. Its absence could actually make it easier for the reader to quickly understand what the sentence is saying. Therefore, this recommendation is an invitation to clarity, to write with higher specificity and to avoid unnecessary expressions in order to convey the meaning behind these concepts as clearly as possible linguistically speaking.

### ***Creating a referencing system***

This researcher suggests a referencing system that can aid in connecting these components in Frankena's model together, where for example, the goals can have references of their foundational counterparts in a numeric format. So let's say the goal "knowledge of the self and others," can end with the reference (1.2.1) which is one of the foundations that support this concept. Simultaneously, next to the foundational statement, a reference can be made to the goal and competency this foundation relates to. And this can be adopted for the rest of the components as well as a means to draw a clear map for the statements that belong to the same logical structure. This could make the documents more "user-friendly" for stakeholders, and can bring a lot of clarity for their sense-making process. Moreover, it can build a stronger evidence-based philosophy because it would oblige the administrators behind creating and modifying these documents to ensure high coherence by being obliged to follow this referencing system, since issues, if any, will surface easier and thus can be addressed in a smoother manner.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has shown that the educational philosophy underlying Iran's reform documents leans towards an ABC structure, and that its coherence level is at a medium. The foundations have shown to create a strong "foundation," or base, for this philosophy. However, although these foundations are relatively large and rich, they have not been transformed into their corresponding practical implications. It is as if they have built a building half-built, that is, an incomplete structure. Secondly, this "half-built building" does not hold a high level of logical harmony, or in other words, it holds a medium level of coherence with its corresponding components. Furthermore, the study has shown that the concepts these documents hold are disparate like floating

islands. They are mostly present, but the connection between them is not strong enough; in other words, they are fragmented. The philosophy has a number of weaknesses that has created this disparateness, namely implicitness of statements, improper combinations of statements, multiple goal statements corresponding to the same competency (whether implicitly or explicitly), multiple goals in one statement, similar goal statements creating redundancy of concepts, in addition to language issues in the form of vague writing and superfluous wordings. Moreover, aside from issues related directly to the logical flow, there were issues in the way the content has been organized, making them difficult to link to each other exemplifying the notion of “disconnected continents” sensed in the logical structure.

As aforementioned, the educational philosophy is what leads the programs that stem from systemic reform. Having said this, if the documents, that are the compass of reform, are difficult to comprehend, it is assumed that this will distort practitioners’ understanding of the reform process, which in turn will transform the incoherence on paper into incoherence in the “shared-depth of understanding” (Allen & Penuel, 2015; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Fullan, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2002) among individuals who are imperative to the reform process. Simultaneously, the more coherent the reform documents, the better practitioners will engage in the process of reform. As a result, this demands that what is provided to practitioners, both in the form of documents and training, to be coherent in nature to allow for a smooth sense-making process, and henceforth, a smooth course of reform. What is clearly needed now is its practical work, i.e. turning this theory into its corresponding practical form, first and foremost for the biggest stakeholders, i.e. the teachers.

## APPENDIX A

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR EACH COMPETENCY

#### Competency One

Competency One: “Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Knowing yourself and your capacities	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	One explicit foundation + missing many others (score = 0)	A few implicit principles + one principle is written descriptively (score = 0)	Low (sum = 2 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowing your identity	Implicit + improper combinations (score = 0)	Many foundations but implicit (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Low (sum = 3)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 2.5; Low			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

#### Competency Two

Competency Two: “Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings and their sources.”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation of coherence	Logical Structure

Knowledge of God and His attributes	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	High (score = 7 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of God's divine actions and signs	Implicit + improper combination (score = 0)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of religious teachings	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	High (score = 7)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Knowledge of religious sources	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit + one explicit principle (score = 1)	High (score = 6)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 6; High				Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>		

### Competency Three

Competency Three: “Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation and how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting the principles (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation	Explicit + multiple goal statements + improper combinations (score = 1)	Explicit + one prescriptive foundation (score = 1)	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Mostly implicit (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Man's relationship with	Explicit + improper combination	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit + one foundation	Explicit (score = 2)	High (score = 6)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>



phenomena, ... and making optimal use of them	(score = 1)		is prescriptive + a missing concept (score = 1)			
Average coherence = 5; Medium			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

### Competency Four

Competency Four: “Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights, and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.”						
Competency sub-part (C)*	Goal (A)	Foundations connecting goal to competency (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
One’s and others’ spiritual dimension	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Implicit (score = 1)	Partially explicit + lacking multiple concepts	Explicit + improper combination + absent in appropriate location (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
One’s and others’ existential status	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Mostly explicit (score = 2)	Partially explicit + missing some data (score = 1)	Explicit enough + missing some principles (score = 1)	Medium (score = 5)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Social and political education + interaction with others and public institutions	Explicit + multiple goals in one statement + improper combination (score = 1)	Partially explicit (absence of some foundations) (score = 1)	Partially explicit (absence of some foundations) (score = 1)	Explicit + improper combination (score = 1)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>

One's and others' health and safety	Explicit (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Absent (score = 0)	Absent (score = 0)	Low (score = 3)	ABC
Average coherence = 4; Medium			Logical structure = leaning towards ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

### Competency Five

Competency Five: "Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran."						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Knowledge about the past ... culture and civilization of Islam and Iran	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Implicit + missing a concept (score = 1)	Implicit + missing concepts (score = 0)	Explicit (score = 2)	Medium (score = 4)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 4; Medium			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

### Competency Six

Competency Six: "Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran."						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure

Familiarity with ... the global status and mission of Islamic Iran	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit (score = 2)	Explicit + missing a few Concepts (score = 1)	High (score = 7 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 7; High			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

### Competency Seven

Competency Seven: “Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art”						
Competency sub-part (C)	Goals (A)	Foundations connecting goals and competencies (B)	Foundations supporting strategies (D)	Strategies (E)	Overall evaluation on coherence	Logical Structure
Familiarity with methods ...expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art	One explicit goal + multiple implicit goals (score = 1)	Explicit + missing a concept (score = 2)	Implicit (score = 1)	Explicit (score = 2)	High (score = 6 out of 8)	ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>
Average coherence = 6; High			Logical structure = ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>			

## APPENDIX B

### Competency One

#### (A) Knowledge of the self and one’s capacities

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
Goal (A)	<p><i>Knowledge of the self</i> and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others’ existential capacities through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system. (<i>Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, TF</i>)</p>
Foundations (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge and the knower have a fundamental role in Islamic society and culture; knowledge is at the top of virtues, the root of all goodness, the inseparable companion of faith, the lamp of reason, and the source of human values, and therefore seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty for all and having respect for the knower (knowledgeable) is an indisputable and inviolable principle. (<i>Axiological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> <li>● Islam considers knowledge as light and ignorance as darkness, knowledge as vision, and ignorance as blindness. Islam perceives the pursuit of knowledge as obligatory... The best knowledge is that which leads to <i>self-knowledge</i> and reform and shows the way to happiness; and the worst knowledge is that which does not correct man and keeps him in his spot (unchanging). (<i>Axiological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> <li>● In the Islamic realist view, the existence of the world is a given matter. That is, the universe is an interconnected set of very different realities, in which there is no doubt as to its very existence. In the divine worldview of Islam, the presumption of this basis is quite clear and prominent and in Islamic teachings, man is asked to know everything as it is, with all its real characteristics, in knowing himself and his environment. To know reality with all its different dimensions and connections and dependencies. (<i>Ontological Foundations, TF</i>)</li> </ul> <p><i>The essence of Man</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man is a being composed of body and soul: two intertwined entities. Human existence has both material and immaterial aspects (body and soul). These two aspects are not alien to one another; rather, despite the differences, there is a close connection between them, and they are mutually influential. In fact, the body and the soul are levels of a single being. They have a continuous and reciprocal effect on each other.</li> <li>● The truth of man is his soul, and the perfection of man is related to the perfection of the soul. The addressee of God is the soul of man, which originates from the command of God, and his life continues after death</li> </ul>

	<p>in the world of Purgatory and the Hereafter.  <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i>  <i>Man's nature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man has a divine nature that can be flourished or forgotten. The primordial nature (الطرة) is a divine nature in humans. Man has a non-acquired knowledge and tendency towards the origin of existence. Instinct, in its epistemological aspect, is the man's knowledge of God's presence, and desire for worship, truth-seeking, and love for beauty, are among the most important instinctual inclinations of man. Also, this God-given capital can never be destroyed. Man, by nature and creation, seeks all levels of perfection (to infinity).</li> <li>● Man has both inherent dignity and can attain acquired dignity, and it is through his choices that make him either fall or rise to reach the status of being the caliph of God on earth (His image, His representative).  <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Characteristics of man</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man is a free being who has free will and has been given this freedom by God.</li> <li>● Man is a creature with diverse natural talents and emotions and desires that can be actualized and effective in any direction (positive or negative).</li> <li>● Humans, while having a common nature and instinct, have different characteristics.</li> <li>● Human beings, while having many talents, have all kinds of limitations and face many external and internal threats.</li> <li>● Man is a social being. Therefore, human existence is significantly affected by the conditions of society and can communicate with others through his/her existential development and influence society.</li> <li>● Human existence is always evolving, moving, and changing.  <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man is under the influence of complex interactions; interaction of internal factors (nature and nature), external factors (environment) and his experiences.</li> <li>● Man, fundamentally has an active nature.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Psychological Foundations, TF)</i>  <i>Man's abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, both in opinion and in action, has the ability of reason (rationalization), which plays an essential role in knowing the truth of existence and achieving eternal happiness. <i>(Epistemological Foundations, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man has the ability to know existence and its various dimensions.  <i>(Combining the Basic Foundations, TF)</i></li> <li>● Man is always in the "situation" and can understand and change it.  <i>(Foundations on Knowledge of Man, TF)</i></li> <li>● Learning is one of the existential capacities of man and the main source</li> </ul>
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	of many changes in his existential dimensions. ( <i>Psychological Foundations, TF</i> )
Competency (C)	<i>Knowing yourself, your capacities, and your identity.</i>
Foundations (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Man, as a rational, believing creature, with will, is the main source of action (i.e., voluntary action arising from knowledge, belief, will) <i>and by acquiring knowledge</i> and carrying out individual or collective action (right or wrong), is effective in understanding and changing the situation of oneself and others through faith (or disbelief) and righteous (or unrighteous) will and action, and its repetition and improvement, in the continuous development of individual and collective identity of oneself and others, as well as in the formation and continuous change of the natural and social environment. (<i>Combining the Basic Foundations, TF</i>)</li> </ul>
Strategies (E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The general approach and orientation of curricula is "monotheistic primordial naturalism." Adopting this approach means laying the groundwork for the flourishing of students' divine nature through the continuous <i>understanding</i> and improvement <i>of their position</i> in order to achieve a far greater degree of good life. (<i>Introduction, NC</i>).</li> <li><i>The development and excellence of all existential capacities of learners</i> in order to continuously improve their position and that of others in all fields,...is undoubtedly one of the grounds for the realization of good life in individual and social dimensions. (<i>Principles, Economic and Professional education, TF</i>)</li> <li>Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities <i>through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.</i> (<i>Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, TF</i>)</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Low

### ***An overview***

The analysis begins by first looking at the competency of the philosophy (Box C): In this case the competency is “Knowledge of the self and one’s capacities.” Then the model looks at the goal statements provided. The goal statement “(Learners must have) knowledge of the self...” (Box A) is an explicit goal statement corresponding to this sub-part. However, there isn’t a goal statement that

corresponds to the sub-part “knowledge of one’s capacities.” The goal statement, present under the section entitled ‘Goals of the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education,’ is in fact made up of two goals and one strategy, giving it a score of 1 out of 2. “Knowledge of the self...” is the intermediate goal that leads to “...responding to the needs, limitations, and development of one’s existential capacities,” and this is accomplished through the strategy, “understanding and correcting the position of oneself.” This combination of different types of statements (goals and strategy) in one statement that is supposed to solely be a goal statement can cause confusion for the reader. This issue of finding a combination of different kinds of statements in one statement, as previously mentioned will be referred to as an ‘improper combination.’ This makes the contents of this box lacking, giving it a score of 1 out of 2. Franekna’s model then directs our attention towards the foundational statements (Box B) supporting the goals in Box A and that relate these concepts to the competency in Box C. All the relevant foundational statements are identified and listed in Box B. These support the goal of self-knowledge and are all written descriptively, i.e. they use a language that expresses factual statements, which is what is expected of foundational statements, and is thus a strength in this logical structure. Although the importance of knowing in general is emphasized upon and it is said that “the best of knowledge is that which leads to self-knowledge” (1.4.14), there isn’t a statement that directly justifies the importance of self-knowledge. Moreover, there are many foundational statements clarifying what man is (soul and body), his nature (divine primordial nature), his characteristics (free, social, etc.), his destination (the Hereafter), and his abilities (knowing existence, reasoning, learning, knowing one’s position and correcting it, etc.), which imply that there is a

lot to know about oneself and that the presence of this many foundations implies that it is a matter of importance. Thus, although these foundations are many in number, they correspond to the sub-part on the ‘self’ and ‘capacities’ implicitly as they do not clearly state that, or more importantly, why knowledge of the self is important. Therefore this Box scores a 1 out of 2.

Frankena then moves on to the practical component of the model, CDE. There were no practical strategies identified that could be inserted in Box E, however there were principles that give an idea as to what the strategies might look like. These principles were only implicitly related to the sub-part of the competency being analyzed. That is, it suggests an education that revolves around learners’ primordial nature and focuses on developing one’s existential capacities which in turn requires knowledge of these capacities, however it does not clearly mention that learners need to know their capacities; it just suggests that these capacities need to be developed. Moreover, the principle is written descriptively when it is supposed to be written prescriptively. The presence of two issues in one Box grants this a score of 0 according to our evaluation criteria. A foundation (Box D) supporting the principle on correcting oneself is only present, displaying gaps in regards to the other concepts conveyed, thus giving this Box a score of 0.

An important point that has to be made here is that there were no practical methods, as is expected to fill the contents of Box E; instead there were statements that were written in the form of principles that can devise what strategies are needed to reach a competency. For example, the statement “primordial naturalism must be an approach used in Ideological education,” is giving an idea as to what direction the strategies need to take, but they are not written as practical methods; i.e. they are still



theoretical. The way this translates in Frankena's model is that there are strategic statements present that are expected to fall under Box E, however, they are not as practical as is expected of the contents of Box E. Because according to Frankena's model, the CDE section is characterized as being concrete unlike its ABC counterpart, which is characterized for being abstract. Therefore, a distinction must be made for a more accurate analysis in determining the state of the logical structure held by the philosophy of education, the answer to our first research question. To make this distinction, the strategies found in the text and their corresponding foundations, will be labeled with the number '1' as a superscript, i.e. as E<sup>1</sup> and D<sup>1</sup> respectively, while practical methods and their foundations will be given the superscript number '2,' i.e., E<sup>2</sup> and D<sup>2</sup>. This will help do justice to the content that is present while retaining accuracy in displaying what this content really is (strategic principles and not practical methods). Overall, the coherence of this sub-part is evaluated as low (since ABC is medium and CDE is very low) and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

**(B) Knowledge of one's identity**

Sub-part Two	
Box	Statement
A	<p><i>i.</i> The general purpose of public education (both formal and informal) is “<i>the development and excellence of a common identity (human, Islamic, Iranian) of educators, ... in order to form a righteous society and its continuous upgrading based on the Islamic standard system, which is done by acquiring the necessary competencies (basic and special).</i> (Source: <i>Outcome and general purpose of Formal and Public Education, TF</i>)</p> <p><i>ii.</i> The general purpose of education in the Islamic society can be described according to the index of its realization as follows: <i>the continuous development and transcendence of the identity of educators</i> so that they can properly understand their position and the position of others in existence and continuously, with individual righteous action, achieve collective reform in accordance with the Islamic standard system. (Source: <i>General purpose of Education, TF</i>)</p>

	<p>iii. Free and conscious acceptance of the religion of Islam (as a way of life and the basis of the standard system) to rely on it, for the <i>continuous development and exaltation of one's identity</i> in order to form a righteous society and its continuous development. (Source: <i>Goal under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education</i>)</p> <p>iv. <i>Efforts to promote common dimensions (human, Islamic, Iranian) of their identity</i> in a unified manner and based on the standard Islamic system. (Source: <i>Goal under Social and Political education</i>)</p> <p>v. Education in all the six areas of education (Ideological, Artistic, etc.) is focused on <i>the formation and excellence of educators' identity in a comprehensive way - considering all the basic elements of identity (knowledge, belief, desire, will, action and repetition)</i> - in order to form a righteous society and continuous progress that which is realized by understanding the position of oneself and others and through righteous action of individuals and groups for its continuous improvement based on conscious and voluntary choice and the duties mentioned in the Islamic standard system. (Source: <i>Fields of education, TF</i>)</p>
B	<p><i>Man's identity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personality (identity) is a complex, dynamic combination and the result of the interaction of the individual will with biological, social, cultural, cognitive and psychological factors. Human personality is formed from various dimensions and aspects. But despite having different dimensions and aspects, it benefits from the unity of a unitary whole. Therefore, there is always a deep connection between the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of human identity. (1.3.6)</li> <li>● Man has a fundamental role in the formation and evolution of his unfinished and dynamic identity. Man with divine nature, having the ability of intellect, natural abilities, and the relative influence of environmental and hereditary factors, and as a result of understanding different situations and voluntary confrontation with them, finds a reality, which is called identity. Hence, the identity of every human being is ultimately the product of the acquisition of certain attributes and skills by himself, and not only is it not a fixed matter, but also the result of one's efforts and success. Therefore, the identity of each person is a gradual and dynamic reality in both individual and collective dimensions, which ultimately evolves during the life of this world with one's voluntary presence in various individual and social situations. Therefore, the realization and evolution of human individual and collective identity depends more than anything on the unique flow of individual and social life of each person and his own knowledge, belief and voluntary actions (individual and collective). That is, in the process of formation and continuous change of one's identity, each person is, to a large extent, free and therefore responsible for it. (1.6.1.8)</li> <li>● Identity has an individual and a collective aspect and can be realized in different dimensions according to different aspects of human life. These aspects do not have inherent independence from each other, and in the path of transcendence, they interact to form a unified existence. Thus, identity is a single truth within plurality. Human</li> </ul>

identity has two aspects: individual and collective. The individual aspect observes the specific dimension of human existence (his unique personality) and the collective aspect observes the common dimension of human life with others. The individual aspect, due to man's intellect, nature, and will, keeps him from being subjugated in the collective, and the collective aspect puts him in the process of connecting with others and feeling a sense of belonging to them. But this trade is such that a person's will is not taken away from him. Also, identity has different types and layers. These layers overlap while being relatively different. The most important types of identity in its collective form are human identity (global), religious identity, national identity, ethnic identity, family identity, sexual/gender identity, and professional identity. Among these, human identity and religious identity (knowledge of the Almighty and communicating with Him) can, while having a central role, unite all other aspects. (1.2.18)

- Man, in order to play a role in the process of formation and evolution of his identity, due to the presence of external and internal threats, needs the help of God Almighty and the guidance and assistance of human beings. Considering the role of human freedom in the main elements affecting the process of formation and change of identity (knowledge, tendency, will and continuous individual and collective action and acquisition of attributes and skills) and also considering the environmental conditions that should greatly affect this process, to direct this complex movement, man needs to rely on divine guidance and benefit from the assistance of qualified human beings, because man, despite having divine nature, intellect, natural God-given abilities, and various desires that can help on the path to perfection, is exposed to all kinds of threats. The selection of divine prophets and their successors is the most complete response of creation to this necessary need, and the acceptance of the guardianship of these divine teachers provides the basis for building and addressing human identity, just as communication with the unseen world and attention to the heavenly dimensions of existence, through spiritual experiences such as prayer, is also a necessary ground for helping one find guidance in this difficult path. (1.2.20)

*Man's role models in shaping his identity*

- God, the true instructor of human beings, always puts examples of perfect human beings as the highest models of human beings in their path of guidance and thus, by knowing these role-models and following in their path, God has given man the process of formation and transcendence of their identity. Therefore, in the complex and difficult path of continuous evolution and exaltation of his identity, recognition of the path from misguidance and ease of reaching the goal requires that he knows the true examples of the perfect man (the divine prophets and infallibles (as)). (1.2.21)
- Man is a social being and his identity is built to a considerable extent in the field of social life. Human insight, inclination, and character are influenced by the cultural, economic and political system of society, although this influence is never to the extent that it makes man an absolute function of the social environment. Therefore, social conditions are a very influential factor on the personality and lifestyle of individuals, and we can resist this social impact by relying on individual will, and through appropriate action, we can even have a good effect on the social system. The Quran in

	<p>several verses, while pointing to the fact that many people are affected by the social environment, emphasizes the responsibility of man towards society and to change the conditions of any society. In other words, from an Islamic perspective, the individualistic and socialist views are not approved; rather, it is the intermediate view that is important to both the individual and society. Meaning, the individual and society interact with each other, and the destinies of the two are intertwined. The destruction of society prevents the development of the individual and the destruction of the individual prevents the perfection of society. Due to the strong bond between the two, the protection of this bond has been emphasized in Islam. For this reason, many Islamic rules such as Hajj, congregational prayer, khums, zakat, enjoining good and forbidding the evil, and the like have a social form. Performing these acts of worship, on the one hand, leads to the perfection of the individual and, on the other hand, to social excellence. (1.2.16)</p> <p><i>Foundations supporting Principles</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man is always in the "situation" and can understand and change it. Situation means a definite and dynamic state and relation, the perception of which is the result of the continuous interaction of the individual (as a conscious and empowered being) with God and existence (supernatural realities, nature, and society) in the presence of God. Understanding and changing the situation (of oneself and others), according to one's freedom, may be done properly, in which case one should speak of "understanding the situation of oneself and others and taking continuous action to improve it." This interaction requires, firstly, <i>self-knowledge</i>, secondly, <i>knowing God</i>, and thirdly, <i>discovering and establishing the relationship between the elements of the situation and God</i>. But at the same time, it is possible that man does not understand the real situation of himself and others or does not make the proper effort to change it. (1.2.14)</li> </ul>
C	Knowing yourself, your capacities and <i>your identity</i>
D	Education in all the six areas of education (Ideological, Artistic, etc.) is focused on the formation and excellence of educators' identity in a comprehensive way - considering all the basic elements of identity (knowledge, belief, desire, will, action and repetition) - in order to form a righteous society and continuous progress ... Therefore, <i>learners in all fields must acquire a set of individual and collective competencies necessary to understand and continuously improve their position and that of others.</i>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Free and conscious acceptance of the religion of Islam (as a way of life and the basis of the standard system) to rely on it</i>, for the continuous development and exaltation of one's identity in order to form a righteous society and its continuous development.</li> <li>• <i>Paying attention to the valuable heritage of Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization in order to create a common Iranian and Islamic identity.</i></li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

There are multiple goal statements (Box A) addressing the development of identity, however, none mentions the concept of knowing one's identity.

Developing identity implies knowledge as a prerequisite. Foundational statements (Box B) talk about what identity is and man's role in shaping his own identity, implying an importance in having knowledge of one's identity and how to form it. Strategies (Box E) are derived from goal statements due to unfitting combinations.

## Competency Two

### (A) Knowledge of God and His attributes

Sub-part	
Box	Statement
A	The field of ideological, devotional, and moral education is concerned with self-knowledge and <i>knowledge of God Almighty</i> , resurrection, prophethood, acceptance of the guardianship of religious leaders (the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams) and following them, for they are truly the perfect human beings of the highest stature throughout history. ( <i>Excerpt from the scope of the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education</i> )
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● God is the origin and the purpose of existence. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God is the Creator of the universe and the Owner, the Mastermind, and the true Lord of all beings in the universe. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God is the fundamental good, the foundation of goodness, and guides all beings in the universe to their worthy perfection. (1.1.6)</li> <li>● God has the highest order of perfection. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God is free from all defects, impoverishment, poverty, and need. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God is superior to time and space, omniscient and omnipotent, a benevolent giver, and at the same time a just judge. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God's relationship with the world of creation is that of creation (i.e., He is the Creator), lordship, ownership, protection, mercy, support, and guardianship. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● God is the fundamental good of existence and guides all beings in existence to their proper perfection. (1.1.6)</li> <li>● God, in addition to being pure goodness and perfection, is also the source of every goodness and perfection. (1.1.6)</li> <li>● God has given each creature what it needs, deserves, and is meant to have, and has intended a specific destination for it, and has fully equipped that creature to reach the purpose of its creation. (1.1.6)</li> </ul>
C	<i>Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings and their sources.</i>

D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, both in theory and in action, has the ability of reasoning (rationalization), which plays an essential role in knowing the truth of existence and achieving eternal happiness. (1.3.7)</li> <li>● The truth of existence in its essence is the Obligatory Existence (God, واجب الوجود). (1.1.3)</li> <li>● Man’s primordial nature is the knowledge of and tendency towards God which is embedded in man’s existence. (1.5.8)</li> <li>● The world, in addition to having “His” nature, is moving towards Him (1.1.5).</li> <li>● The most important ways and tools of knowing for man is the senses (esoteric and exoteric), reason, witnessing and seeing the unseen, and revelation and inspiration.</li> <li>● Reasoning is the most important human activity and is present in all activities, including hearing, seeing, observations of the heart, as well as producing concepts, making inferences, evaluations, generalizations, ... and reaching certainty. (1.2.9)</li> <li>● Reasoning (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms). (1.3.7)</li> <li>● The mind can enter both the realms of theoretical perceptions (i.e., knowledge of facts and beings) and practical perceptions (i.e., knowledge of good and bad, or should and should not) as well as practical obligation (will and action) to adhere to the tools of one’s theoretical and practical perceptions. (1.2.9)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oriented around one’s primordial nature (starting from knowledge and desire for the divine that is embedded in learners’ existence).</li> <li>● Prioritizing reasoning over worship.</li> <li>● Rationalism (giving originality to reason and rationality, which is considered the skeleton and axis of ideological, devotional, and moral education), while paying attention to the emotional and practical dimensions (avoiding purely emotional confrontation or choosing religion based on reluctance and pure indoctrination); this means emphasizing on the acquisition of religious insight (البصيرة).</li> <li>● Principle of continuous transformation: Moving from indoctrination and habit to explanation, choice, and reasoning. Moving from suspicion (uncertainty, الظن) to certainty.</li> <li>● Balanced emphasis on explanation, reasoning, sensitivity (showing care and being considerate towards sensitive topics), and moral action.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Principles under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education)</p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

The logical coherence in this sub-part is high meaning that it is mostly explicit and coherent. The goal statement (Box A), although explicit, is not laid out as a goal in the list of goals under the field such a competency is expected to be

relevant to, i.e., the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education. The multitude ontological statements (Box B) are rich in giving knowledge of God, His attributes, and His relationship towards creation, thus reflecting the importance of learners having such knowledge. The principle statements (Box E), although mentioned under the field of Ideological education, are very general and do not reflect the explicitness present in the foundational statements that explain how man can come to know God through his divine primordial nature (1.5.8) and through the power of reasoning (1.2.9, and 1.3.7) and ultimately reach certainty (1.2.9). However, the foundational statements make this connection clear enough which makes them explicit. Another point to make is that there were principles but there were not any practical methods mentioned, which makes the structure lacking. Therefore, for the sake of an accurate analysis, we will label principles and their corresponding foundations as E<sup>1</sup> and D<sup>1</sup> respectively, and methods and their foundations as E<sup>2</sup> and D<sup>2</sup>. Overall, the coherence of this sub-competency can be evaluated as high and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

Recommendation:

To complete this logical structure, a goal that explicitly states “Knowledge of God” needs to be devised under the field of Ideological education. Principles must be rewritten and expanded upon to relate specifically to the competency’s sub-parts. For example: knowledge of God needs to address learners’ primordial nature and the skill of reasoning must be taught as a means for learners to reach such knowledge, avoiding practices like that of indoctrination.

**(B) Knowledge of God’s divine actions and signs**

Sub-part Two	
Box	Statement
A	<p>(1) Cultivation of the senses and the power of imagination <i>to re-read one's divine nature and receive the manifestations of truth throughout nature/existence.</i></p> <p>(2) <i>Understanding the beauties of the world of creation as manifestations of divine beauty and perfection.</i></p> <p><i>(Source: goals under the field of Aesthetic and Artistic education, TF)</i></p>
B	<p>Foundations relevant to the first goal statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All beings are signs of the truth of existence, i.e., Almighty God. (1.1.3).</li> <li>● The world of creation has an integrated system, all of which are signs and symbols of God's infinite knowledge, power, wisdom, and love (1.1.9).</li> <li>● The world of creation is a real, objective, and permanent sign of God (1.1.9).</li> <li>● Nature and its phenomena should be viewed as signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace, and mercy (1.4.16).</li> </ul> <p>Foundations relevant to the second goal statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● God is absolute beauty.</li> <li>● God has created everything in its best form and has given the best fit and harmony to existence.</li> <li>● The love of beauty is created instinctively in human beings by God, so an important part of life is to pay attention to the internal and external beauty in things.</li> <li>● Beauty and art are manifestations of the transcendence of human life.</li> <li>● In Islamic art, the principle of exaltation of aesthetic emotions is discussed so that the real beauties of life are not hidden behind outward beauties. Thus, art is the manifestation of human creativity, the knowledge of which has a profound effect on the evolutionary movement of man towards God.</li> <li>● Aesthetic value has been proposed in Islamic texts with an objective and a subjective criterion. Objective means object itself has real properties that make it beautiful. (1.4.15)</li> </ul>
C	<p>Knowledge of the Almighty, attributes, <i>divine actions and signs</i>, and religious teachings and their sources.</p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The senses are the most pervasive tool of knowledge. The exoteric senses provide man with a broad knowledge of the natural world. The esoteric senses help in understanding meaning and mental forms. (1.3.6)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Cultivation of the senses and the power of imagination</i> to re-read one's divine nature and receive the manifestations of truth throughout nature/existence.</li> <li>● Emphasis on cultivating the senses.</li> <li>● Providing suitable grounds for cultivating imagination</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: principles under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Low



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The logical structure gives statements on “Knowledge of God’s divine actions and signs” (Box C). The goal statements (Box A) are both implicitly related to this competency. The first talks about the act of “receiving” the manifestations of God in nature and existence, while the verb used in the competency is having “knowledge” of God’s actions and signs, which implies more of a passive role unlike the active role in the goal statement. Moreover, the first is a statement that includes both a goal and its strategy forming an unfitting combination that creates conflict in the logical flow of the Frankenian structure. The ontological and axiological statements (Box B) that support the goals are explicit, where foundations 1.1.3 and 1.1.9 explain how everything in existence is a manifestation of God’s action and beauty, and that these signs and symbols are present both within man’s being and externally in the world around us, and it is through witnessing them that man can reach God; hence the importance of knowing His divine actions and signs. The principle (Box E) for the first goal statement, although explicit, was placed alongside the goal and thus this creates confusion. Moreover, the suggested strategies are implicit and not practical in their nature as is expected of a Box E statement, making this box’s content weak. Box D is also implicit for it generally talks about the senses as a way of attaining knowledge without explicitly talking about the role of the senses and imagination in witnessing everything around us as workings that are divine and to see the Creator in these perceptions. Additionally, what allowed the researcher to know that the senses are involved in this process is the information given in the goal statement “cultivate the senses and imagination.”

Otherwise, the connection wouldn't have shown at all. Overall, the coherence of this structure is low since it is very implicit, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

***Recommendation***

A goal that explicitly addresses “Knowledge of God’s divine actions and signs” needs to be present under the field of Ideological education. Foundations of Box D need to be written more specifically to be in line with the principles to show how the senses and imagination can help read the signs around us as divine. And the principles, being too generic, need to be written with more specificity to be linked clearly to the whole logical structure; e.g. the sense must be cultivated as they are the most pervasive tool of knowledge in reading the signs and symbols of the natural world and existence as divine action.

**(C) Knowledge of religious teachings**

Sub-part	
Box	Statement
A	<p>(1) The field of ideological, devotional, and moral education is concerned with self-knowledge and <i>knowledge of God Almighty, resurrection, prophethood, and acceptance of the guardianship of religious leaders (the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams)</i> and following them, for they are truly the perfect human beings of the highest stature throughout history. <i>(Excerpt from the scope of the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education, TF)</i></p> <p>(2) The most important goal of the formation of the Islamic system in general and the educational system in particular is religious education in its deep and wide meaning. <i>(Goal under Islamic knowledge and wisdom, National curriculum (NC))</i></p> <p>(3) Deepening the knowledge and faith of students in the beliefs, ethics, and divine rules, which is the knowledge and faith in the religion of Islam, is the most important mission of education in the Islamic system. <i>(Goal under Qur'an and Arabic, NC)</i></p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Religion is the only truth sent by God to guide mankind to true and eternal happiness, and the monotheistic laws (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) are its perfect examples. (1.5.1)</li> <li>● The purpose of religion is the flourishing of human nature. It is a set of beliefs and laws sent by God to guide humans to their perfection by the divine prophets. Belief in one God, resurrection, and prophethood is the common core among monotheistic religions (Abrahamic laws); moreover, the need to worship God, and protect moral principles is emphasized by all of them. The religion of truth in the present time is</li> </ul>

Islam, revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), with the characteristic of universality. Its teachings are in full harmony with the rules of common sense. Therefore, what Islam conveys about the doctrinal truths is complete and its validity is not limited to a specific time and audience. (1.5.1)

- Islam includes the beliefs, ethics, rules, and systems that humans need to achieve their transcendent destination. It is a comprehensive program of human education for closeness to God.
- Sources of Islamic knowledge are the Holy Quran, Sunnah, the biography of the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH), the Infallible Successors (PBUT), and reason.
- Reason means the power of analyzing and relating propositions and evaluating findings according to a standard system (Islam), obtained through valid methods.
- Wisdom, in the sense of being solid knowledge, is the result of the power of reason. Wisdom and insight occur when a person is in the correct process of thinking with the guidance of common sense.
- Faith based on thought is the basis of religious practices. No religious practice has meaning without reasoning.
- Thinking, studying, and research form the basis of religious knowledge.
- The field of Islamic knowledge is a platform for strengthening religious thought and planning to gain knowledge about this comprehensive human education program to give educators a degree of awareness about Islam so they can live their individual and social lives accordingly, to actively lead society towards Islamic ideals and to be successful in educating their children.

*(Source: The field of education and learning of Islamic Knowledge and Wisdom; NC)*

- For humans to achieve the levels of good life in all its individual and social dimensions, Islam provides the standard system to guide man to eternal happiness. It upholds the rational values of humans, emphasizes the commitment to these values, and establishes a system that completes them.
- This system of religious standards governs all aspects of life (personal, social, material, and spiritual); although it is a guide for some of these areas, it provides generalities for others; religion does not seek to meet all needs without relying on human intellect, and rather plays a complementary role for human intellect because the intellect is considered as mutually reinforcing. (1.5.2)
- The comprehensiveness of religion does not mean that it provides answers to all epistemological questions without the use of human intellect. Comprehensiveness is the provision of a complete standard system by the ‘true’ religion to lead a person to God and attain true happiness. Religious sources in some human sciences (such as the humanities and social sciences) can effectively participate as one of the important sources of knowledge in the production and judgment of scientific theories (as a guiding and complementary source of knowledge). (1.5.2)
- Knowing Islam, in addition to understanding the Holy Quran, requires benefiting from the authentic tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Infallibles (AS) and relying on their interpretation of religious truths. (1.5.6)
- Religious knowledge is a systematic, comprehensive, and reliable collection that considers a system of human life, based on the rules of theoretical and practical reason (under the title of esoteric argument) i.e. analyzing all components of the individual

	<p>and collective life of man in relation to each other and explaining the whole life as a purposeful set based on ijtiḥād (methodical understanding of authentic religious sources, i.e. tradition and reason, which is responsible for explaining the religious education system in the main aspects of life), stable (with fixed elements) and at the same time dynamic (evolving), in harmony with man’s primordial nature (the tendency towards God). (1.5.8)</p>
C	<p>Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and <i>religious teachings</i> and their sources.</p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human life is an intellectual life and thinking is a divine talent actualized through education considering piety, by balancing one’s inner powers, in the path of one’s monotheistic primordial nature. The process of education should develop thinking, reason, and wisdom. This affects a person's faith and knowledge and provides the ground for his excellence. The main process in the voluntary action of humans, which should be considered in Islamic teachings, is the process of thoughtful cognition and conscious faith.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: The field of education and learning of Islamic Knowledge and Wisdom; NC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A characteristic of any valuable educational endeavor is its voluntariness. Freedom is a fundamental feature of man. Although the transcendence of identity occurs in the social space (influenced by family, government, and non-governmental institutions), the ultimate factor is free will and pre-existing authority of human consciousness. The formation and evolution of identity can be in the direction of ascent and fall due to his inherent. Hence, the flow of education must emerge voluntarily. Otherwise, educational practice will not be distinguished from other practices. The use of methods such as imposition and indoctrination are allowed only in the early stages of education.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Characteristics of the definition of education; TF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man, both in theory and in action, has the ability of reasoning, which plays an essential role in knowing the truth of existence and achieving eternal happiness. (1.3.7)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The main process in the voluntary action of humans, which should be considered in Islamic teachings, is the process of thoughtful cognition and conscious faith.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: The field of education and learning of Islamic Knowledge and Wisdom; NC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prioritizing reasoning over worship.</li> <li>● Rationalism (giving originality to reason and rationality, which is considered the skeleton and axis of ideological, devotional, and moral education), while paying attention to the emotional and practical dimensions (avoiding purely emotional confrontation or choosing religion based on reluctance and pure indoctrination); this means emphasizing on the acquisition of religious insight (البصيرة).</li> <li>● Principle of continuous transformation: Moving from indoctrination and habit to explanation, choice, and reasoning. Moving from suspicion (uncertainty, الظن) to certainty.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Principles under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Being active (emphasizing the main role of educators in the process and outcome).</li> <li>● Education should not be limited to the transfer of knowledge but should also prepare</li> </ul>

	<p>the ground for the production of knowledge by students by emphasizing their participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasis on the application of religion and ethics in individual and social life (with emphasis on the real issues in educators' lives).</li> </ul> <p>(Source: <i>Principles under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education</i>)</p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

### ***An overview***

This competency corresponds to the field of Islamic knowledge and Wisdom in the National Curriculum while it relates to the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education in the educational framework of the Theoretical foundations document. The logical structure gives statements on “Knowledge of religious teachings” (Box C). The goal statements (Box A) are explicit and are found in both the Theoretical foundations document and the National curriculum. Foundational statements (Box B) found in relation to this competency are theological. They explicitly discuss the importance of having religious knowledge, explaining that religion is the only truth sent by God to mankind to reach eternal happiness, and there are many statements explaining what religious knowledge is (a systematic, comprehensive, reliable, and dynamic collection of knowledge that takes into consideration a system of human life, based on the rules of theoretical reason and practical reason, and how it is obtained (through religious sources and the method of ‘Ijtihad’) and how it is in harmony with man’s primordial nature. The relevant principles (Box E) are found in three different locations, two within the Theoretical Foundations document and one within the National curriculum. Those found within the Theoretical foundations document are very general and do not explicitly address

the competency, mentioning reasoning, avoiding indoctrination, and learner's active role in learning and in knowledge production as important principles in ideological education. However, data found in the National curriculum in regard to religious teachings, is that it must be a process that involves "thoughtful cognition and conscious faith," i.e., a process that involves thinking and rationalizing and being conscious as opposed to a faith that is blindly followed. The data from the National curriculum is sufficient in making this connection explicit.

The foundational content of Box D, on the other hand, clearly makes the link between the present principles and the competency by explaining the importance of the intellect in learners' role in obtaining religious knowledge, i.e., obtaining this kind of knowledge using the power of reasoning to avoid unhealthy practices of indoctrination and thus highlighting the element of freedom, claiming that it is through free will and voluntary action that one can truly form a solid ascending identity. Additionally, gaining the ability of thinking, reasoning, and wisdom will allow the strengthening of a person's faith, belief, knowledge, and performance which in turn provides the ground for one's excellence. Overall, the coherence of this structure is high, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

### ***Recommendation***

A goal that explicitly addresses "Knowledge of religious teachings" and what this specifically includes needs to be present under the field of Ideological education. The principles in the Theoretical Foundations document are too general and thus need to be written with more specificity in a way that would reflect the foundational statements that explain them in order to make a clear logical structure with the competency and its other sub-parts. For example: in order to obtain

religious knowledge, skills such as reasoning, thinking, and wisdom need to be developed within learners.

**(D) Knowledge of religious sources**

Sub-part	
Box	Statement
A	<p>(1) The field of ideological, devotional, and moral education is concerned with self-knowledge and knowledge of God Almighty, resurrection, prophethood, <i>acceptance of the guardianship of religious leaders (the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams)</i> and following them, for they are truly the perfect human beings of the highest stature throughout history. (<i>Excerpt from the scope of the field of Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education</i>)</p> <p>(2) Goals under the subject matter ‘Qur’an and Arabic’ education:</p> <p>A) Ability to read the Holy Quran correctly and fluently;</p> <p>B) Ability to understand the meaning of simple and widely used phrases of the Holy Quran;</p> <p>C) The relative ability of contemplation in the verses of the Holy Quran in order to understand the simple and basic details and subtleties of the meanings of the verses, without specialized training in Quranic sciences;</p> <p>D) Continuous and permanent acquaintance with the Holy Qur’an, so that students are people who read and think in the Qur’an and consider this a necessity for religious education and the promotion of their divine identity.</p> <p><i>(Source: Goals of the subject matter ‘Qur’an and Arabic’)</i></p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sources of Islamic knowledge are the Holy Quran, the Sunnah (biography) of the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) and the Infallible Successors (PBUT), and reason.</li> <li>● Religious sources in some human sciences (such as the humanities and social sciences) can effectively participate as one of the important sources of knowledge in the production and judgment of scientific theories (as a guiding and complementary source of knowledge). (1.5.2)</li> <li>● Knowing Islam, in addition to understanding the Holy Quran, requires benefiting from the authentic tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Infallibles (AS) and relying on their interpretation of religious truths. (1.5.6)</li> <li>● The immortality of the original text of revelation (Holy Quran) in the context of time on the one hand, and the emergence of new needs in the individual and collective life on the other hand, requires the presence of knowledgeable commentators familiar with the depths of revelation. This is realized in the inseparable connection of Ahl-ul-Bayt (the Infallibles) with the Qur’an. Therefore, to meet the needs of humans at any time and place, the Infallibles (PBUT) are the main commentators of the true meaning of the Qur’an. The principle of Imamate is one of the pillars of the preservation of religion and the most important basis for understanding Islam. (1.5.6)</li> <li>● To attain the good life, we need the guidance of religion in drawing the destination and determining the criteria to reach that destination. To prepare for the most important</li> </ul>

	<p>prelude to the good life, we need to rely on God’s standard system which is based on the true religion (the Islamic teachings within the framework of Ijtihad, which is the methodical understanding of religious sources, i.e. tradition and reason), accept the guardianship of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Infallibles (PBUT) and establish their biography in all aspects of life (as the best examples of perfect human beings and the eternal human educators). (1.5.12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reason means the power of analyzing and relating propositions and measuring and evaluating findings according to a standard system (Islam) which has been obtained through valid methods.</li> <li>● Wisdom, in the sense of being firm and solid knowledge, is the result of the power of reason. Wisdom and insight occur when a person is in the right process of thinking with the guidance of common sense and correct narration.</li> <li>● Faith based on thought is the basis of religious practices. And no religious practice has meaning without the presence of thought and reasoning.</li> <li>● Thinking, studying, and research form the basis of religious knowledge.</li> <li>● The religion of Islam is the way to lead human beings to perfection and salvation. God guides man to the path of perfection. One of the sources of Islamic knowledge is the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran is a book of guidance for human beings.</li> <li>● The Quran is the source revelation, beliefs, and rules. The ability to understand the Qur'an is the entrance to Islamic knowledge. Learning Arabic as the language of the Qur'an enables one to benefit from its guidance and makes it possible for educators to use the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt. On the other hand, Persian language and literature are mixed with Arabic and familiarity with Arabic will affect learning Persian.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: The field of education and learning of Qur’an and Arabic, NC)</i></p>
C	<p>Knowledge of the Almighty (God), attributes, divine actions and signs, and religious teachings and <i>their sources</i>.</p>
D	<p>A characteristic of any valuable educational endeavor is its voluntariness. Freedom is a fundamental feature of man. Although the transcendence of identity occurs in the social space (influenced by family, government, and non-governmental institutions), the ultimate factor is free will and pre-existing authority of human consciousness. The formation and evolution of identity can be in the direction of ascent and fall due to his inherent. Hence, the flow of education must emerge voluntarily. Otherwise, educational practice will not be distinguished from other practices. (Characteristics of the definition of education; TF)</p>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Avoiding the delivery of religious, devotional, and moral education to one of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of religion.</li> <li>● Avoiding indoctrination, reluctance, and coercion in the ideological and attitudinal dimension of religious education.</li> <li>● Avoiding the approach of mere emotionalism and faith (meaning abandonment of reason and knowledge).</li> <li>● Emphasis on persuasion, patience, dialogue, and tolerance.</li> <li>● Avoid presenting large volumes of religious material (regardless of the intellectual capacity of the audience).</li> <li>● Avoiding petrification, superstition, heresy, and eclecticism.</li> <li>● Familiarity with the Arabic language and specifically the four language skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking in this area is enough to help the student to understand the meaning of the verses of the Holy Quran, the words of the Infallibles</li> </ul>



	and religious texts and Islamic culture. (Source: <i>Qur'an and Arabic education, NC</i> )
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

This structure includes statements on knowledge of sources of religious teachings (Box C). Like the previous case, the goal is mentioned within the scope of the field of Ideological, Devotional and Moral education where “... resurrection, prophethood, acceptance of the guardianship of religious leaders (the Prophet (PBUH) and the infallible Imams) and following them, ...” are parts of the educational goals of this field. However, to accept the leaders of Islam, namely the Prophet and the twelve Imams, one must gain knowledge of them first, which makes the goal statement weak. Moreover, ‘reason’ is missing as a source within the goal statements. Overall Box A is partially explicit. From the foundational statements in Box B, it can be understood that these religious sources are the Prophet and the Infallible Imams (PBUT), the Holy Quran, reason, and some of the humanities, making the foundations explicit. Moreover, these statements discuss who and what these sources are and why we need them to understand revelation. For example, the foundations explain that accepting the religious leaders means accepting them as a reliable source of knowledge in knowing God, religion, and the path one needs to take to reach the good life. The ways and means of teaching that were mentioned (Box E) were very general, except for one that explains Arabic as the tool needed for learners to understand and read the Qur’an, making the contents of this box, overall, partially weak. Foundational statements (Box D) describing the foundations

on which the principles are based are present and explicit, where descriptive statements on the intellect and the power of reasoning as well as the primordial nature with which God has embedded within man is explained, and their importance in finding the right path and in reaching the right values. Overall, the coherence of this structure can be said to be medium, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

This sub-competency addresses one of the sources of the religion of Islam, its holy book the Qur'an. The goal statements (Box A) present within the National curriculum under the subject matter Qur'an and Arabic, are justified explaining that the Holy book is an gateway for every Muslim to gain knowledge of the religion since it is the source of the religion's ethics, beliefs, etc. And thus, learning how to read and understand it, and also how to contemplate over its meaning is an expected goal for learners. A proper goal statement for this section of the competency would be: "Knowledge of the Prophet and the Infallibles, their biographies, their traditions and Qur'anic interpretations as religious sources."

### Competency Three

#### (A) Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Understanding phenomena and its purpose</i> to understand existence and one's place in it.</li> <li>ii. <i>Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events</i> in order to decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.</li> <li>iii. Cultivate the senses and imagination...<i>to receive the manifestations of God throughout nature/existence.</i></li> <li>iv. <i>Understanding the beauties of the world of creation as manifestations of divine beauty and perfection</i> and fostering one's aesthetic taste.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Goals under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All beings are signs of the truth of existence, i.e., Almighty God. And the world of creation is real, objective, and a permanent sign of God. The Qur'an has spoken of natural phenomena in more than seven hundred and fifty verses and man is invited to</li> </ul>

	<p>know and understand nature. This knowledge is meant as knowledge of signs so that one can look at divine signs and reach the owner of these signs (1.1.9).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace, and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered (1.4.16).</li> <li>● In the Islamic view, God is the absolute beauty and lover of beauty. God has created everything in its best form and has given the best fit and harmony to existence. The love of beauty is created instinctively in human beings by God, so an important part of life is to pay attention to the internal and external beauty of things. (1.4.15)</li> <li>● Beauty and art are manifestations of the transcendence of human life. In Islamic aesthetics, the principle of exaltation of aesthetic emotions is discussed so that the real beauties of life are not hidden behind outward beauties. Thus, art is the manifestation of human creativity, the knowledge of which has a profound effect on the evolutionary movement of man towards God - the creator of artistic talents. (1.4.15)</li> <li>● Aesthetic value has been proposed in Islamic texts with an objective and a subjective criterion (individual's perception). The objective element in beauty means that the beautiful object itself has real properties that make it beautiful. (1.4.15)</li> </ul>
C	<i>Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation</i> and how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The senses are the most pervasive tool of knowledge. The exoteric senses provide man with a broad knowledge of the natural world. The esoteric senses help in understanding meaning, and mental forms (1.3.6).</li> <li>● Reason (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms). Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. In various verses, the Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who notice these signs are those who have a heart and a mind. (1.3.7)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Cultivate the senses and imagination...</i> to receive the manifestations of God throughout nature/existence.</li> <li>● Emphasis on cultivating the senses.</li> <li>● Providing suitable grounds for cultivating imagination.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> <li>● Providing the background and conditions for creating and creativity for educators.</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

*An overview*

There are four goal statements that can be related to this competency, the first two being the most directly explicit. The first goal statement is an intermediate goal (understanding phenomena and its purpose) that leads to an ultimate goal (...understand existence and one's place in it). This can cause some conflict in Frankena's logical flow. Statement (ii) also has the same problem. Moreover, this statement lacks other key terms namely "relations," "events," and "laws" of the world of creation. Goals (iii) and (iv) are implicit; goal (iii) consists of both the goal statement and its strategy, while goal (iv) has two goals in one statement which can also cause confusion for the reader. The content of Box B states ontological and axiological statements that explicitly support how man is invited to understand phenomena in nature. However, it has been written prescriptively rather than descriptively as is expected of a foundational statement. Foundations supporting goals (iii) and (iv) are also explicit. The strategies mentioned (Box E) are very generic and do not clearly explain their role in achieving the said competency. Another point to make is that the principles (Box E) are not practical, which makes the structure lacking. For the sake of an accurate analysis, we will label principles and their corresponding foundations as  $E^1$  and  $D^1$  respectively, and practical methods and their foundations as  $E^2$  and  $D^2$ . Box D is also very generic and implies the senses as a means to understand phenomena. "Reasoning" is mentioned foundationally (Box D) as a tool for encrypting and decrypting phenomena, however, it is not mentioned as a strategy.

Overall, the coherence is evaluated as medium since two of the goal statements are explicit enough and the contents of Box B are also clear enough to support the competency statement. The logical structure is  $ABCD^1E^1$ .

**Recommendation**

The fact that there are other goal statements relevant to this competency displays a lack of one-on-one relationship between goal statements and competency statements which can create confusion for the reader. In this case, it is better if the goal statements are revised to better correspond to the competency statement. For example, goal statements (i) and (ii) are very similar and can be rewritten as one.

**(B) Man’s relationship with phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of creation, and making optimal use of them.**

Sub-part Four	
Box	Statement
A	<i>Establishing a constructive relationship with nature by honoring, harnessing, developing, and learning from it to make use of it in scientific activities at the national and global levels. (Source: Goal under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</i>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man has individual and collective duties and responsibilities towards God, himself, others, and creation (other living beings, nature, and even supernatural beings). (1.2.19)</li> <li>● Nature provides the necessary tools and facilities for human life in the world. It should be used as a tool for optimal use in human life, while maintaining the environment and its sustainable development of life - with respect to the rights of all human beings – and that would not lead to destruction. (1.4.16)</li> <li>● Encounter with nature is not limited to its instrumental aspect, but also has a symbolic aspect, i.e., nature and its phenomena are signs of God's authority, wisdom, and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, the understanding of divine signs must be considered. (1.4.16)</li> </ul>
C	Knowledge of phenomena, relations, events, and laws of the world of Creation and <i>how man is to have a relationship with them and make optimal use of them.</i>
D	A and B give E in this case.
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establishing a constructive relationship with Nature by <i>honoring, harnessing, developing, and learning from it</i> to make use of <i>it</i> in scientific activities at the national and global levels.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Goal under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paying attention to <i>establishing a healthy relationship with the environment, i.e., respecting it as a divine sign and using its capacity reasonably and morally to improve the quality of human life.</i></li> <li>● Paying attention to <i>creating a spirit of commitment and responsibility towards God's creations, including human beings and nature in learners.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on the acquisition of moral competencies in the use of nature.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Principles under Biological and Physical education)</p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABC D <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

### *An overview*

The goal statement (Box A) relating to the sub-competency “how man is to have a relationship with phenomena ... of the world of creation” (Box C) is explicit. This relationship is pictured in the form of a “constructive” relationship that involves learning from nature and using it morally and feeling responsible towards it. Goal statement (i) consists of both a goal and its strategy, which creates conflict in the logical flow. Overall, all the goal statements are explicit. Boxes A and B give E directly in this case, as can sometimes happen according to Frankena, however, there still lacks data about *how* man is to “honor, harness, develop, and learn from nature,” (Box E) which makes the content of Box E impractical.

### **Competency Four**

Sub-part	
Box	Statement
A	Continuous effort to <i>promote the spiritual dimensions of oneself and others</i> through communication with God (worship and adherence to religious rules) and inviting others to religiosity and morality. (Source: goal under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education)
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man is an obligated being and is responsible to perform his duties first towards God and then towards himself and others. Man, given the freedom of choice to move in different directions of life, has a duty to strive for truth and perfection constantly and voluntarily. Therefore, he is responsible for the proper performance of his individual and social duties. Obligation to these duties and responsibilities to God, self, others, and creation (the natural environment and supernatural beings) is in proportion with the ability of the individual and is done for one’s own perfection while observing the</li> </ul>

	<p>general conditions of duty (intellect, maturity, power, and freedom). (1.2.19)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man with cognition, belief, desire, and individual and collective action, is effective in changing the situation, in the formation and evolution of individual and collective identity and in determining the future and destiny of himself and others. (1.6.1.9)</li> <li>● Man, as a rational, believing creature, with will, is the main source of action (i.e., voluntary action arising from knowledge, belief, will, and design) and by acquiring knowledge and carrying out individual or collective action (right or wrong), is effective in understanding and changing the situation of oneself and others through faith (or disbelief) and righteous (or unrighteous) will and action, and its repetition and change, in the continuous development of individual and collective identity of himself and others, as well as in the formation and continuous change of the natural and social environment. (1.6.1.9)</li> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (social justice), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society. (1.4.6)</li> <li>● Reflection on the sermons of Imam Ali (as) shows that the Islamic rule does not have the power to dominate all aspects of people's social life, rather an important part of the current affairs must be attended to by the people themselves. Perhaps the necessity of enjoining good and forbidding evil, which is an important principle in the social life Islamic societies, confirms this view. The broader meaning of enjoining good and forbidding evil goes back to a kind of public oversight of society. The scope of it reaches even those in power. That is, people have responsibilities in many matters of society and should participate. In the eighth principle of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the mutual participation of the people in the government in improving the affairs of society is emphasized. "In the Islamic Republic of Iran, calling for good, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil is a public and reciprocal duty of the people towards each other, the government towards the people and the people towards the government. Its conditions, limits, and quality are determined by law." Therefore, when the divine verses and narrations of the Infallibles (PBUT) are considered together, it becomes clear that serving the community to meet people's material and spiritual needs is worship and a duty.</li> </ul>
C	<p>Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.</p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the eighth principle of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the mutual participation of the people in the government in improving the affairs of society is emphasized. "In the Islamic Republic of Iran, calling for good, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil is a public and reciprocal duty of the people towards each other, the government towards the people and the people towards the government. Its conditions, limits, and quality are determined by law." Therefore, when the divine verses and narrations of the Infallibles (PBUT) are considered together, it becomes clear that serving the community to meet people's material and spiritual needs is worship and</li> </ul>

	a duty.
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous effort to promote the spiritual dimensions of oneself and others <i>through communication with God (worship and adherence to religious rules) and inviting others to religiosity and morality.</i></li> <li>• Moving from individual reform to social reform.</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

***An overview***

The goal statements (Box A) are explicit as they state the importance of promoting spiritual knowledge, and the improvement of oneself and others in general, both of which entail relationships, rights and duties of oneself and others, in social life. However, both have their method written alongside the goal which can cause confusion according to Franekna’s logical flow. The foundational statements (Box B) are filled with explaining the importance of performing one’s duties as well as social duties. Value concepts of charity, kindness, and such, which are all social values, are clearly stated. Furthermore, it is clearly stated that man should invite others to morality (as mentioned in Box A) by talking about enjoining good and forbidding evil. Therefore, they explicitly connect our goal statement (Box A) to the competency (Box C). The principle statements (Box E) propose worship and adherence to religious obligations as ways to promote the spiritual self individually and in others. Foundations that explain in detail that to improve oneself and others, by developing qualities such as “controlling natural instincts, ... strengthening will and self-control,” and so forth are absent, with only the concept of “enjoining good and forbidding evil” being clearly stated within the foundations. Ultimately, the coherence of this sub-competency can be evaluated as medium due to the weakness



in Box A and the absence of sufficient foundations in Boxes B and D. Its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

Sub-part	
Box	Statement
A	<p>i. Constantly striving for <i>improvement of the self and others</i> according to the Islamic standard system by controlling natural instincts, adjusting emotions and desires, strengthening will and self-control, maintaining dignity and self-esteem, acquiring moral qualities and virtues, preventing the development of immoral traits and vices, and enjoining good and forbidding evil.</p> <p>ii. Knowledge of the self and others to responsibly <i>respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities</i> through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system.</p> <p><i>(Source: Goals under Ideological, Devotional, and Moral education)</i></p> <p>iii. <i>Development of freedom and the existential status of oneself and others</i> in light of understanding and reforming one's social status and that of others (family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, colleagues, citizens, compatriots, etc.), <i>establishing a constructive and appropriate relationship with them</i> based on the Islamic standard system and <i>gaining collective traits such as kindness, compassion, fairness, benevolence, tolerance, harmony, empathy, and peace-seeking.</i></p> <p><i>(Source: Goal under Social and Political education)</i></p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The realization of the good life has individual and social dimensions and includes various aspects of human life. (1.6.2.5)</li> <li>● Man with cognition, belief, desire, and individual and collective action, is effective in changing the situation, in the formation and evolution of individual and collective identity and in determining the future and destiny of himself and others. (1.6.1.9)</li> <li>● Man, as a rational, believing creature, with will, is the main source of action (i.e., voluntary action arising from knowledge, belief, will, and design) and by acquiring knowledge and carrying out individual or collective action (right or wrong), is effective in understanding and changing the situation of oneself and others through faith (or disbelief) and righteous (or unrighteous) will and action, and its repetition and change, in the continuous development of individual and collective identity of himself and others, as well as in the formation and continuous change of the natural and social environment. (1.6.1.9)</li> <li>● Man is always in the "situation" and can understand and change it. Situation means a definite and dynamic state and relation, the perception of which is the result of the continuous interaction of the individual (as a conscious and empowered being) with God and existence (supernatural realities, nature, and society) in the presence of God. (1.2.14)</li> <li>● Man has the ability to know existence and to understand his position and that of others in existence. Just as the existence of facts outside the mind is obvious for every human, the possibility of knowing these facts (acquiring knowledge) is also an obvious matter that has no room for denial. The universe is recognizable to man. God has given this</li> </ul>

	<p>ability to man. Invitation to know the dimensions and levels. The Qur'anic reference to the teaching of man by God indicates the possibility that this knowledge of man is the basis of choice and dignity and as a result has provided the prostration of angels before Him. (1.3.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The relationship between the individual and society is the relationship of unity and plurality. Social status, in the Islamic perspective, never means giving originality to the collective; rather, it means considering unity in plurality and individuality within the community. Paying attention to one's situation helps explain the actions of human beings, as well as the effects of the social environment in the occurrence of behaviors and even in the emergence of moral characteristics. Instead of prescribing, we should ask people to identify and control the extent and type of these environmental effects based on their choice and will. Thus, the Islamic point-of-view on the one hand (in conflict with individualism) advises us to avoid the naive negation of the effects of social structures in the emergence of behavior and the formation of individual identity, and on the other hand (in conflict with social determinism) does not allow us to rely solely on social structures to change and improve. The general rule in the Islamic view is that we cannot ignore the effects of the environment on the actions of individuals. At the same time, we cannot overstate their role in explaining their actions and even in correcting them. (1.4.3)</li> </ul>
C	<p>Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.</p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understanding and changing the situation (of oneself and others), according to one's freedom, may be done properly, in which case one should speak of "understanding the situation of oneself and others and taking continuous action to improve it." This interaction requires, firstly, <i>self-knowledge</i>, secondly, <i>knowing God</i>, and thirdly, <i>discovering and establishing the relationship between the elements of the situation and God</i>. But at the same time, it is possible that man does not understand the real situation of himself and others or does not make the proper effort to change it. (1.2.14)</li> <li>● Man actively interacts with the environment (society) and its members. The Islamic perspective distances itself from environmentalism (as in contemporary social sciences) in terms of its emphasis on individual responsibility. In terms of situational attention, it is also fundamentally different from individualism and warns us to interact with the environment, but we are not allowed to give ourselves completely to the environment to change it. (1.4.2)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Knowledge of the self and others</i> to responsibly respond to the needs, limitations, and development of one's own and others' existential capacities <i>through understanding and correcting the position of oneself and others according to the standard Islamic system</i>.</li> <li>● Constantly striving for <i>improvement of the self and others</i> according to the Islamic standard system <i>by controlling natural instincts, adjusting emotions and desires, strengthening will and self-control, maintaining dignity and self-esteem, acquiring moral qualities and virtues, preventing the development of immoral traits and vices, and enjoining good and forbidding evil</i>.</li> <li>● Emphasis on cultivating the character of freedom in the identity of learners.</li> <li>● The development and excellence of all existential capacities of educators in order to continuously improve their position and that of others in all fields, especially economic and professional education, is undoubtedly one of the grounds for the realization of</li> </ul>

	<p>good life in individual and social dimensions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acquisition of appropriate competencies in learners in order to solve their individual and group problems in relation to family, community, and work environment.</li> <li>● Paying attention to the constructive relations between learners and society.</li> <li>● Emphasis on legality and respecting and observing the rule of law (acceptance of the country's constitution as a national covenant)</li> <li>● Providing the ground for learners to get out of self-centeredness, authoritarianism, and despotism.</li> <li>● Looking at family and social rights and responsibilities as two complementary elements.</li> <li>● Emphasis on tolerance towards opposing beliefs and subcultures at the national and global levels.</li> <li>● Emphasis on anti-oppression (fighting against oppression that is inflicted upon others) and non-oppression (not accepting oppression upon yourself)</li> <li>● Moving from individual reform to social reform.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Principles under Social and Political education)</i></p>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

***An overview***

The goal statements (Box A) are both explicit as they directly address the social aspect of education. Goal statement (i) mentions the importance of promoting knowledge of self and others to respond to needs and develop capacities, which are social aspects. However, “knowledge of the self and others” is an intermediate goal and a method that is needed to be able to attend to one’s and others’ existential capacities. Furthermore, the statement consists of a second strategy, “correcting one’s and others’ position,” which creates further conflict in the logical flow, since such a statement should not be mentioned alongside the goal. The second goal statement (ii) is made up of three goals placed in one statement which could be problematic because it can become confusing for the reader. Moreover, goal statements (i) and (ii) are similar when it comes to addressing one’s and others’

existential status, making the concept redundant. The foundational statements (Box B) are replete with clarifying that a good life involves social dimensions, like the development of collective identity and the ability to change one’s situation as well as others’. One weakness that exists is that the third goal in goal statement (ii) is not foundationally present; the foundational statements mainly focus on social concepts in general and do not lay out the collective traits expected to be cultivated within learners (kindness, tolerance, harmony, etc.), making it implicitly supported.

Overall, the contents of Box B are mostly explicit and satiated. The principle statements (Box E) straightforwardly mention the need of knowledge for responding to needs, developing capacities, as well as the importance of solving individual and group problems; additionally, they emphasize learners’ constructive relationship with society and how social reform is a wanted principle, making Box E, overall, explicit. The foundational statements (Box D) are mostly generic compared to the contents of Box E that are more specific. Box E specifically mentions concepts such as tolerance, respecting the rule of law and so forth, unlike the foundations that speak of the social dimension of education more generally. However, they are explicit in explaining man’s capacity to alter his and others’ situation for the better, making Box D partially implicit. Interestingly, the foundational statements in Box D mention additional strategies that are not found in the contents of Box E, namely *“knowing God,”* and *“discovering and establishing the relationship between the elements of the situation and God.”* Overall, the coherence of this sub-competency is evaluated as high and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

Sub-part	
Box	Statement

A	<p>i. The field of social and political education is part of the formal and public education process to acquire competencies that enable learners to be active and knowledgeable citizens and to participate in political and social activities. The parameters of socio-political education includes the following: <i>proper communication with others</i> (family members, relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues, etc.), <i>proper interaction with the government and other civil and political institutions</i> (observance of law, responsibility, participation) social and political, protection of social values), <i>acquisition of social knowledge and ethics and communication skills</i> (tolerance, harmony and empathy, social understanding, peace seeking, political understanding, social justice, intercultural understanding and interaction, maintaining unity and understanding the capabilities of the national language (Persian) as well as global languages (Arabic, English, etc.)).</p> <p>ii. <i>Proper understanding of one's and society's social and political position and wise confrontation with social and political developments</i> based on the Islamic standard system in order to build a bright future and influence the future of oneself and society at the national and global levels.</p> <p>iii. <i>Appropriate interaction with the government and other civil and political institutions and the acquisition of competencies such as law enforcement, accountability, social and political participation, and protection of social values</i> to form a competent society and its continuous development according to the Islamic standard system.</p> <p>iv. <i>Effective collective participation in social and political life</i> by observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</p> <p>(Source: Goals under Social and Political education)</p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education is one of the basic functions of the Islamic government and what is considered to be the goals of the government (such as the implementation of divine commandments, welfare, and justice) is in fact the means for the realization of good life and the desired process of education in society. Laying the groundwork for the education of the people is both the purpose of the Islamic State and the guarantor of its survival. The participation in the sphere of social and political life by members of the society is considered as guiding the people. Educational institutions are the basis for the active participation of the public in social and political life. (1.1.2)</li> <li>● Council is one of the basic principles of politics and leadership in Islamic government and management. The Holy Qur'an, in verses one of Surah Al-Imran and four of Surah Shura, has instructed the Prophet and the Muslims to carry out Shura (meaning collective council). There is a lot of emphasis on it in narrations (for example, see the translation of Al-Hayat, Volume I, Chapter Forty-two from the first chapter). These recommendations indicate the vital role of this principle in improving the affairs of society in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres. Opinion polls, councils, and participation of individuals in social life (collective wisdom) are among the basic teachings of the religion of Islam, and this is more necessary and vital for the leaders and managers of society. (Pt; 1.1.2)</li> <li>● All human beings are created equal and have equal rights and duties. All human beings are descended from the same origin. No human being is superior to another in terms of</li> </ul>

	<p>the principle of creation. Therefore, the natural differences (racial, ethnic, sexual, hereditary, etc.) are based on divine wisdom and to identify humans, which, cannot be a criterion of superiority. The equality of human beings (in society and before the law) means that all human beings have fair rights and duties (based on their abilities and the amount of effort they put forth). (1.2.8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Society has laws and traditions independent of its components as it involves a kind of life independent of individual life. At the same time, the components of society (human beings) are independent, because individual life and individual acquisitions of one's nature are not solved within the collective life. Man lives with two lives and two souls (selves): the individual who is born of nature and his personal will and action, and the other life and collective soul that is born of social life and as a collective identity of each person, where one's actions emerge based on one's collective choice. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a real relationship between the individual and society. (1.4.1)</li> <li>● Communication with family is one of the most basic components of communication that plays an undeniable role in shaping the foundations of human identity. Family life, preparation for it, and the formation and continuation of this form of social life is a major component of social education. In formal and public education, aside from the emphasis on basic competencies, factors that lead to the strengthening of the family institution and gender roles such as maternal role, are also given serious attention.</li> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society. (1.4.6)</li> <li>● Man actively interacts with the environment (society) and its members. The Islamic perspective distances itself from environmentalism (unlike contemporary social sciences) in terms of its emphasis on individual responsibility. In terms of situational attention, it is also fundamentally different from individualism and warns us that we have to interact with the environment, but we are not allowed to give ourselves completely to the environment to change it. (1.4.2)</li> </ul>
C	Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Islamic teachings, justice is the most fundamental moral and social value in the path of nearness to God. Carrying out just actions is connected to the happiness of man and society. The standard of justice is the observance of the rights of individuals. But the rights of different people can be the same or equal, or different and unequal. In cases where the rights of individuals are the same, then justice means the establishment of equality between individuals. Equality does not only mean the same level of enjoyment of individuals. In the case of inequality and injustice between individuals (who are under the same conditions), the realization of justice and equality of social opportunities requires access to different benefits. Therefore, if the rights and duties of individuals (due to differences in the amount of action and the type of individual characteristics) are unequal and different, then the realization of justice is associated with inequality. But this kind of inequality never means oppression, but can be combined with justice; that</li> </ul>

	<p>is, everyone should enjoy the reward or receive appropriate punishment according to the result of their efforts. (1.4.12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society. (1.4.6)</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effective collective participation in social and political life by <i>observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, promoting religious democracy, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</i></li> </ul> <p>(Source: Goal under Social and Political education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social and political education is “virtue-oriented.” Such an approach indicates the importance of paying attention to value and ethical issues and including them in this type of education. Ethics is a code that obliges man, in terms of being human, to abide by it. Religion, which is the all-encompassing sphere of social and political structures and the source of norm in social and political education, should be considered, and it plays an irreplaceable role in promoting social relations at the family and social level; this is because the correction of the relationship with God, which corrects the relationship with oneself, others and nature, is a key element in social and political education.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Approach under Social and Political education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing ground for learners to get out of self-centeredness, authoritarianism, and despotism.</li> <li>● Looking at family and social rights and responsibilities as two complementary elements.</li> <li>● Emphasis on legality and respecting and observing the rule of law (acceptance of the country's constitution as a national covenant).</li> <li>● Emphasis on a common identity (human, Islamic, Iranian) for national unity and social cohesion.</li> <li>● Emphasis on (Iran’s) global mission and human responsibility (towards one another) and the spread of justice in the world.</li> <li>● Emphasis on tolerance towards opposing beliefs and subcultures at the national and global levels.</li> <li>● Emphasis on anti-oppression (fighting against oppression that is inflicted upon others) and non-oppression (not accepting oppression upon yourself)</li> <li>● Acquisition of appropriate competencies in learners in order to solve their individual and group problems in relation to family, community, and work environment.</li> <li>● Rejecting the distinction between religion and politics, rights and responsibilities, authority and duty, and worship and work.</li> <li>● Moving from individual reform to social reform.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Principles under Social and Political education)</p>

Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

***An overview***

The goal statements (Box A) are all under a similar category of learners’ role in social and political life which entails their interaction with others, with governmental institutions, and so forth, making them explicit to the competency statement. Statements (ii) and (iii) consist of more than one goal, which can cause confusion. Statement (iv) has a goal and strategy in one statement creating a confusing combination of statements in what is expected of the content of Box A in the logical flow of Franekena’s model. Another issue is that statements (iii) and (iv) are very similar to each other displaying some redundancy in the concepts that the Social and Political field of education is trying to convey. Within the goal statements, there is a clear connection made between the social and political education learners are to receive, which hasn’t been very clearly highlighted within the foundations (Box B). The characteristics of what a righteous society would look like are more pronounced within the goal statements than the foundations. Concepts that haven’t been addressed include what man’s “social and political confrontation” would look like and how he has a global responsibility socially and politically speaking. On the other hand, concepts such as communication with family, law observance, social justice are all axiologically mentioned within the foundations, making the contents of this box (B) partially strong. The principle statements (Box E) explicitly mention observing duties and the rules of law and acquiring knowledge for the promotion of social life. Foundational statements (Box D) supporting these



principles are lacking, only meeting some concepts. In a way, the goal and principle statements are more in line with each other than they are with the foundations.

Overall, the coherence in this sub-part can be evaluated as medium, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
A	i. Continuous efforts to <i>maintain and promote the physical and mental health of oneself and others</i> based on the Islamic standard system;  ii. Individual and collective efforts to maintain and promote the health and safety of society at the local, national, and global levels based on the Islamic standard system  <i>(Source: goals under Biological and Physical education)</i>
B	
C	Knowledge of relationships, roles, rights, and duties of oneself and individuals and their importance in social life.
D	
E	
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
AC	Very Low

***An overview***

The goal statement (Box A) touches upon the importance of maintaining health of the self and others, showing a different social responsibility. The foundational statements (Box B) are absent. The foundational statements that are present state in general how the individual holds a form of responsibility towards the other, however, there is no mention as to how this responsibility also involves the others' health. Principles (Box E) and foundational statements that would

support these principles are absent. Overall, the coherence of this sub-competency is low and its logical structure as AC.

### Competency Five

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
A	<p><i>Recognition of Islamic culture and civilization, with regard to the present and future needs of society and efforts to achieve a single Islamic nation based on the standard Islamic system.</i></p> <p><i>(Source: Goal under Social and Political education)</i></p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The religion of Islam promises a bright future for human beings - the society of world justice - which requires the efforts of a righteous religious society to establish a new Islamic civilization based on the standard Islamic system. Continuing the mission of the prophets, Islam has presented a transcendent plan for human life and for building a future. This plan has not been fully realized in the past of Islam, nor does it conform to modern material patterns. Rather, it will emerge with the efforts of Muslims, and its full realization must be expected in the promised future (a world ideal society based on Mahdavi justice). The Qur'an promises that the righteous will be the caliphates of the earth, and Islamic texts paint a picture of the world community, in which prosperity, justice, freedom, tranquility, and other manifestations of material and spiritual happiness can be achieved. According to the Qur'an, a righteous Islamic society envisions such a future and considers itself responsible to change its destiny towards the realization of such a world. (1.5.9)</li> <li>● Knowledge and the Knower (person receiving knowledge) have a fundamental role in Islamic society and culture; science is at the top of virtues, the root of all goodness, the beacon of reason and the value of humans; thus, seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty for all. (1.4.14)</li> <li>● Based on the presuppositions and theological principles described in the Principles of Philosophy of Education section in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to face modernity and its manifestations and effects, the civilization-building approach is preferable to approaches such as modernism and traditionalism. In this approach, in addition to spirituality, reason is emphasized. Religion is not only in the realm of individual life but is considered a comprehensive life program that has fundamental presence in various political and social arenas. The use of human knowledge and its development within the framework of religious principles is of value. Muslims should take a step towards the establishment of a new Islamic civilization based on the interpretation of the book and tradition and methodical and dynamic ijtehad in Islamic society. (1.1.6)</li> </ul>
C	<p><i>Knowledge about the past and present of human societies, especially the culture and civilization of Islam and Iran.</i></p>

D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Iran’s formal and public education model has general and common features that are in common with other models (such as being mandatory, systematic, universal, school-oriented, etc.) and these characteristics are compatible with the foundations of the philosophy of formal and public education. At the same time, the "justice-oriented" aspect of this model has distinctive features that make it different from common models. Some features such as the emphasis on "national unity and social cohesion while accepting pluralism and diversity" and the appropriateness of culture "and" compliance with the religious standard system," highlight the distinguishing features of this model. However, there are more specific aspects of this new model (in this reform endeavor) that focuses more on the Islamic-Iranian identity and opts to respond to the requirements of today's Iranian society, which makes it different from the current models of formal and public education. On one hand, this new model refers to the key role and guidance of the Islamic standard system in all its dimensions and the components of formal and public education, and on the other hand, it focuses on the historical feature of this model.</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paying attention to the valuable heritage of Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization in order to create a common Iranian and Islamic identity.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: principle under Social and Political education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● "Attention to Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization.” The process of education as a social practice, inevitably takes place in the context of society's culture and with its support, and therefore the transfer of culture and its promotion is one of the main functions of education. Therefore, proper use of valuable resources of Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization in all stages and types of education, as well as paving the way for active interaction of indigenous culture with other cultures, will be one of the most important mechanisms for developing and transcending the national identity of learners. " (Principle # 17)</li> <li>● The desired model of formal and public education should also have clear signs of dependence on the Islamic-Iranian civilization. The desired model of formal and public education should be appropriate to the cultural, social, political, historical, and even economic requirements of Iran. This feature also provides a favorable model for today's Iranian society. Therefore, the emphasis on Persian culture, language and literature and the emphasis on Iranian national identity should also be considered as distinguishing features of formal and public education.</li> <li>● Futurism. Education, while paying attention to the past of the individual and society and their current conditions, is basically facing the future and is a collective plan to build and deal with the future of human society; Therefore, learners at all levels of policy-making, planning and action not only need to achieve a relatively accurate and realistic forecast of the future of society and the challenges ahead by conducting futures studies, but also by adopting an approach that is active and forward-looking (explains the desired future) in relation to future cultural, political and social developments, appropriate educational strategies to meet the educational system and learners with the challenges ahead and use the strengths and opportunities and transform threats and weaknesses "Design and implement opportunities and strengths." (Principle # 18)</li> </ul>

(Source: Principles under Key Principles of education, TF)	
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	High

***An overview***

The goal statement (Box A) is explicit, but it lacks addressing a part of the competency; it only mentions knowing the past and present of the Islamic civilization and culture when the competency refers to societies in general in addition to the Islamic civilization. It also gives an additional goal, i.e., achieving an Islamic civilization. The foundational statements are partially implicit. These statements explain well the role man plays in building civilization, more specifically an Islamic civilization, and what such a society looks like, implying the importance of having knowledge of such a civilization (to be able to build it). The principles (Box E) are very explicitly connected to the competency highlighting the importance of having an education model oriented around the Islamic-Iranian culture and the importance of futurism, i.e., knowing the past and present circumstances of societies to understand their future. Foundational statements (Box D) supporting this are mainly what has been already addressed in Box B. In other words, Boxes A and B together draw the rationale for Box E. This means that Box D is also partially implicit. Overall, the coherence of this competency is high, and its logical structure is ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>, due to the absence of practical strategies.

**Competency Six**

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement

A	<p>i. Effective collective participation in social and political life by observing the principles of seeking rights, maintaining dignity and honor, being against oppression, seeking justice, gaining and maintaining all-round independence, respect for the rights and legitimate freedoms of others, <i>promoting religious democracy</i>, promoting social justice, maintaining unity and national understanding (تفاهم), intercultural interaction and international understanding (تفاهم) based on the Islamic standard system.</p> <p>(Source: <i>Goal under Social and Political education</i>)</p> <p>ii. Expanding the constructive participation and role of the general public in the expected social and political developments in the socio-political system <i>based on religious democracy</i>.</p> <p>(Source: <i>Goal under 'common goals of Formal and Public education'</i>)</p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The religion of Islam promises a bright future for human beings - the society of world justice - which requires the efforts of a righteous religious society to establish a new Islamic civilization based on the standard Islamic system. Continuing the mission of the prophets, Islam has presented a transcendent plan for human life and for building a future. This plan has not been fully realized in the past of Islam, nor does it conform to modern material patterns. Rather, it will emerge with the efforts of Muslims, and its full realization must be expected in the promised future (a world ideal society based on Mahdavi justice). The Qur'an promises that the righteous will be the caliphates of the earth, and Islamic texts paint a picture of the world community, in which prosperity, justice, freedom, tranquility, and other manifestations of human material and spiritual happiness can be achieved. According to the Qur'an, a righteous Islamic society envisions such a future and considers itself responsible to change its destiny towards the realization of such a world. (1.5.9)</li> <li>● In Islamic teachings, justice is the most fundamental moral and social value in the path of nearness to God. Carrying out just actions is connected to the happiness of man and society. The standard of justice is the observance of the rights of individuals. But the rights of different people can be the same or equal, or different and unequal. In cases where the rights of individuals are the same, then justice means the establishment of equality between individuals. Equality does not only mean the same level of enjoyment of individuals. In the case of inequality and injustice between individuals (who are under the same conditions), the realization of justice and equality of social opportunities requires access to different benefits. Therefore, if the rights and duties of individuals (due to differences in the amount of action and the type of individual characteristics) are unequal and different, then the realization of justice is associated with inequality. But this kind of inequality never means oppression, but can be combined with justice; that is, everyone should enjoy the reward or receive appropriate punishment according to the result of their efforts. (1.4.12)</li> <li>● The social dimension of good life is related to various value concepts, such as, charity, payment of installments (<i>social justice</i>), respect for people's rights, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, alliance with God's allies and enmity with God's enemies, council/collective intellect, social unity, victory, peace, obedience to social laws (discipline), self-sacrifice, all of which can be considered as the characteristics of a desirable Islamic society, i.e., a righteous society. (1.4.6)</li> <li>● Proper education of the public in terms of the principle of religious democracy in the</li> </ul>

	<p>Islamic government is one of the goals of forming a government and considering the reliance of this type of government on the election of the people is the main strategy to maintain the desired political system. (Pt 2; 1.1.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education is one of the basic functions of the Islamic government and what is considered to be the goals of the government (such as the implementation of divine commandments, welfare, and justice) is in fact the means for the realization of the good life and the desired process of education in society. Laying the groundwork for the education of people is both the purpose of the Islamic State and the guarantor of its survival. Participation in the sphere of social and political life by members of the society is perceived as a form of guidance that is coming from the people. Educational institutions are the basis for the active participation of the public in social and political life. (Pt 2; 1.1.2)</li> <li>● Council is one of the basic principles of politics and leadership in Islamic government and management. The Holy Qur'an, in verses one of Surah Al-Imran and four of Surah Shura, has instructed the Prophet and the Muslims to the Shura. There is a lot of emphasis on it in narrations (for example, see the translation of Al-Hayat, Volume I, Chapter Forty-two from the first chapter). These recommendations indicate the vital role of this principle in improving the affairs of society in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres. Opinion polls, councils, and participation of individuals in social life (collective wisdom) are among the basic teachings of the religion of Islam, and this is more necessary and vital for the leaders and managers of society. (Pt; 1.1.2)</li> </ul>
C	Familiarity with the characteristics of a religious democracy and the global status and mission of Islamic Iran.
D	Box B and D can be the same in this case.
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasis on (Iran's) global mission and human responsibility (towards one another) and the spread of justice in the world.</li> <li>● Emphasis on a common identity (human, Islamic, Iranian) for national unity and social cohesion.</li> <li>● Emphasis on anti-oppression (fighting against oppression that is inflicted upon others) and non-oppression (not accepting oppression upon yourself).</li> <li>● Rejecting the distinction between religion and politics, rights and responsibilities, authority and duty, worship, and work.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Principles under Social and Political education)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relying on Iranian Islamic culture and civilization and being appropriate for today's Iranian society. According to this feature, the desired model of public education should have clear signs of dependence on Islamic-Iranian civilization. The desired model of public education should be appropriate to the social, political, historical, and even economic requirements of Iran. Therefore, the emphasis on Persian culture, language, literature, and on national identity should also be considered as distinguishing features of public education.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Source: Specific features of Formal and Public education)</i></p>

Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Medium

***An overview***

The goal statements (Box A) imply the need for being familiar with the concept of a religious democracy to be able to “promote” it and involve the public in the affairs of the country. It does not directly state that learners need to be familiar with it. Foundational statements (Box B) are replete with describing the kind of society Iran aims for, “a society of world justice,” also known as a Mahdavi state, and it emphasizes the importance of having a religious democracy and concepts like collective council as is encouraged within the Qur’an and the Islamic culture reflecting the importance of involving the public in the affairs of society and the country at large. The contents of Box B are thus very satiated and explicit. There are no practical strategies; instead, there are principles stated. Some of the principles are directly related to the competency reflecting the importance of learners knowing the “global mission” of Iran, and the importance of achieving global justice. While others are absent, i.e., there is no mention of religious democracy, i.e., it is implied in the inseparability of religion from politics. The foundations that would support these principles (Box D) in this case are the same as the contents of Box B. Overall, the coherence can be evaluated as medium, and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

**Competency Seven**

Sub-part One	
Box	Statement
A	<i>i. Decrypting and encrypting overt and covert phenomena of nature/existence and</i>

	<p><i>expressing it in artistic language.</i></p> <p>ii. Understanding the beauties of the world of creation as manifestations of divine beauty and perfection and <i>fostering one's aesthetic taste</i></p> <p>iii. Utilizing the power of one's imagination in <i>creating works of art with the aim of preserving and promoting artistic heritage at the national and global levels.</i></p> <p>iv. Understanding, discovering, and interpreting phenomena and events to <i>decrypt and encrypt them as divine creatures and signs.</i></p> <p><i>(Source: Goal under Aesthetic and Artistic education)</i></p>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. The Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural events and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who can perceive and notice these signs people who have a heart and mind. (1.3.7)</li> <li>● Aesthetic and artistic dignity refers to the activity of the imagination and the enjoyment of emotions, feelings, and aesthetic tastes (ability to understand and appreciate subjects and actions with material or spiritual beauty) and the ability to create works of art and appreciate works of art and values. (1.4.6)</li> <li>● Beauty and art are manifestations of the transcendence of human life. God has created the love for beauty within human beings, so that an important part of human life is to pay attention to the beautiful things inside and out. In Islamic aesthetics and art, the principle of exaltation of aesthetic emotions is discussed so that the real beauties of life are not hidden behind outward beauties. Thus, art is the manifestation of human creativity, the knowledge of which has a profound effect on the evolutionary movement of man towards God. (1.4.15)</li> <li>● Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered (1.4.16).</li> <li>● All beings are signs of the truth of existence, i.e. Almighty God. (1.1.3).</li> <li>● The world of creation has an integrated system, all of which are signs and symbols of God's infinite knowledge, power, wisdom, and love The world of creation is a real, objective and permanent sign of God (1.1.9).</li> </ul>
C	<p><i>Familiarity with methods of decoding phenomena and their encoding, and expressing it in the language of aesthetics and art.</i></p>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Qur'an invites man to know and understand nature (1.1.9).</li> <li>● Nature and its phenomena are signs and symbols of God's authority, wisdom, grace and mercy, and according to the Qur'an, they are divine signs, and their knowing and understanding, in addition to their conquest (usage), must be considered (1.4.16).</li> <li>● Reason (in its comprehensive sense) includes deciphering the essence of reality and encoding reality (expressing it in new forms). Decipherment of the symbolic world and the internal (within man) and external signs, which are all manifestations of reality, is possible in the continuous process of reasoning. In various verses, the Qur'an refers to the decipherment of natural and social events as a possibility for reason and states that those who notice these signs are those who have a heart and a</li> </ul>



	<p>mind. (1.3.7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The senses are the most pervasive tool of knowledge. The exoteric senses provide man with a broad knowledge of the natural world. The esoteric senses help in understanding meaning, and mental forms and creating new forms and artistic and poetic creations. (1.3.6)</li> <li>• Acquired knowledge includes three levels, the sensory, imaginary, and intellectual.</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of art is an encoding and decoding process while understanding and receiving art is decoding. Adopting the approach of receiving meaning includes two processes of creating and discovering meaning. The creation of art is a kind of encoding or decoding and understanding and receiving art is a kind of decoding. The creation of meaning or coding is specific to the artist and the discovery of meaning or decoding is reserved for ordinary people. The purpose of art education is not to cultivate a professional artist, but to cultivate an aesthetic perception in all learners. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning, and these should be the basis of policy-making and planning.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: <i>Approach under Artistic and Aesthetic education, TF</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> <li>• Paying attention to the perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning</li> <li>• Emphasis on cultivating the senses.</li> <li>• Providing suitable grounds for cultivating imagination.</li> <li>• Providing opportunities for educators to gain competence in encryption and decryption.</li> <li>• Providing the background and conditions for creating and creativity for educators.</li> <li>• <i>Utilizing the power of one's imagination in creating works of art</i> with the aim of preserving and promoting artistic heritage at the national and global levels.</li> <li>• Through appreciation and aesthetic understanding of divine creation and human artistic artifacts, understanding of cultural and intercultural concepts and using the power of imagination, (learners) acquire the necessary capabilities to create cultural and artistic works and ... to preserve and promote cultural, civilizational, and artistic heritage at the national and global levels. (Source: FRDE)</li> </ul>
Logical structure	Degree of Coherence
ABCD <sup>1</sup> E <sup>1</sup>	Very High

### ***An overview***

Goal statement (i) is the perfectly corresponding goal statement of this competency. There are other goals (ii, iii, and iv) that do not relate directly to other competencies and can only be related to this competency. Foundational statements in Box B talk about the decipherment of phenomena but they do not link it to

expressing it in artistic language, making it partially explicit. The statement “creation of art is an encoding and decoding process...” (Box E) is the fitting descriptive foundational statement that links the goal statement (i) to this competency, when it comes to linking the creation of art to the decipherment of phenomena, meeting the concept of “expressing phenomena in the language of aesthetics and art” (Box C); however, such a statement is only clearly mentioned under the approach of aesthetic and artistic education and is absent within the foundations. Thus, as a principle, it makes the content of Box E very directly explicit and thus strengthens the logical flow on its end. Foundational statements in Box D imply how one may decrypt and encrypt phenomena through the senses however, it is not clearly linked to the use of this decipherment in the arts. The method reflects the how of the competency better than the foundational statements stating that a “perceptual approach of receiving emotion and meaning” must be followed. Within goal statement (iii), imagination is mentioned as a clear tool for creating art. Other principles (in Box E), although are not explicitly expressed as relating to this competency, support what the paragraph on “perceptual approach” is conveying, as well as the idea of using the imagination to create art; in other words, they are implicitly stated. A statement within the FRDE, expresses additional means that would lead to artistic creation, expressing that “through appreciation and aesthetic understanding of divine creation and human artistic artifacts, understanding of cultural and intercultural concepts and using the power of imagination, (learners) acquire the necessary capabilities to create cultural and artistic works.” Overall, the coherence can be evaluated as high and its logical structure as ABCD<sup>1</sup>E<sup>1</sup>.

It is important to mention that, as has been the case with all the competencies before this seventh competency, the contents of Box E are principles and not practical strategies as would be expected to be found based on Franekena's model. Thus, since there is data relating to this competency, but it is not practical enough to be given the label E, a superscript is placed on the letter E, that is  $E^1$  and its corresponding foundations D, i.e.,  $D^1$ , in order to reflect this important point. Consequently, it can be said that the logical structure may be closer to an ABC pattern rather than an ABCDE.

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