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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CURRICULUM  
OF THE ACADEMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IRAN IN THE LIGHT OF  
MODERN PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION AND THE NEEDS OF IRANIAN SOCIETY

By

HASSAN BESHARAT REZAI

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SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

I R A N

B E S H A R A T

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the main deficiencies of the present curriculum of the secondary academic schools in the light of modern principles of education and the needs of Iranian society in order to give some proposals concerning the construction of a more useful curriculum and introduction of a system of secondary education which might be more suitable to cope with the needs of rapidly increasing secondary school population and those of society. To do so an attempt is made:

1) To present the existing system of secondary education in Iran and the procedure of the curriculum construction.

2) To show the major features of Iranian society and fundamental economic and social changes such as industrial development, the building of several dams, the implementation of land reform, the infiltration of progressive thoughts which have had great influence in the life of people and the creation of new needs and aspirations.

3) To analyse the main shortcomings of the present curriculum in neglecting individual differences, in ignoring disparities between communities, in being theoretical rather than related to the life situations of the learner. This analysis will also represent the absence of harmony between the needs of the society and the outcome of the secondary education such as lack of balance between the needs for skilled individuals in various occupations and the number of students in vocational schools.

4) To give suggestions concerning the improvement of fore-mentioned deficiencies considering existing possibilities which limit a rapid shift towards introducing a modern curriculum. The development of terminal schools, the establishment of comprehensive schools in large cities and the limitation of entrance to the secondary academic schools are proposed. It is also suggested that the determination of educational aims and their translation into concrete activities should be as scientific as possible; in addition to central educational authorities other people such as local leadership groups, classroom teachers, parents and even students should be involved in different processes of curriculum construction. It is suggested that the curriculum should consist of two parts: (a) Required courses of study which are assumed to secure general aims, and (b) elective courses which provide opportunities for individual differences and for meeting local needs.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The secret of the progress of nations is hidden in their struggles towards the establishment of a sound system of education. A glimpse into educational history of advanced countries will reveal that prosperity and education go hand in hand. To provide the future generation with the knowledge that will enable them to live happily and to contribute actively to the improvement of the society a continuous examination of the curricula and their effectiveness in the realization of the sought goals seem essential. At present the progress of a nation is based, to a great extent, upon the productivity of the competent individuals of that nation. Education should develop resources of manpower by providing appropriate education for every individual to help him develop to his fullest. Just as a sound system of education accelerates the progress of the society, an inflexible, unexamined and inappropriate educational system hinders development and may cause serious problems.

#### The Problem

The present curriculum of secondary academic schools, where the great majority of secondary school students are continuing their studies, is a prescribed subject-centered curriculum. It is less able to cope with changing needs of students and society. Being uniform, it tends to neglect individual differences and to ignore considerable disparities which exist between communities. Secondary academic schools are intended to prepare

students for university studies, but as many of them do not fit for academic education, they face failure or frustration either in the academic life or professional ambitions. Despite their rapid expansion, the existing universities can not provide places for the everincreasing number of secondary school graduates. Many of those who fail to enter universities, seek employment, but they can not be absorbed, any more, in government offices. Being unable to do a job skilfully, they face failure in finding an occupation in a government-sponsored, or private, organizations which need technicians, foremen, or other individuals who have acquired a salable skill. The graduates from wealthy families go abroad for their higher education, but many of them become alienated and do not return to the country. All these difficulties have created many economic, emotional, social, and political problems for both families and the government.

#### The Importance of the Problem

Being dissatisfied with the present curriculum, people of all walks of life, have frequently criticized it. They complain, primarily, about the outcome of the present curriculum and the absence of harmony between qualifications of secondary academic school graduates and the existing employment opportunities in the country. For example we find the following statement by the Minister of Education speaking to gathering of high school principals and heads of educational departments. The Minister severely criticized the present curriculum and said, "This curriculum can not safeguard the happiness and welfare of the future generation. In spite of the efforts to expand university places, a large majority

of high school graduates who apply neither find places nor can they find other suitable employment. Those who do not enter universities remain idle and constitute an explosive social and political group."<sup>1</sup> Owing to the importance of the problem and the great interest of the readers 'Ettela'at Havaii', a daily Persian newspaper for those living abroad, has devoted some part of the newspaper for the discussion of the problem of secondary academic school graduates. Golamreza Ghodrati, a contributor graduate of academic school, complaining about his acquired knowledge of being useless to him writes "We should be called wandering generation. We have studied for twelve years, but we have been taught nothing except some complicated and meaningless formulas ... We are unable, therefore, to find employment to earn our living. We have no alternative, but demanding the government to provide us with white collar jobs."<sup>2</sup> There seems to be an urgent need to solve these problems in order to prevent their grave social, economic, and emotional consequences. The purpose of this thesis is, therefore, to study and analyze the present curriculum and give suggestions for its improvement in the light of modern principles of education and the needs of Iranian society, considering the existing conditions and limitations in the country.

In this thesis an attempt is made to find answers to some fundamental questions as the followings:

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<sup>1</sup>Ettela'at, Air Edition, No. 3404, November 5, 1961, quoted in Comparative Education Review. (Unesco: Vol. 6, No. 2, October 1962), p. 90.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 4272, February 12, 1964, p. 2.

Does the present curriculum meet the new social needs ?

What are the main deficiencies of the present curriculum ?

What percentage of students who enter general secondary schools complete the academic school course ?

What percentage of students go to vocational schools ?

Is there a balance between the needs of the society for skilled individuals in different occupations and the population of vocational schools ?

What percentage of secondary academic schools graduates succeed to enter universities ?

What happens to the remaining graduates? Do they find employments ?

What factors should be considered in making a curriculum ?

What should be the principal aims of secondary education in Iran ?

What types of schools should be established or developed at present ?

What kind of curriculum should be designed for secondary schools ?

Who should go to academic schools ?

Who should make the curriculum ?

### Method of the Study

The processes followed in this study are:

1) The present system of secondary education in Iran, the aims and contents of the curriculum of various types of secondary schools in Iran, the system of examination and the procedure through which the curriculum is designed by central authorities.

2) The present social situation which will cover the study of the social structure, presentation of differences between various communities,

the new needs of the society and students, economic development and social changes which have had influence in the life of the people in Iran.

3) A critical analysis of the present curriculum - its aims, contents, and the method of its construction - in the light of foregoing studies about the society and modern principles of education. Some major neglected needs of the society will be presented in detail.

4) In the light of above mentioned studies some proposals concerning the type of the curriculum, the establishment of terminal schools, the limitation of the students of the secondary academic schools and the method of curriculum construction have been suggested.

#### Sources of the Study

In writing this paper the following sources of data have been utilized and consulted:

- 1) Records published by different ministries in Iran.
- 2) Educational authorities, directors of schools, teachers, and students - through interviews.
- 3) Newspapers, magazines, almanacs, bulletins of information and similar publications.
- 4) Registrar's records in the university of Tabriz.
- 5) Books written about Iran by some Iranians and foreigners.
- 6) Books about modern principles and techniques of curriculum construction and revision.
- 7) References on educational system in England, France, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.

### Limitation of the Study

This study will be concerned only with the curriculum of the secondary academic schools though it may touch, for reasons of appropriateness and clarification, some other types of secondary schools. It will deal with such fundamental issues as put in the form of questions in introduction so that sound suggestions may be made for the improvement of the present curriculum. The study will not attempt to give detailed proposals concerning other measures such as training teachers, decentralization in the administrative system, the establishment of a guidance system, and activities for the people's involvement which are essential in the construction and implementation of a flexible and functional curriculum.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN IRAN

#### A Brief Historical View on Education in Iran

Iran's history of education goes back to a very remote period. In the times before the Arab invasion military education and character training were considered to be essential for the upper classes and military men. After the adoption of Moslem religion, education was based upon the Qoran, just as in Europe it was based upon the Bible. For many years children attended the "Maktab" which was a private religious school, usually with one large single room, where they were taught the Qoran, Persian, and a little mathematics. There were also some religious colleges where advanced students discussed and studied the interpretation of some verses in the Qoran, religious laws, and theology. The children of the elite were taught, by tutors, Logic, Persian literature, Arabic, theology and sometimes astronomy and mathematics.

The great scholars in Iran often had to travel to different cities to acquire advanced knowledge from the prominent educators of the time who lived there.

Fairly close contact with some European countries was established in the early seventeenth century. But the development of educational organizations, in the form of modern schools, was started at the beginning of the twentieth century along with revolutionary movements for the establishment of constitutional government. The establishment of the

Tehran Polytechnic, called Dar-el-Fnoon, in 1852, by the Grand Vizir Amir Kabir, marked the beginning of a change in the content of secondary and higher education, under the pressure of national needs, and increasingly closer contact with the West. Most of the professors who taught in this Polytechnic were Austrians and French, and the teaching language was also French.

The first Ministry of Education was founded in 1855, but the essential form of the present educational system dates from the organization of educational Council in 1897. When the decision was taken to use the French system as a model.<sup>1</sup> (Italics mine).

The revolution of 1906, which gave Iran a Constitution and central government, led to further reorganization of education.

A few years later parliament passed the first laws drafted by the Ministry of Education, establishing the new educational system with its three levels, primary, secondary and higher. Primary education was intended for children from seven to eleven years of age in rural areas and from seven to thirteen in the towns. After passing through the six grades of Primary Schools, students could enter a secondary school, but secondary education was free only for the children of needy families. At that time, however, there were few secondary schools, and it was not until after the First World War and the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty that secondary education began to expand. In fact its development became one of the principal concerns of the Iranian Government, which needed qualified officials for its civil service.

With the establishment of the Tehran Secondary Teacher Training

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<sup>1</sup>Donald N. Wilber, Iran Past and Present (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1958), p. 203.



College, the promulgation of the first law for study abroad in 1928, according to which the Iranian Government selected about one hundred students a year to study in Europe and in the U.S.A. at government expense; the passing of the Teacher Training Act in 1934, and the preparation of the first official curriculum for secondary schools in the same year, the secondary level of education took a definite shape. "The establishment of the University of Tehran, in 1934, put the final touch to the reorientation of secondary education in Iran."<sup>1</sup> Primary education was declared compulsory and free by a law of 1944.

#### Foreign Schools in Iran

The American schools conducted by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions have played an important role in the development of education and the creation of modern method of teaching which was different from that of the French system. "They opened the first school at Rezaieh, a city in the West Azerbaijan, in 1836."<sup>2</sup> Gradually they established other schools in the cities where there were a considerable number of Christians. Most of the Students in these schools were Armenians, and Assyrians, but very soon the number of Moslem students increased rapidly. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions also founded high schools, in the large cities, for boys and girls.

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, World Survey of Education (Paris: 1962), Vol. III; p. 674.

<sup>2</sup>Wilber, D.N., op. cit., p. 207.

There were also British, German, French, and Russian schools in operation in various parts of the country. The Lazarists opened Saint Louis School, in Tehran, in 1864. The Society of Saint Vincent-de-Paul, or Soeurs de Charité established schools for girls in Tabriz, Rezaiieh, Isfahan and Salmas in 1866. The Alliance Israelite of France opened the first school in Tehran in 1898.

"In 1940 foreign-run schools which were educating Persian students were taken over by the Iranian government."<sup>1</sup> Justification for this seemed to be political problems. "But the French schools which demanded some more time to take over their supplies were able to remain in the country due to the occupation of Iran by the armies of Allied countries in August, 1942."<sup>2</sup> But these schools have to include the official curriculum in their own syllabus. They may be inspected by the Ministry's inspectors at any time.

#### The Aims of Secondary Education

"The aims of secondary education in the first<sup>3</sup> cycle are:

1. To provide students with general education which will be useful for them in life and will enable them to take part effectively in the civic activities if they leave school after having completed the first cycle course.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Issa Sadiq, The History of Education in Iran (Tehran: The Teachers College Press, 1963), p. 366.

<sup>3</sup> See the following page.

2. To prepare students to enter the next stage, where specialization in studies takes place, and to continue their studies in one of the academic branches or in a vocational school."<sup>1</sup>

The aims of education in the secondary academic branches, as stated in the preamble, are preparation for higher education and to provide student with useful general education. "The main aim of the curriculum in the second cycle is to complete the general education given in the first cycle and to prepare students for study at a university. However, the curricula of the different branches are built in a way to be useful for students in life should they terminate their studies after getting the Diploma."<sup>2</sup>

### Types of Secondary Schools in Iran

#### General Secondary Schools

The scheme adapted in 1934 divided secondary education into two three-year cycles. The first cycle was designed to provide a general education and specialization started in the second cycle. Since 1955 the second cycle has been divided into four branches: literature, mathematics, natural science, and home economics. Chart number 1 (page 13) represents the present educational system in Iran. It shows that elementary education begins at the age of seven and secondary education at thirteen. Secondary education begins nearly for all students in a general secondary school and for a

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the General Secondary Schools in the First Cycle (Tehran: 1954), pp. 5-6. (Translated from the original Persian by Besharat Rezaii).

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the Secondary Academic Schools (Tehran: 1956), p. III. (Translated from the original Persian by Besharat Rezaii).

very few students in craft or music schools. As the chart shows craft schools are terminal secondary schools. At present education in a general secondary school is subdivided into two cycles: (a) The first cycle which lasts three years and provides students with a general education to enter one of the academic branches as mentioned above, or a vocational or teacher training school; and (b) the second cycle or academic branches which prepare students to enter a university.

### Vocational and Teacher Training Schools<sup>1</sup>

Vocational schools consist of crafts schools, technical or industrial schools, agriculture schools, commerce schools, music schools and schools of fine arts all with a three year course. As the chart shows there are different teacher training schools called normal schools which last two years and prepare teachers for elementary schools. Secondary school teachers are prepared in Teachers Colleges where the graduates of the general secondary schools study for three years and get a B.A. or B.S. degree.

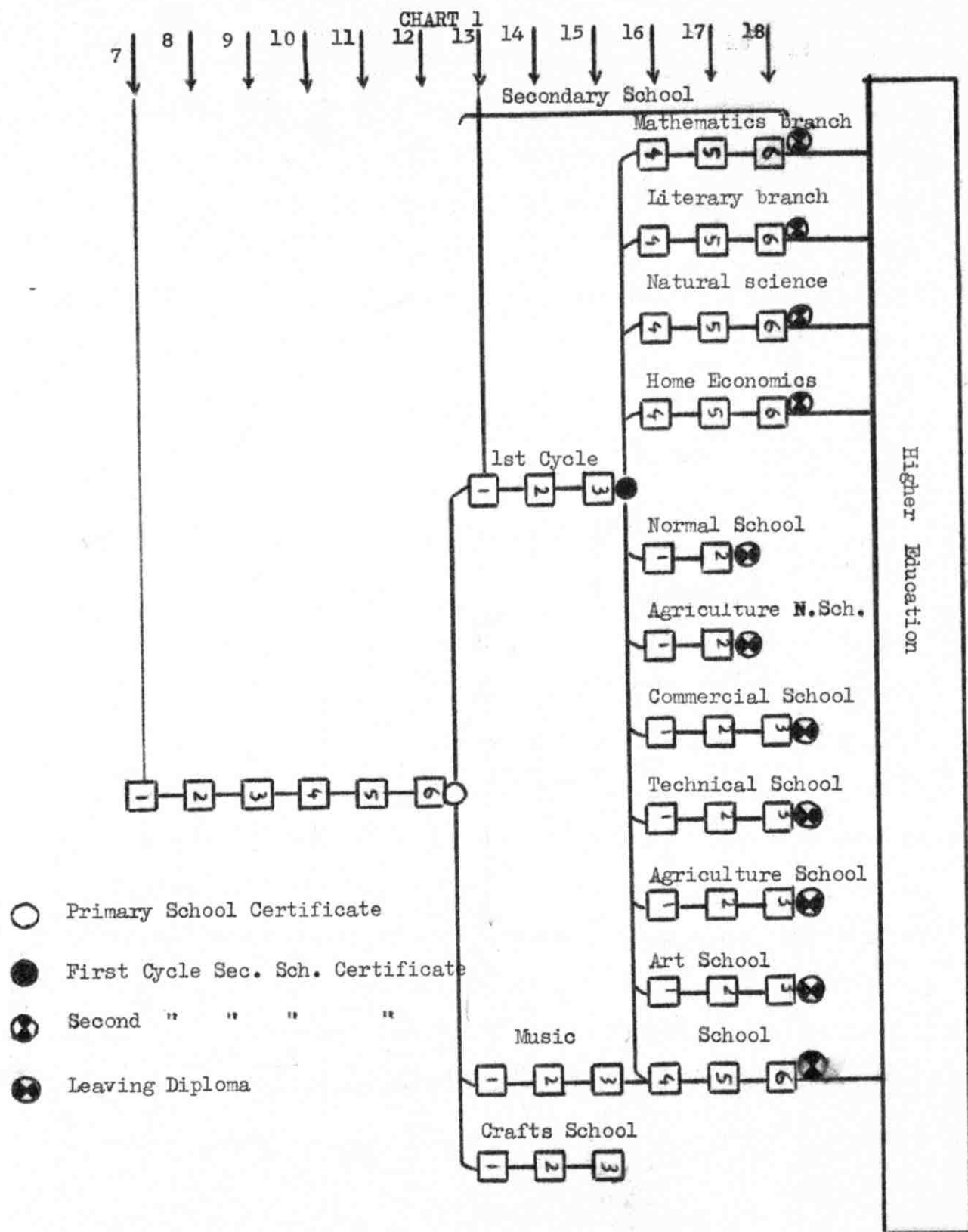
Table number 1 (page 15) shows that in May 1963 (for 1962-63) there were 326,982 students enrolled in general secondary schools, 9,958 in vocational schools and 2,369 in teacher training schools.<sup>2</sup> According to these statistical facts 96.4% of students were studying in the general secondary schools at that time. In 1957-58 the percentage was 94.7%.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>Infra., pp. 23-30.

<sup>2</sup>The Students of Special classes for training teachers, who are secondary school graduates are excluded.

<sup>3</sup>Source: World Survey of Education, op. cit., p. 681.



Source: World Survey of Education, Vol. III, p. 679.

same table shows that the number of students in agricultural secondary schools is 822 which seems very small considering that Iran is primarily an agrarian country. It also shows that there are no private vocational schools, but the number of students in Private General Secondary Schools is 50,882 which makes about 18% of the total number of the students of the general secondary schools. There are only 542 students in the commercial schools which are supposed to train personnel for various commercial and government organizations to do clerical jobs and accounting. In general the table clarifies that very little attention is paid to the development of vocational schools and that only about one fifth of elementary school students are studying in secondary schools.

#### The Curriculum of General Secondary Schools

The curriculum of the first cycle which is the same for all students in the general secondary schools is assumed to realize the two major aims, that is, to prepare students to enter the second cycle and to enable them to take part effectively in the civic activities.<sup>1</sup> Table number 2 (page 17) shows that the subjects in the curriculum of the first cycle have been divided into nine integrated groups, viz. religious instruction; Persian and Arabic; mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, geometry and technical drawing); experimental group (physics, chemistry, natural science and hygiene); social studies (history, geography, and civics); foreign language; physical education; arts (calligraphy and drawing); and

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 10.

TABLE 1

## SUMMARY OF SCHOOL STATISTICS IN IRAN IN MAY, 1963

Level and type of education	Type of Institution	Number of Institution	Students enrolled		Teaching Staff		
			Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
Kindergarten		245	5,696	7,248	502	104	606
	Maktab	424	2,385	3,320	156	214	370
Primary	Primary Schools (Public)	11,810	510,369	1,084,534	17,918	34,781	52,699
	" " (Private)	641	43,584	80,939	832	2,948	3,780
Total		12,451	553,953	1,165,473	18,750	37,729	56,479
General Secondary	Secondary Schools (Public)	1,001	82,830	193,270	2,881	10,213	13,094
	" " (Private)	206	16,283	34,599	480	990	1,470
Total		1,207	99,113	227,869	3,361	11,203	14,564

TABLE 1 (Cont'd)

## SUMMARY OF SCHOOL STATISTICS IN IRAN IN MAY, 1963

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Level and type of education	Type of Institution	Number of Institution	Students enrolled		Teaching Staff		
			Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
Teacher Training Schools		21	489	753	22	142	164
Agricultural Teacher Training Schools		13	-	936	-	110	110
Auxiliary Schools	" "	4	12	130	4	18	22
Special Classes for training teachers		48	1,056	2,501	21	94	115
Physical Teacher Training Schools		1	-	49	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>4,169</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>411</b>
Crafts Schools (first cycle)		41	524	2,896	1 <sup>(1)</sup>	377	378
Technical " (second cycle)		28	764	4,005	80	370	450
Agriculture Schools (Sec. " )		13	-	822	-	<del>48</del>	48
Commercial " ( " " )		7	-	542	<del>28</del>	28	28
Schools of Fine Arts		5	70	335	10	89	99
<b>Total</b>		<b>94</b>	<b>1,358</b>	<b>8,600</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>1,003</b>

1. The teachers of technical schools teach also at Crafts Schools for girls.

Source: Sadiq, I., op. cit., p. 498.



TABLE 2  
 TIME TABLE FOR THE FIRST CYCLE OF THE GENERAL SECONDARY  
 SCHOOLS IN IRAN

Group	Subject	Class		
		First Secondary	Second Secondary	Third Secondary
1	Religious instruction	2	2	2
2	Persian	4	4	3
	Arabic	2	2	2
3	Mathematics	4	4	4
4	Physics and Chemistry	2	2	4
	Natural history and hygiene	2	2	2
5	History and geography	2	2	2
	Civics	1	1	1
6	Foreign Language	4	4	4
7	Physical education	2	2	2
8	Calligraphy and drawing	2	2	2
9	Manual training (for boys)			
	Dress making and domestic science (for girls)	3	3	2
Total		30	30	30

Source: Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the First Cycle,  
 op. cit., p. 86.

domestic science (for girls), manual training (for boys). It is upon the basis of this classification that criterion for admission to different branches in the second cycle is determined.<sup>1</sup>

The second cycle of the general secondary school, divided into four branches, prepares students to enter a university or other institutions of higher education. Table number 3 (page 19) represents the curriculum in four branches, namely, literary, mathematics, natural science, and home economics. The table shows that the program of studies is similar to a great extent, but the major differences are in that more time is allocated to the study of certain subjects in each branch. In the fifth class of the mathematics branch, for instance, seven periods a week is devoted to the study of mathematics whereas in the literary branch it is reduced to two and in the natural science branch to three periods in the same class. The study of logic and philosophy is introduced in the sixth class of natural science and mathematics branches. In general the table shows that all students should study thirty periods a week some limited prescribed subjects according to a fixed and predetermined schedule.

Students go to school six days a week, and there are five periods every day. Each period lasts fifty minutes.

There are no remedial classes for weak students. Every student can repeat a class only once, and if he fails again, he will be dismissed according to the regulations.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Infra., p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Infra., p. 20.

TABLE 3  
 TIME TABLE FOR THE SECONDARY ACADEMIC SCHOOLS IN IRAN  
 (In hours per week)

Subject	Branch and Class												
	Class	Literary			Mathematics			Natural science			Home economics		
		4	5	6	4	5	6	4	5	6	4	5	6
Mathematics		2	2	-	7	7	10	3	3	2	2	-	-
Physics and Chemistry		2	2	-	7	7	9	8	8	8	4	4	4
Natural science and hygiene		2	-	-	2	2	-	5	5	9	2	2	2
Foreign language		5	5	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Persian		6	6	7	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Social science, history & geography		4	4	6	2	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-
Logic and Philosophy		-	2	5	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-
Religious and moral instruction		1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-
Drawing and manual training (for boys); domestic science													
Cooking and hand work (for girls).		2	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	11	13	16
Physical education		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: World Survey of Education, op. cit., p. 682.

Home economics branches were established for girls in 1956, and the main objectives as set by the Ministry of Education are:

"1) To prepare girls to understand and accept family as well as social responsibilities.

2) To acquaint them with family life and relationship among family members.

3) To develop vocational education by helping girls learn saleable skills which might be useful for them in family life and in society."<sup>1</sup>

#### Examinations

The criteria for promoting high school students from one grade to another are the results of internal examinations with complicated regulations. The amount of passing grade differs in different classes and according to the subjects of study because of the emphasis which has been put upon them. For instance the passing grade for chemistry in the natural science branch is twelve, but in the mathematics branch it is seven. In the former "chemistry" is considered a basic or special course and in the mathematics branch a non-special course.

Every three months students sit for examinations which are given only by the teacher of the subject concerned. There is one final examination at the end of the school year which is considered the most important one and is given under supervision of the headmaster with the collaboration

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the Secondary Academic Schools, op. cit., p. 132. Translated by Besharat Rezaii.

of all teachers. The passing grade in the first cycle is ten out of twenty in four groups namely Persian, mathematics, religious, and experimental groups and seven in the five remaining groups. Every student whose overall average is ten but has not attained the required grade in some groups can sit for the make up examination in August. Final examinations are all written except Persian, Arabic, and foreign language which are given orally too.

The regulations of examinations in the second cycle are often changed. The subjects in each branch have been divided into special and non-special ones. Special subjects have been given greater importance due to their relevance to the students' specialization. Special subjects for the mathematics branch are Persian, mathematics, and physics; and in the natural science branch Persian, physics, chemistry, natural science, and algebra. The remaining subjects included in the curriculum of these two branches are non-special subjects. The passing grade for special subjects is twelve and for non-special ones seven out of twenty.

Students have to take examinations in all the subjects, usually not less than sixteen, that the prescribed curriculum contains. However, the students who get less than the required grade only in two subjects (one special and one non-special) are promoted to higher classes provided that the grades for those subjects are above seven and above zero respectively.

### The Leaving Certificate or Diploma

By the end of school year, the students of the sixth grade in the general secondary schools sit for the Leaving Certificate examinations. These examinations are given and supervised by the Education Department of the area with the collaboration of an appointed group of secondary school teachers. The tests are set in the capital city and are similar for all candidates in the country. The passing average grade is ten in written tests.

There is no special certificate for a group of subjects or for individual subject. Every candidate has to take examinations in all the subjects that the curriculum contains.

The holders of the Leaving Certificate may be employed in a government organization, but are not admitted to a university unless they succeed in the competitive entrance examination of the College concerned.

### Admission Requirements

The possession of a Primary School Certificate is essential to enroll in a public, semi-public (Government schools which charge fees)<sup>1</sup> or private secondary school. There is no selection examination to enter the first cycle of the general secondary school. Secondary education is not

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<sup>1</sup>Public schools are free to help needy students. But since the Ministry couldn't afford to pay for all expenditure of secondary schools, which were rapidly expanding, the semi-public schools were authorized to charge a small amount of fees and spend it on repairing buildings, establishing or developing laboratories, libraries and buying audio-visual materials.

compulsory, but there are many free public schools which also provide text-books, and clothes for needy students. Private and semi-public schools charge fees the amount of which is determined by "School and Parents Association".

To enroll in the second cycle a grading system using numbers from one to twenty is applied. A student must earn an average grade of at least twelve (12) in a relevant group of subjects. For instance he has to get twelve in the mathematics group in the third secondary class in order to be admitted to the mathematics branch, and twelve in the experimental group, or the Persian and Arabic group if he wants to enter the natural science, or the literary branch respectively.

### Teacher Training Schools

There are three types of schools for training teachers for primary schools: 1) Normal School, 2) Agricultural Normal School, and 3) Tribal Normal School.

#### 1. Normal Schools

These schools train teachers for primary schools. The course lasts two years. To enter the schools candidates must be between the ages of sixteen and twenty two, hold the first cycle Secondary School Certificate, and have the necessary physical and character qualifications. They must also be successful in a competitive entrance examination, which includes papers on arithmetic, geometry, and a Persian composition, and an interview held in conjunction with it.

In some of the primary teacher training schools the students live in; in the others, they hold scholarships and live out.

### Curriculum

The following subjects are included in the Normal School curriculum: Persian and Arabic, mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural science and hygiene, foreign languages, social science, history and geography psychology and education, religious and moral instruction, drawing and manual training. There are thirty two hours of instruction per week. Extra curricular activities are emphasized.

### Examination

The examinations are nearly similar to those of the academic secondary schools, but the amount of passing grade differs. To obtain a satisfactory grade in education, especially in practical teaching, is essential besides earning passing grades in other subjects.

Students get the Normal School Certificate when they complete the course of the school successfully. Its value is equal to the completing certificate of the fifth grade of secondary academic school, so the holder of the Normal School Certificate is permitted to sit for Leaving Certificate examination of the secondary academic schools as an outside candidate.

### Agricultural Normal School

These schools train teachers for rural primary schools.

The course lasts 2 years. The conditions of entry are similar to those for the Normal School, just described, with the additional requirement that candidates must have experience of rural life and some knowledge of farming.

Students live in at all agricultural normal schools.



### Curriculum

Apart from the fact that the larger amount of time is devoted to studying agriculture, in class and in the field, and to workshop training, the syllabus differs little from that of the Normal School.

There are 43 hours of instruction per week. Teachers of specialized subjects are employed from among agricultural engineers, as far as possible.

### Teacher training school for tribal areas

To enter these schools, students must be members of a tribe, have reached the age of 17, hold the first cycle secondary school certificate and be successful in the competitive entrance examination. The course lasts one year divided into 3 terms.

All students live in these schools.

The curriculum of these schools contains Persian, arithmetic and geometry, religious instruction, educational theory, Arabic and some specific subjects as human and animal hygiene, agriculture and animal husbandry, fundamental education, machinery, animal and plant parasitology, social science, artistic and vocational activity, physical education and administration.

The Teacher Training Department of the Ministry of Education is responsible for drawing up and supervising the application of the syllabuses for all teacher training schools.

The graduates of these schools are employed by the Ministry of Education as they complete the courses.

### Agricultural Secondary Schools

These schools are of two types, those of the first and those of the second cycle. By a recent decision of the Ministry of Education, the first cycle agricultural schools are being converted into general secondary schools. "The reason is that there were not adequate candidates to go to these schools."<sup>1</sup>

Agricultural Secondary Schools of the second cycle have been in existence only since 1958-59. The course lasts 3 years.

### Curriculum

The following subjects are taught at these schools: Horticulture, animal husbandry, rural administration, agricultural machinery and equipment, cottage industries, and the training of agricultural advisers and of rural administrators.

Pupils must obtain the full secondary school leaving certificate if they wish to go on to more advanced studies.

### Vocational and Technical Schools

#### Crafts Schools

In principle, vocational training begins in the second cycle of the secondary school however, there are vocational schools of an educational standard equivalent to that of the first cycle of general secondary education. These are intended to train skilled workers and craftsmen, and have classes from first to third grade. So the course lasts three years.

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, Comparative Education Review (Paris: October 1962), Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 87.

Students who have completed the primary school course may enrol at one of these schools.

The schools have various sections: Masonry, metal work, tin work, smelting, automobile engineering, carpentry and cabinet making, shoemaking, etc.

The leaving certificate of such schools does not entitle the holder to continue his studies at a secondary school, neither academic or vocational, at the second cycle level. They are terminal schools. "There were fifteen schools of this type, in Iran, in 1962, attended by 1,505 pupils."<sup>1</sup> These schools fail to attract students. In some areas, for instance in Tabriz, they hardly find candidates for one fourth of the provided places. The major reasons for this failure seem to be:

1) Traditionally manual work is despised and there are no planned activities to encourage vocational education.

2) There is no placement service and vocational guidance, either public or private, to provide places for the graduates of these schools in workshops, factories, or businesses.

### Industrial Schools

The industrial or technical schools correspond to the second cycle of secondary education. Possession of the first cycle of the general secondary school certificate is required to enter these schools.

The industrial schools train technical staff for the various branches of industry. They include industrial schools for boys with

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, World Survey of Education, op. cit., p. 676.

courses in automobile engineering, metal work, dyeing spinning, carpentry, electricity, and building construction. There are also vocational secondary schools for girls with the following courses: dress making, cooking, hair dressing, secretarial work and decoration.

In these schools general subjects account for half the syllabus. Pupils begin to specialize only in their second year.

If they wish to continue their studies at a higher technical institution, they must first obtain the Secondary School Leaving Certificate in the mathematics branch. Technical teachers of the industrial secondary schools are trained at the Technological Institute which enables them to teach technical subjects. General subjects as Persian, language, etc, are taught by the graduates of Teacher Training Colleges.

#### Commercial Schools

To enter these schools students must obtain the certificate of the first cycle of the Secondary School. The course lasts three years. The aim is to train qualified businessmen, to work in a commercial organization or in a bank. (But some banks as well as some technical organizations as those concerning railways, telecommunication, etc, establish their own schools, for a short time, to train students they will employ later).

The curriculum of these schools, in addition to some subjects to provide general education as Persian, and foreign language, includes commercial law, accounting, typing, social science, secretarial work and psychology.

The graduates of these schools are awarded a leaving certificate but this does not entitle the holder to take part in the entrance examination of universities.

#### Schools of Music and Art.

These are schools coming under the Directorate General of Fine Arts.

#### Schools of Music

To enter these schools, candidates must be not more than 17 years of age, already have their Primary School certificate, show a special bent for music and pass an examination in elementary musical theory and practice.

Pupils who obtain their first cycle certificate at one of these schools may go on to the second cycle, which is also open to outside candidates who have their first cycle Secondary School Certificate and pass the music examination required for entry to the first cycle of the school.

Pupils who successfully complete the course are awarded the Second Cycle Leaving Certificate.

#### The Isphahan School of Fine Arts.

This school serves a two-fold purpose: to provide suitable training for gifted artists and to develop national arts.

To enter this school candidates must be not more than 16 years of age, must hold the first cycle secondary school certificate, and show evidence of artistic gifts. They must also produce a medical certificate

showing that they are in good health.

The leaving certificate of this school is equivalent to the secondary school Leaving Certificate.

#### Evening Secondary Schools

Any one prevented by his daily occupation or by age limitation or dismissal from day time schools, may be enrolled at an evening secondary school in Iran.

All these schools are private and charge fees. They are of the academic type of Secondary Schools. The curriculum is quite similar to that of the general secondary school. They generally give 18 hours of teaching a week.

Students can take examination, under the supervision of the Regional Education Department, twice a year. So abler students may complete a two year course in one year. There is no make up examination for the students of evening schools.

The Leaving Certificate, issued by the Ministry of Education is awarded to the students who pass the examination. The certificate entitles the holder to take part in the competitive entrance examination of the universities.

#### Who Makes the Curriculum?

The curriculum of the secondary school consists of the whole range of studies or courses offered in a school. The type and the amount of courses and even the allocation of time for each course or subject matter is determined and prescribed by the central educational authorities.

The curriculum of the general secondary school is usually made and suggested by the Secondary Education Department, in the Ministry of Education. A special committee in that department is appointed by the Minister of Education to design the curriculum and offer it to the Research and Curriculum Department. There is a high curriculum committee in this department to discuss and revise all suggested curricula. The members of the curriculum committees are selected and appointed, for an unlimited time, by the Minister of Education or his assistant according to the suggestion of the Chief of the Research and Curriculum Department. The Minister can replace the committee members at any time.

The High Curriculum Committee consists of Professors, some advisors from UNESCO or foreign countries, a few experienced high school teachers and principals, and the technical personnel and experts of the Research and Curriculum Department, who usually hold high positions in the Ministry of Education. The number of committee members varies, but is usually more than twenty five.

The committee is divided into subcommittees in which the contents of the curriculum are discussed and revised, by the members according to their specializations. The head of the Research and Curriculum Department is authorized to invite qualified persons to participate in the subcommittee sessions as consultants.

When the curriculum is approved by this committee, it will be presented to the Minister of Education. After it has been approved by him, the curriculum will be passed on to the Supreme Education Council.

The curriculum will be legal, after being approved in this council, to be put into practice tentatively, from the beginning of the following academic year. The program of studies is subject to the further revision by the curriculum members if deemed necessary by them.

To get knowledge about the teachers' views as well as those of experts on elementary and secondary education, a national educational conference was held, for the first time, in Tehran during the summer of 1957. "For ten days 550 educators representing the echelons of the Ministry of Education from all over Iran, and some twenty foreign advisors (USOM Iran mainly, UNESCO and British Council), met together in groups of different interests to discuss problems pertaining to education in Iran."<sup>1</sup> The teachers and the principals of schools who participated in the conference were chosen by their colleagues in each country. The results concerning the aims of education and recommendations, reached by each discussion group, were reported to the Board of Directors of the conference who consisted of seven prominent members of the High Curriculum Committee. Since 1957 no other educational conference has been held with the cooperation of teachers.

#### The Supreme Education Council

According to the Constitution Law, passed in March 1921, concerning the Supreme Education council, all curricula and regulations of schools and, in general, all technical affairs of the Ministry of Education should be approved by this council in order to be legal.

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, Resolution of the National Education Convention (Tehran: 1957), p. 3.



The Supreme Education council consists of twelve official members and honorary or consultant members who have no right to vote. The official members are the Minister of Education, the Director General of the Ministry of Education, two professors, two secondary school teachers, one Majtahed (religious leader practicing religious jurisprudence) and five learned qualified persons. The members are selected by the Minister of Education every four years. Their membership is to be approved by the king. The head of the council is the Minister of Education.

For preliminary studies of the subjects that should be discussed in the council, five people are chosen from among the members of the council, and some qualified people outside, if necessary, in order to discuss and analyze the subject. They can get more information on the subject through consulting experts and learned men. These groups of five persons are called the Supreme Committee for Studies.

The most important duties of this council are: To discuss and approve the regulations and curricula of schools, and the regulations of the organization of the Ministry of Education; to give permission to establish private schools, - elementary, secondary and evening schools; to determine the necessary qualifications of the principals and teachers of schools. To study the text-books to see whether they contain the prescribed determined course of the curriculum in order to recommend their study at school; to select qualified authors and translators to write or translate scientific and technical books, which are to be published by the Ministry of Education; to make remarks on the employment of teaching staff, foreign experts, granting allowance and other educational affairs.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 446.

### The Local Education Councils

According to the Constitution Law passed in September 1927, the Supreme Education Council should have branches in the central cities of the counties (ostans), and in the large towns. The regulations concerning local councils were laid down and passed by the Supreme Education Council in November 1941; they were revised in 1956. According to these regulations the Local Education Council must have nine members in the central city of the county, seven members in the large towns and five in small ones. The members consist of the Head of the Education Department who is also the head of the council, one high school principal, the head or a representative of the city council, one professor, the head of the chamber of commerce, two persons from among the heads of the School and Parents Associations, and one religious leader. Their membership is to be approved by the Minister of Education.

The most important duties of these local councils are: to help the Head of the Education Department solve educational problems; to establish public libraries; to found museums, to give suggestions for the improvements to be made in the curricula of schools to cope with local needs;<sup>1</sup> to discuss and approve the competency of those who want to publish local newspapers and magazines, and to determine the districts where new schools should be established.

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<sup>1</sup>An interview with the secretary of the Education Council in Tabriz, in August 1963, revealed that no suggestion has been made about the curricula of schools since the council has been formed.

Summary

Iran's history of education goes back to a very remote period, but the development of educational organization in the form of modern schools was started at the beginning of the twentieth century. Secondary education in Iran aims basically at giving general education in the first cycle and preparing students for university studies in the secondary academic schools. However, the transmission of the cultural heritage is strongly emphasized. The highest place is given to the study of the Persian language. The study of Persian literature and social studies is considered essential for the education of good citizens. Mathematics and science are included in the program of nearly all the grades. The number of students in vocational and teacher training schools is very small. It was less than five per cent of all students enrolled in secondary schools, in May 1963. The curriculum is made by the central educational authorities. It is prescribed and uniform. The major difference in the programs of the academic branches is in the emphasis upon the study of some courses, called special or basic subjects, rather than in the kinds of them. The evaluation system is formal and rigid. It is based on the regulations made by the central authorities. The promotion of students and their admission to the different academic branches are based merely upon their success in the formal examinations and the students' average grade. At the end of the secondary school course there is a state examination. A 'Diploma' issued by the Ministry of Education is awarded to those who pass. In each city, there is usually a local education council the members of which are not elected by the people. The

main duty of the council is to help the Head of the Education Department in solving educational problems. The council has no right to interfere either in making the curriculum or in adapting it to the local needs; but it can make suggestions and offer them to the Ministry of Education to be studied.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PRESENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATIONS

#### IN IRAN

##### Introduction

In this chapter a descriptive analysis of some aspects of the present social and economic situations considering their relations to education will be given. The analysis will include:

a) Some information on the physical conditions of the country as well as on the social characteristics of the people and their effect in the life of Iranians.

b) Some important changes in the field of human relationship, values, and technical development in the last few years with a reference to the fact that similar changes have been going on for more than thirty years, but have been accelerated in the last decade.

c) Some statistical facts which may represent certain immediate needs of society especially the everincreasing demand of technological development for skilled manpower in various occupations.

##### Physical Conditions and Crops

The Iranian Plateau lies between two strips of water, - the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf in the south. Iran today covers approximately 1,645,000 square kilometers, extending about 2,600 kms. north to south and 2,100 kms. east to west at the widest points. It is more than double the size of Turkey, and five times that of Great

Britain. About one half of the total land is mountainous. The mountains in the north are covered with forests the amount of which is estimated at two tenths of the whole land. Of the other half only one fourth is cultivable; the rest is extensive desert regions which receive less than five inches of rain a year. The mountains standing high around the country form a barrier against the infiltration of the moisture toward the Plateau.

As regards climate Iran may be divided into the following four regions which are differed to a great extent.

1. The Caspian Sea region

The coastal areas of the Caspian Sea have a warm and humid type of climate which resembles that of the Mediterranean areas, mild in winter and warm in summer. Due to the existence of the high Alborz mountains, which separate this region from the Plateau, these areas enjoy an extraordinary amount of rainfall, which is over sixty inches. Gilan, Mazanderan, and Gorgan are the three provinces comprising this region where most of the country's agricultural and industrial products like rice, tobacco, cotton, jute, and tea are grown. Mulberry trees are also grown in this area and raising silkworms is considerable. Citrus fruits including oranges, tangerines, lemons and the like are grown in this region in a large scale. The northern part of the Alborz Mountains, which is covered with thick forests, supply most of the timber and charcoal used in the country. Ash, beech, box, cypress, and oak are the commonest trees. Some trees such as walnut being precious for their special qualities are cut down and exported. The Caspian Sea is famous for the

most valuable varieties of fish. Its caviar is exported to different parts of the world.

## 2. The north-west region

The north west corner and some parts of the west of the country have rather sufficient annual rainfall which ranges from fifteen to thirty five inches. Owing to the existence of a number of large and small streams this area is considerably cultivated. Dry farming on the hilly areas and the growing of the crops and fruit trees which need less irrigation are most widely carried on in this region which provides the greater quantity of the wheat used in the country. In addition to wheat, barley and various cereals, tobacco, sugarbeet, cotton, etc, and many kinds of fruit are grown in this region. The export of some dried fruits as raisin and apricot, which are prepared and packed in local factories, is one of the important sources of income.

## 3. The Great Plateau region

This region extends from the walls of the Alborz Mountains in the north to the Zagros ranges in the south and in the west. It is a great desert area the dryness and salinity of which make cultivation difficult except in some limited parts through which streams flow in spring and partly in summer. But this area is of great importance for its mineral resources like iron, copper, lead, and oil. Iran ranks fourth in the world in oil potentials. "With vast deposits of oil, Iran is the fourth largest oil producer of the world."<sup>1</sup> The Iranian Plateau enjoys fairly mild winters and hot summers.

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<sup>1</sup> Aziz Hatemi, Iran (Tehran: The General Department of Publications and Broadcasting, 1963), p. 1.

#### 4. The Persian Gulf Area

The narrow strip of land between the southern mountains of the Iranian Plateau and the coast of the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea is a hot region. Being close to the tropics this region has hot, damp, and sticky weather especially in summer. In summer temperature reaches 130 degrees and makes conditions less tolerable. Precipitation is low, but in the south west there are a few large streams, as Karon and Karkhah, which irrigate a considerable amount of the rich soil of this area. The chief products are wheat, sugar cane, tobacco, cotton, dates, and henna leaves. The Dez Dam, one of the biggest dams in the Middle East, which will be completed very soon, will irrigate a great section of this area.

#### Social Structure: The Population and its Composition

The Iranian society is primarily an agricultural society. The framework of society is based upon hierachical structure such as the relationship between land-lord and peasants, tribesmen and their chiefs. But with the implementation of the land reform<sup>1</sup> the relationship between land lord and peasants, which was the most powerful factor in keeping the hierarchy and the rigid social stratification, has been improved. In addition to its economic effect, the land reform has led, relatively, to the emancipation of the village people.

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<sup>1</sup>Infra., p. 57.



The land-owners and the chiefs of tribes who mostly dwelled in urban areas governed the country in the past, getting their social and economic power from the peasants and tribesmen by the force of tradition, religion, and a discipline resulting from economic dependence. But the Middle class, at present, is on the way to getting more power in acquiring high political positions. The new land reform, which has made land-owners and some tribal chiefs dissatisfied<sup>1</sup>, has also created a tendency in the Shah to shift towards the Middle group and some educated youth for political support.

"In 1957, preliminary results of a national census placed the population of Iran at 18,945,000 people. Of this total some 5,787,000, or thirty one percent of the people, live in towns of 5000 or more; the rest are either peasant farmers living in 45,500 villages or are among the estimated two million members of the migratory or semi-nomadic people. Population increase is estimated at two per cent annually."<sup>2</sup> The present population, therefore may be about 21,000,000. The development of industry, provision of facilities for a better life, and the enlightenment of the village people have created a tendency towards urbanization. "The sharp increase in urban population in recent years reflects the growing importance of the central government as well as industrial development. Most of the increase is in government workers or laborers providing services for them."<sup>3</sup> For instance the population of Tehran in 1950 was estimated at 619,000, but it was close to one and a half million in 1957 and now it is estimated at two

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<sup>1</sup>Infra., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Wilber, Donald, N., op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>3</sup>Herbert H. Wreeland, Iran (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1957), p. 34.

million.

Since all academic secondary schools are established in towns and large cities, it seems useful to analyse the structure of urban society to get a better view of its needs. "Out of thirty per cent urban people of Iran eight per cent are in government and private institutions, small industries and handicrafts, transportation activities, etc; twelve per cent are crafts men engaged in petty business; five per cent are government employees, employees of private concerns and the intelligensia, and five per cent businessmen, capitalists and big land-lords."<sup>1</sup> Considering the number of students in vocational schools which was about 9,958 in 1963 only about 0.16% (that is less than two persons out of 1000) of urban population were being trained in these schools to take part in industrial, building construction, commercial and agricultural activities, or the similar technical works.

As mentioned above, Iranian society has been a rather rigidly stratified one for centuries, both in rural and urban areas. Therefore, there are great gaps between the different classes considering the distribution of wealth, power, educational opportunities, and prestige. The people in urban areas may be divided roughly into three groups: the elite, the middle group and the lower group.

a) The Elite or the upper class

"Most of the wealth, power, prestige, advanced education and leadership in Iran have been concentrated within a small group of large

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<sup>1</sup> Echo of Iran, Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts (Tehran), p. 768.

families, estimated from two hundred to 1000 families."<sup>1</sup> Many of them were economically supported by land-ownership. They used peasants as political power to consolidate their positions. Having lost their source of revenue and power because of the land reform they seem to be willing to invest in industry, banking, business, and building construction. The rapid increase of banking firms may be given as one example.<sup>2</sup> "Numerous large and small private banking firms have been established in recent years, some with round-the clock facilities, drive-ins and mobile services. They include the Bazergani, Pars, Tehran, Saderat and Ma'aden, Asnaf (Trade Unions), Iranian, etc."<sup>3</sup>

This economic movement will probably have great influence on the industrial, commercial, and technical development of the country and may create more needs for specialization and skilled manpower. A majority of this group usually send their offspring to study abroad.

b) The Middle Group

The core of the Present urban middle group is businessmen, officers, government officials, and highly skilled workers. More differentiated middle groups are emerging from the core making upward and outward. The upward movement consists of the high rank government employees, the smaller industrialists, bankers, and businessmen who are learning the techniques

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<sup>1</sup> Wreeland, H.H., op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Infra, see also p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Hatemi, Aziz, op. cit., p. 167.

of western industrial and commercial organization. The lateral movement is made up of skilled workers, educated white collar government employees and others who are doing clerical jobs in private organizations. In general, it seems that skilled workers, who are still few in number, have more of a chance, at present, in finding employment and having a better income<sup>1</sup> compared with the majority of general secondary school graduates. "Last year, over 38,000 students sat for the University Entrance Examinations. Only 5000 of them were admitted. The rest joined the ranks of unemployed."<sup>2</sup> (*Italics mine*).

The middle group seem to seek economic security for their children through education. They try to provide their offspring with higher education though it might be very difficult for them to afford it. Many of the students of the present universities in Iran consist of the children of the middle group in urban areas.

c) The Lower Group

The lowest social level of the urban people consists of unskilled workers, servants, and peddlers. Literacy is very low among these people, but urban life has helped many of them to appreciate education and to send their children to school. However, unable to afford paying for

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<sup>1</sup>In 1960 the general average of pay of Government servants as a whole was 3,365 rials per month whereas the daily wages of skilled workers ranged between 120-200 rials (3600-6000 rials per month); highly skilled workers, such as locomotive drivers and the like get far more than that. (Source: Iran Almanac, 1962, pp. 793 and 747). See also page 51 and 52.

<sup>2</sup>Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 325.

the secondary education, they often withdraw their children from schools and send them to work in workshops to learn a craft. The lower group, who are suffering economically partly because of lack of salable skills, may appreciate vocational education more than the other groups.

It is interesting to know that even the lowest group seem to prefer only the academic type of education since they often refuse sending their children to vocational schools when they can manage to send them to general secondary schools. For instance, an interview with the head of the craft school number one, in Tabriz, revealed that the school was hardly able to get twenty-five candidates for one hundred provided places in the year of 1963-64.

### Religion

Religion is the marrow of Iranian life. Iranians show extreme submission and respect to God. They seek relief and hope in religion by resignation and relying on God's mercy even in the most desperate state. However, this trust does not prevent them from activity, since they believe that blessing comes through individual effort.

Islam (Shiah Sect) is the official religion of the country. The Iranian constitutional law is based and related to Islamic principles so much that the study of religious laws is indispensable for a judge or a lawyer. About nine out of ten Iranians are Shiites. For a thousand years Persians have favored this sect which offered the basis for them to free themselves from the influence of the Arabs, who are mostly Sunnites, and to preserve their independence. The Shiah Sect has become for four and a half centuries the state religion and bulwark of Persian nationalism.

Ninety-eight per cent of the inhabitants of Iran are Moslem, 93% of these are Shiites, seven per cent belong to the Sunni sect. There are relatively few religious minorities within the country and Iranians have nearly always been tolerant towards them. Many of these minorities have representatives in the Lower and Upper Houses and enjoy nearly the same civil rights as Moslems. There are about 50,000 Armenians who are often prosperous merchants or craftsmen. Jews whose number is estimated at 75,000 are settled in the large towns. There are a few thousand Protestants and Roman Catholics. There are also Zoroastrians who worship in fire temples, and about 30,000 Assyrians who live in the western coast of the lake Rezaieh.

There seems to be evidence (judging by personal observation) that increasing number of middle and upper class individuals are adhering less rigourously to religious ritual and to the guidance of some religious leaders. However, a great majority of the middle class are religious people and most of them accept the leadership of religious leaders. Religion is also a means for the "Bazaar Group", that is, the businessmen in the bazaar, to maintain a sense of cohesiveness and hence influence. Since political parties are frowned upon and limited by the Government, the businessmen get together informally in mosques and religious centers, to defend their social, economic, and political rights. Religion is especially widespread valued among the bazaar group whose stores and commercial houses are located in the bazaar. People usually tend to trust the businessmen who adhere to ritual and are considered virtuous. The third group which covers a great majority of the lowest class in urban

and rural areas are the most rigorous adherents of religion. They seem to show great respect and obedience towards religious leaders and Ulema (more learned religious leaders). Many of them in rural areas do not appreciate education unless it includes religious instruction.

Religious studies have been included in the curricula of schools to train faithful moslems, to teach a moral code and to help the cultivation of national unity. The study of Islamic principles seems to satisfy most Moslem parents as well as central authorities who emphasize national solidarity and unity.

#### Language

Unlike religion which is one for almost all the people, there are different languages and dialects which divide the Iranian into component ethnic groups. However, owing to the existence of a long common history and traditions, common religion, and giving equal rights to all the groups, the difference in language has not been effective to weaken the feeling of nationalism and cultural identity as Iranians.

Nearly two thirds of the entire population speak Persian or some dialects of it. Some of these dialects are not understood readily by the speakers of standard Persian, in Tehran, but most speakers of such dialects do understand standard Persian. Standard Persian, which is spoken in Tehran is the official language of the country and that of educated class in many parts of Iran.

One fifth of the total population dwelling in the densely settled north-west province of Azerbaijan speak a Turkish dialect called Azeri.

Some Turkish dialects are also spoken by various tribes as the Qashgair in the south, the Afshar tribe in the east, Turkmen in the north, and the inhabitants of numerous villages all over the country. "The Turkish speaking people of Iran stand next in number to the Farsi (Persian) speaking."<sup>1</sup> The Arabic dialects are spoken by some 380,000 people living along the south coast of Iran. Other languages such as Kurdish, Baluchi, Armenian and Aramic are also spoken in Iran by different ethnic groups.

Classical Persian is the only language of instruction, and by law no other language should be used for instruction in educational institutions. Radio broadcasts, however, are diffused a few hours a day in some languages as Azeri, Arabic, Baluchi, Kurdish and others. Persian, being the language of the great poets and writers throughout history, is highly appreciated by the educated Iranians, though their native language may be different from Persian. They like to listen to or recite beautiful Persian poems full of maxims, philosophy, and beauty. "The language is a tie with their past and a force which binds the nation together. Even the linguistic minorities, jealously though they guard their own speech, seem to share this reverence for the national language."<sup>2</sup> Non-Persian speaking groups, however, use their own particular languages for communication though they use Persian in their writings.

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<sup>1</sup>Iran Almanac, 1962, op. cit., p. 772

<sup>2</sup>Wreeland, H., op. cit., p. 47.



The central authorities put a great emphasis upon the instruction of the Persian language. It must be taught even in kindergartens in non-Persian speaking areas. The underlying assumption seems to be that a common national language contributes to the creation of cultural solidarity and national unity.

#### The Family Life and Progressive Thoughts

"The most stable fundamental social unit in Iran is the family household."<sup>1</sup> Each member of the family has obligations towards his family. A shameful deed of a member of the family will be a disgrace to the whole family. It is the responsibility of the father or the elder son to struggle for the welfare of the family members. The father is obeyed and respected. He is also expected to protect his children economically though they might have become grown men. Owing to such feeling and expectation, the father usually considers it his duty to provide his children with university education, though it might be difficult to afford. Even the other members of the family seem to be ready to accept economic difficulties in order to share in helping to enhance the position of a family member.

The father is usually one who makes the family decisions, but the other members may have influence upon him. However the final decision is usually taken by him. The authoritarian method appears to be the most accepted way of child training. It is in the family that the child learns

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

for the first time how to adapt to the cultural codes and traditions and live outside the family where obedience and respect towards superiors is a means of success and promotion. It is known that authoritarian attitudes towards children, which is also favored by some teaching staff in schools, stifle creativity and initiative in children. "Prolonged dependency on father and mother for material and emotional support produce an unwillingness to assume responsibility and initiative outside clearly defined roles whether in the family or society."<sup>1</sup> Many children in Iran have a tendency of depending economically and emotionally upon their families even as adults.

#### Women

Women traditionally do not play an active community role as they do in advanced countries. Their roles are primarily to rear children and to do household duties. But women in rural areas also participate actively in agricultural work. Some of them are busy with carpet weaving. In the large cities a considerable number of women take part in various kinds of occupations such as teachers, nurses, clerks and factory workers. Out of 54,233 teaching staff in Iran, in 1960, there were 18,436 women. There were also 8000 nurses and midwives working in the public hospitals in Iran, in 1961. The number of women teachers has been increased, in 1963, to 22,242 (18750 teachers in Primary and 3,499 in secondary schools): there were also 156 women who were teaching at universi-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 263.

ties in the same year.<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the insistent demand and activities of the enlightened women, who have organized associations, for more freedom and equal rights, and due to the support of progressive authorities especially the Shah, Iranian women have succeeded, in May 1963, in winning the right of voting and being elected to the Parliament despite the strong opposition led by some religious leaders who were against the participation of women in political activities. This important social reform will probably have great influence on the family life of Iranian people in the future.

#### Some changes in the family life

The family in Iran is undergoing a democratization with increase in equality of the sexes and decrease in parental authority. Sometimes there are conflicts in the family between the new ideas and traditions. These conflicts sometimes seem to cause dissatisfaction and frustration in the youth as well as in parents. In the large cities some youth seek to participate in political movement in order to bring about new changes which might help them solve their problems in life. Feeling insecurity towards realization of their economic and social aspirations, the educated youth seem to have become aggressive towards authorities. "The Prime Minister Amini spoke several times about youth, particularly students, last

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 449.

year. He expressed his concern about their lack of religious beliefs and their political deviation.<sup>1</sup> The increasing unemployment<sup>2</sup> amongst them and the failure of Iranian students abroad to return home was a cause of anxiety to authorities. (Italics mine). Students attacked the Prime Minister several times in Tehran, Tabriz, and Shiraz. They criticized his policy about oil at a special meeting held for them in the Prime Minister's presence in the middle of December."<sup>3</sup>

The Government feels it necessary to take over some of the protecting functions formerly exercised by the family. For example the Government helps the youth contribute in independent activities by giving them long-term loans.

On the 21st of August 1961, Ettela'at reported that the Youth Cooperation Fund, established in 1959, had so far loaned fifteen million rials (\$200,000) to youths, eight million rials of which had already been amortized in instalments. Six hundred young tradesmen and artisans had obtained loans ranging from 20,000 to 30,000 rials (about \$400). Moreover the Fund had signed 550 agreements for 'School Loans' with students. The Fund had so far paid them 4,500,000 rials in monthly instalments and was to continue paying them during their studies.<sup>4</sup>

But such protective activities by the Government do not seem to be sufficient either to eliminate the feeling of insecurity in secondary school graduates towards their seemingly dim future because of unemployment

<sup>1</sup>It seems to be an allusion to leftists and nationalists, in universities, who oppose the government and support Mossadegh, the former Prime Minister of Iran

<sup>2</sup>In 1961, over 3,8000 students sat for university Entrance examinations. Only some 5000 of them were admitted. The rest joined the ranks of unemployed. (Source: Iran Almanac 1962, p. 325).

<sup>3</sup>Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 325.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

in government offices or to encourage them effectively to work in private enterprises. Students seem to fail in taking advantage of these loans without having acquired a technical skill and being trained for such activities at school.

### Traditions and Values

"In the Iranian hierarchy of values two types of endeavor are given great respect: Intellectual activity and skilled workmanship. Accordingly the two groups engaged in these enterprises (the intellectual, professional men, including those in vicil service and the artists and highly skilled industrial workers) enjoy preferred status."<sup>1</sup> In addition to the mentioned groups, the commercial group of entrepreneurs also enjoy high status in Iranian society. This is an influential group who have economic and political power due to their wealth and cohesiveness.

Titles and rank are accepted as indicative of authority. It might be, to some extent, for this reason that military rank seems to be attractive to some young men. "The military school in Tehran has a high prestige ...."<sup>2</sup> Recognition of the positions and titles which convey prestige is given great importance. Any title which serves to identify an Iranian as distinctive bears particular prestige. Titles such as doctor, engineer, director general, Haji, etc, are considered valuable in Iranian society. Using respectful language towards a person of high position is expected. The existence of numerous words in the Persian language

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<sup>1</sup>Wreeland, Herbert, H., op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

which convey the meaning of 'Sir' might be considered as a proof for presence of this tradition. Critical comments towards authorities and superiors is usually discouraged.

But as in many other aspects of social life, changes are occurring in the field of values and customs. "Western social and technological ideas challenge the traditional way of thinking."<sup>1</sup> New ideas bring about new values. "Not all Iranians are gripped in the paralysis between the glorious past and a future that will bring justice without effort. New ideas, new attitudes towards the manipulation of their environment have stirred a number of them to action."<sup>2</sup> These activities have begun since the period of the former king who did his best to modernize the country by building railways, erecting factories, establishing schools and making countless economic and social reforms. These reforms led, later on, to the infiltration of democratic ideas even among some of the offspring of the elite. Due to the contact with liberal people and democratic societies, during their studies, in advanced countries, some of the university graduates had got democratic and progressive thoughts. After return to the country some of them tried to put these ideas into practice, as far as possible. Their influence has been great among the educated classes.

On the other hand a growing political awareness keeps pace with

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

increasing literacy, industrialization, development of communication, and modern life. This awareness, along with the increasing dissatisfaction with the old hierarchical structure, as the relationship between land-lord and peasant, and increasing danger of political and economic difficulties,<sup>1</sup> spurred the Iranian authorities to think seriously about the solution of the problems. Consequently important social and economic reforms and improvements were undertaken, during the last two years, under the leadership of the **Shah**. "Land reform and emancipation of peasants, giving equal political right to women, establishing the literacy and the health army, passing a law according to which 25% of factory profits should be given to the workers in the factory, nationalization of the forests in the country... are some important changes,"<sup>2</sup> which have created new needs and will require new types of education to meet them.

#### Agriculture and Land Reform

In Iran 70% of the people live in rural areas. "Agriculture is the country's second biggest export (after oil), but agricultural produce lags behind the annual growth of population at the rate of 2.5%. The population will reach 55 million by 2,000 A.D. while agricultural production in some instances has actually fallen."<sup>3</sup> This decrease in some agricultural production, in 1961, might have different reasons, but big land-ownership

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<sup>1</sup> supra, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Iranian Embassy, Bulletin of Information (Beirut: No. 2123, March 11, 1964), p. 2. Translated by Besharat Rezaii.

<sup>3</sup> Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 215.

and inefficiency of education in rural areas have certainly been two important factors. The first obstacle is being removed by the implementation of the Land Reform Bill and the second one requires an appropriate kind of education. "About 95% of the rural people are illiterate. In 1957-58 there were only 634 girl students and 22,691 boy students in 538 rural Primary Schools."<sup>1</sup> Many of the landowners objected to the establishment of schools, thinking that education would enlighten the people and would be dangerous for land-lords. Feudalism has been the main reason of the farmers' poverty. A majority of the people living in rural areas had no land of their own. They used to cultivate for the land-lord and crop was distributed among them on the basis of five factors one fifth for each. They were water, seed, labour, oxen, and the land itself. Thus, in most cases the poor cultivator had to get only one fifth of the produce. "Four-fifths of what he (a farmer of Iran) can grow, he has to turn over to somebody else, one fifth for water, one fifth for the loan of oxen, one fifth for seed, and one fifth for the land-lord himself. The farmer does not even have any security on the land. Next year on the land-lord's whim or because a cultivator comes along who is willing to pay higher rent, he may be booted out."<sup>2</sup>

Such conditions were very difficult for the farmers to stand and many were dissatisfied. Consequently when the farmers became acquainted with

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 795.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Bingham, Shirt-Sleeve Diplomacy (New York: The John Day Co., 1953), p. 72.



the urban life, due to the easy communication and military service in the cities, they preferred to leave villages for industrial areas hoping to get a better income and a better living. "Available statistics show that during the past few years some fifty or sixty thousand peasants have been migrating with their families to Tehran every year."<sup>1</sup>

### Land Reform

The developing economic and social problems of unemployment, farmers migration to urban areas, the increase of population and the shortage of some agricultural produce such as wheat accompanied the conflict between the supporters of feudalism and the enlightened farmers and their supporters who demanded social reform. This created an impending political crisis. To forestall such a crisis the Land Reform Law was passed in an extraordinary meeting of the cabinet held on the first of March 1962. According to this law which was implemented rapidly in spite of the strong opposition of the land-lords and some reactionary people,<sup>2</sup> a majority of the Iranian farmers will own the land on which they are cultivating. The latest reports given in the Iranian news bulletin, published in Beirut, on March 17, 1964, states that the Land Reform Law has been implemented in 8,513 villages where the lands have been distributed among 1,922,790 farmers. The Government helps the farmers

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<sup>1</sup>Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 795.

<sup>2</sup>Engineer Malik Abedi, who was the responsible headman for the distribution of land in the south of Iran, was killed by land-lords and martial law was declared in Shiraz to keep peace and to support the implementation of the Land Reform Bill.

economically and technically, by providing them with seed, technical advisors, machinery and by giving long-term loans which enable them to improve the technique of agriculture. "According to figures released by Ettela'at on September 25, 1961, the Plan Organization had sold, on instalments, 4,900 tractors, 890 combines, and 8,500 other agricultural machinery and implements by september 1961. The total cost of these machines was 2,400 million rials (about \$30,000,000), but the Plan Organization has given them to farmers on 25% down payment and the rest on four years' instalments."<sup>1</sup> It should be added that many private companies and firms have been recently established and are selling modern agricultural instruments and machinery.

Today rapid improvements is not limited to agriculture. The Plan Organization has undertaken the implementation of developmental projects in various fields as communications, industries and mines, social services, and so on. Almost all the money that is spent for carrying out these projects come from Persia's share of the country's oil revenue. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to give even a summary of the implemented projects in the two last decades. However new development in the field of water supply which is first and foremost among the needs of agriculture in Iran will be explained briefly in order to give the reader a view of the new important changes in Iran.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

A concentrated effort by the Ministry of Agriculture, the independent Water Organization and the Plan Organization culminated in the construction of several dams, the most important of which are: (1) The Karaj Dam, 50 miles west of Tehran, begun in November 1958, and finished in 1961, electric capacity 110,000 Kw. A lake formed by this dam will eventually be 15 kilometers long, provide water for Tehran and farmlands to the south of the city, (2) The Sefid Rud Dam in Guilan Province, storage capacity nearly 1,700 million cu. meters, controlling irrigation for 450,000 acres of land. Electric capacity 64,000 kw., (3) The Dez Dam, in the oil province of Khozistan part of five river dam project which aims at providing water for the rich Khozistan plain, (400,000 square miles). It will provide 520,000 kw. and will be nearly 200 meters (over 600 ft.) high. When the water has been thus provided and irrigation canals built, the Plan Organization aims at increasing Iran's agricultural products ten times in fifteen years through better techniques of cultivation and other activities, (4) Numerous smaller dams such as the Latian dam on the Jajrud river east of Tehran, the Kuhrang dam in Isfahan, the Gulpaigan dam, the Shabankareh dam, etc, are part of this scheme for water storage. Deep wells supplement the project.<sup>1</sup>

Not only will these dams provide needed water and electric power, but also they will affect the way of life in rural areas in the direction of opportunities for increased production and improved standards of living. The role of education in this process is paramount. Chapter five will explore some of the educational implications.

#### Industries and Mining

Modern industries were introduced in Iran towards the middle of the 19th century. Industries made considerable progress during the reign of the former king. Profits from monopolies and income from taxes provided

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<sup>1</sup>Hatami, Aziz, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

the funds for the establishment of state-owned industry and factories. Technical development was greatly expanded in the country. In the fifties of the twentieth century industrial progress was accelerated. The industrial statistics published in December 1960 indicate that "... in 1960, there were 8,156 factories functioning throughout Iran."<sup>1</sup> This number is being increased every year by the establishment of a considerable number of new factories. "In 1959-60 permission was granted by the **Ministry of Industries and Mines** for establishing 455 new factories, and 139 factories received permits to start functioning and producing goods."<sup>2</sup> The increase in industrial production also represents the development of industry in the country. Industrial output in some goods as cement, sugar, cigarette has been considerably increased; for example the cement output was 65,000 metric tons in 1954-55, but it increased to 797,000 metric tons in 1960-61. This suggests that the constructive activities have been increased more than twelve times in six years.<sup>3</sup>

"According to the statistics published in April, 1961, there were 265,000 workers employed by the government-owned factories, engaged in oil, railway, fisheries, carpet, sugar and textile industries. The total number of workers employed in other factories was 142,630."<sup>4</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup>Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 708.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Source: Adapted from Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 178.

addition to the state-owned factories, there are large numbers of industrial organizations owned by people throughout the country. There is a great need for skilled workers all over the country; for instance "according to bulletin No. 6 of 1960 of the Supreme Economic Council, out of 6.5 million economically active men 1,370,000 were employed as workers in various mills, plants, factories, workshops and looms all over the country."<sup>1</sup>

As regards natural resources Mineral surveys indicate that Iran possesses extensive and widely varied mineral resources. Iran ranks fourth in the exploitation of oil production. Petroleum deposits have been found all over Persia and it is often said that the Iranian plateau stands on a sea of petroleum. In addition to the oil deposits, there were 671 explored mines in Iran at the end of June, 1961. Forty of these were discovered in 1960. Out of all the explored mines "323 were in operation in 1959"<sup>2</sup> whereas in 1955 only "one hundred mines had been exploited to some degree."<sup>3</sup> Even in the present stage of exploitation, in addition to the provision of consumption of the plants in the country, "... the export of minerals is an important source of the revenue to Iran."<sup>4</sup> The most significant exploited minerals are coal, iron, copper, chromium, lead, zinc, sulphur, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 788.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> Wilber, D.N., op. cit., p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The rapid developments and new activities have created new economic opportunities for youth. There is an urgent need for a great number of technologists, technicians, skilled workers, accountants, secretaries and various kinds of people who have learned some useful skill.

#### Need for Technicians and Foremen

As explained in the first chapter people from all walks of life have criticized the curricula for being academic and insufficiently related to current social needs. Even the king of Iran, who has the leadership in the new reforms and social improvement in the country, emphasizes the importance of vocational education which is neglected to a great extent. "Our biggest human shortage lies in the category of foremen, lead men (those who partly perform skilled work and partly supervise), and skilled workers. We need them for industrial production, construction, agriculture, and other purposes. The key point is that while we require thousands of top-level people, the intermediate ones I have just mentioned must be found by the hundreds of thousands."<sup>1</sup> Although the need for technicians and skilled workers is increasing, the education provided for more than 90% of students is academic. There were only 8,382 students in vocational schools, in 1959-60; it makes about 3% of the students enrolled in secondary schools in that school-year.<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>His Imperial Majesty, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, Mission for my Country (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1961), p. 253.

<sup>2</sup>infra, p. 89.

outline of the Third Five Year Plan indicates that "the main problem in the field of man-power is the shortage of skilled labour and technicians.... The Third Plan will create 130,000 new skilled jobs. About 150,000 men of the existing labour force will need specialized training to prepare them for other more technical jobs."<sup>1</sup> In the following table the need for the skilled workers in different lines is shown. A comparison of these statistical facts with the number of students in vocational schools will show clearly the neglect of vocational education and lack of sufficient relationship between educational outcome and the needs of the society.

#### Concluding Statement

The social structure in Iran has undergone a considerable evolution and fundamental changes. Economic development has created new needs. Secondary education has lagged behind in that it fails to meet effectively the needs of Iranian students and society concerning technical and vocational fields. In the following chapter an attempt is made to analyze the present secondary school curriculum in the light of modern principles of education and the needs of Iranian society.

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<sup>1</sup>Iran Almanac 1962, op. cit., p. 317.

TABLE 4  
SHORTAGE OF SKILLED HANDS IN VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	Total Shortage in	Labour need in	
	1957-58	1959-60	1962-63
Specialized occupation, technical	12,533	39,459	61,693
Management (Administrative and clerical)	2,398	4,843	8,677
Mining	20	24	41
Transportation	259	554	789
Technical industries involving conversion of raw materials into manufactured products	11,206	16,012	26,566
Physical science and relevant industries	1,811	2,398	3,475
Biology, Agriculture and relevant industries	356	481	700
Health and Medical	5,871	7,329	9,660
Social science and relevant occupations	4,432	7,584	11,328
Clerical lines	2,398	4,843	8,677
Railways and communications	130	311	476
Textile industries, ready made clothing and manufacture of leather goods	690	1,218	2,027
Timber industry, manufacture of wooden article etc.	2,130	1,617	2,933
Electric and electric engineering	1,475	2,452	3,867
Printing, binding and manufacture of paper articles	150	238	345
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,859</b>	<b>89,363</b>	<b>141,254</b>

Source: Iran Almanac 1962, op. cit., p. 790.



## CHAPTER IV

### A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CURRICULUM OF THE SECONDARY ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

#### Introduction

An academic curriculum<sup>1</sup> for a great majority of secondary school students, which is still customary in Iran, does not seem to contribute effectively to manpower resource development needed for economic and social improvement. An academic curriculum for nearly all secondary school youth might have been fitted to the needs of the country in the past, for, the secondary schools were expected to train qualified personnel for the civil service in the modernized government departments and organizations.<sup>2</sup> But at present, the graduates of the general secondary schools can not be absorbed, any more, in the government offices. The universities in the country, despite rapid expansion, provide places only for a limited number of secondary school graduates. The students from wealthy families, who have failed to enter universities in Iran, go abroad to continue their studies, but many<sup>3</sup> of them become alienated and do not return to the country. This seems to create economic, social, and psychological problems for both families and the government of Iran. "Thousands of Persians go abroad for their college years ... Year after year the Iranian government has had difficulty in arranging to supply the

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<sup>1</sup>An academic curriculum may be defined as a curriculum which prepares students for university studies, is concerned primarily with theoretical aspect of education rather than technical, commercial, rural, professional education, or related to the student's life problems.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>There are no available statistics to show the exact number of such students.

foreign currency required by these students. In 1957 there were about 4000 students in foreign countries.... It must be noted that many of these students become disoriented with respect to their own country and seek to remain abroad."<sup>1</sup> The number of students who are studying in foreign countries increases, to a great extent, every year. There were 17,142 Iranian students in foreign countries in 1962; "their number has been estimated to have increased to 20,000 in 1963."<sup>2</sup>

The remaining secondary school graduates, who neither succeed to enter universities in the country nor can afford to go abroad for university study, seem to face great difficulty in finding employment. They have not acquired practical knowledge or salable skills, during their studies at secondary school, and seem to fail to earn their living through independent activities. They seem to become frustrated and pessimist, and form a restless group which can not be ignored by the Government. Dr. Ali Amini, who was the Prime Minister in 1961, referring to the unemployment problem, in one of his press conferences, said: "Generally speaking there are two groups of unemployed. One consists of daily wage earning workers... the other group consists of the Diploma holders (alluding to high school graduates). For this group we have thought that after they are drafted in the army and have received four months of military training, they should be applied to road building and agricultural work so

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<sup>1</sup>Wilber, Donald, N., op. cit., p. 205.

<sup>2</sup>Ettela'at Air edition, No. 4226, January 1964.

that after the end of their military service they should have learned some skill which they can use in the free market with the help of the government."<sup>1</sup>  
(Italics mine).

The prescribed curriculum of the general secondary schools which is uniform and highly academic puts great emphasis on the theoretical, abstract, and verbal aspects of knowledge. It seems that the present curriculum has created a tendency in the graduates to avoid private enterprises and to seek white collar jobs, which are not so easily found. So they are sometimes accused to be lazy and idle. Dr. Kazem Vaddi, a professor of geography and history at the University of Tehran, criticizes one of the educational authorities who had accused the educated youth of being lazy and idle. Defending the young generation, Dr. Vaddi remarks,

If our youth are idle, the responsible authorities should confess it as a shameful fact rather than presenting it as an important discovery. When the number of slothful young men is so high that it involves a generation and paralyzes society, the youth are not to be accused of being indolent and lazy. They are the outcome of the present system of education and the present curriculum.... As the root of deficiencies and idleness stems from the educational organizations and curriculum in use, these should be revised and improved before anything else.<sup>2</sup>

The kind of education must be compatible with the needs of society. In the last thirty years the educational system has not been profoundly modified. The social situations, on the other hand, have undergone an evolu-

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<sup>1</sup>Ettela'at, Air edition, No. 3625, Nov. 29, 1961, quoted in Comparative Education Review, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>Ettela'at, Air edition, No. 4281, Feb. 23, 1964, p. 2.

tion and considerable changes, especially, in the last few years. The new needs, originating from industrial, agricultural, commercial development, social reforms, and emerging values, make it necessary to make a considerable revision in the curriculum and educational system. This chapter will deal with a critical analysis concerning the determination of the educational aims, the content of the curriculum, the present system of evaluation, the organization of secondary schools, and discrepancy between educational outcome and the needs of society. In the light of this analysis some suggestions will be made that might help giving direction to the efforts to solve these educational problems.

#### Analysis of the Aims of Education in Secondary Schools.

The main stated aims of education in the general secondary schools are (a) to give general education which is assumed to be useful for all students in life, and (b) to prepare students for higher education.<sup>1</sup> The basic principles of life or living give direction to the program of studies in secondary schools. These goals or principles have to be more than mere statements or stimulating phrases if they are to affect the educational program. One of the basic reasons for the failure of organizing curriculum in secondary schools to meet the students' needs seems to be the selection of goals for educational programs which may not be basic goals in the lives of the students. The following is a critical analysis of the aims of secondary education as set by the makers of the curriculum in Iran.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 10.

1. The aims are general and vague rather than specific and clear.

The writers of the curriculum have begun with the statement of the general aims, and have made a leap from the aims to the subject matter. No attempt is made to reduce the aims into specific objectives, to concrete activities or behavioral terms. Since the course of study is a vital part of the curriculum it seems necessary to analyze these goals to specific objectives in order that the true relationship of the course of study and the curriculum to education may be apparent. This analysis will also be helpful to make it clear whether the sought goals have been achieved or not.

2. The aims seem to be to prepare the individual for a fixed society rather than to train him for a dynamic life in a changing environment.

It seems that the makers of the curriculum see the role of the school as transmitting of cultural heritage and tend to stress that kind of education which acquaints learners with important aspects of that heritage. The inclusion of some subjects to provide general information with the presupposition that they will be useful for all students in their future life may represent such a tendency. "To realize this end a part of the curriculum has been devoted to the study of subjects as literature, history, geography, civics, and religious education."<sup>1</sup>

Since individual experiences are dynamic and society is changing, education should prepare students for a dynamic life in such a society. As pointed out in chapter three, rapid economic and social changes have been

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the Secondary Academic Schools, op. cit., p. iii.

happening in the life of Iranian people. These changes have created new needs and ideals. The aim of secondary education, as preparation for university studies through offering academic courses, served the society in the past by providing qualified officials for civil service in government departments,<sup>1</sup> but at present, it has created economic, social, and political problems due to the lack of needs for the graduates of the academic schools. A program which is determined by the aims should be kept up-to-date in order that the lag between society and the school shall be as small as possible. One of the aims of secondary education should be to help the student to adjust to his changing environment.

3. Secondary education aims at the preservation of the past society rather than also aiming at the improvement of the present society.

Iranian society is undergoing a modernization resulting partly from western influence and partly from internal conditions. A society is being built with more freedom, security, justice, equality of opportunity for both sexes and other western ambitions. But education in Iran tends to admire the old educational principles and traditions without trying to cultivate critical and creative thinking. The curriculum is designed and prescribed by central authorities. The text-books are written under their directions. Education is thought to be a means to train citizens to support the existing social order. The study of history is confined to the presentation of facts included in the text-books written under the control of the Ministry of Education. The causes of historical events are

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p.8.

not so much explained; or they are interpreted in a way to support the views of the authorities. The study of civics is also limited to giving information concerning the present system of government, the power and duties of different authorities. Non-critical obedience towards rulers, and social outlook of the old generation have been admired. Such a study does not seem to cultivate the idea of appraisal and the development of creative thought. It is also doubtful whether such method creates the feeling of responsibility towards the kind of civic activities which might be conducive to the improvement of conditions. It is not enough that the educational program follows the social order of the past and try to train non-thinking submissive citizens. it must anticipate what it ought to be in future, and therefore, help to create it.

4. Greater emphasis has been put upon the expectation of the realization of national solidarity rather than a balance between the needs of the individual and the overall needs of the national society.

The goals of education have been determined by the experts. Prescription of a similar curriculum for all, which aims at the realization of similar goals, tends to show that the experts have not tried to discover the individual's objectives in a scientific way through the study and analysis of the learners' needs, their environments, and the needs of society. No one can ignore the importance of national unity, especially for the people of Iran who have different cultural patterns, speak in different languages, and live in a large country, but the life

of society depends upon its component parts, that is, the individuals. Paying less attention to the individual needs might be harmful for the continuous life of society. Some of the major needs of the secondary school students, to the realization of which less attention has been paid in the determination of the aims and arrangement of the curriculum, are the following ones:

a) Economic needs - A student in Iran needs help to find out his ability and aptitude in order to choose an occupation, to acquire a saleable skill and a feeling of respect for manual work, and to know how to arrange his personal finances.

b) Psychological and social needs - He needs help to understand himself and others, to develop his personality, to accept responsibility, to develop a feeling of respect for others and for humanity as a whole, and a tendency for cooperation and friendship with others, to appreciate family life, homemaking, and to know how to maintain democratic family relations.

c) Civic responsibility - He needs help to develop the habit of social activity to improve society, the sensibility towards social justice, a constructive critical judgement, the skills of active participation in planned change.<sup>1</sup>

The present curriculum tends to ignore these needs which are considered so important by modern educators.

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<sup>1</sup>The needs of the secondary school student will be given in details in chapter five which deals with recommendations.



### Critical Analysis of the Present Curriculum

The purpose of this analysis is to examine the contents of the curriculum in order to clarify to what extent the offered courses can realize the sought aims. In the meantime an attempt will be made to present the major defects of the present curriculum.

1. The curriculum is preparatory for higher studies rather than being also terminal. The curriculum consisting of highly academic courses neither provides students with education useful and practical in life nor helps them to acquire certain knowledge for a special profession. It does not include even any courses about accounting or white collar job though many of the students who fail to enter universities tend to be employed in a private or government office. Some supporters of the present curriculum may argue that the curriculum being constructed for the secondary academic schools should necessarily include highly academic courses. But considering that a majority of students do not get access to higher studies due to the limited number of provided places, economic reasons, elimination from school, etc, this justification does not seem sound. For example the following statement by the Minister of Education, speaking to a gathering of high school principals and heads of educational departments may represent this evidence. "This curriculum cannot safeguard the happiness and welfare of the future generation. In spite of the efforts to expand university places, a large majority of high school graduates who apply neither find places nor can they find other suitable employment. Those who do not enter the university remain idle

and constitute an explosive social and political group."<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand the secondary academic schools in Iran are not provided, only, for a selected intelligent group of students who have been proved to have ability for higher studies. Less than 10% of the students are enrolled in vocational or teacher training schools,<sup>2</sup> and the remainder are studying in the general secondary schools. The present curriculum which emphasizes the academic aspect of education tends to neglect many important immediate and future needs of a majority of students.

2. The curriculum is abstract and theoretical<sup>3</sup> rather than related also to real life activities.

For the most part subjects are merely theoretical with little relation to life activities. In the Persian language course, for instance, the study of grammar and literature, with emphasis upon the memorization of the biographies of Iranian poets, writers, and famous learned men, throughout history, have been included. In the fourth secondary, where specialization in studies begins, the study of the history of literature starts with the study of the first poetry after Islam. Despite great emphasis on the study of Persian, there are often complaints concerning the student's knowledge of their mother tongue.

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<sup>1</sup>Manoochehr Afzal, "Problems of Secondary Education in Iran", Comparative Education Review, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>infra, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup>A theoretical curriculum may be defined as a curriculum which is concerned primarily with giving facts and information, and emphasizes verbalism and memorization rather than learning by doing or changing the learner's behavior.

The history course, in the first cycle, which is arranged chronologically, includes many details concerning the history of Iran, from the very beginning up to the present time. It is repeated again in the second cycle with the inclusion of more details.<sup>1</sup> The history course also covers the mediaval and modern history of so many foreign countries with less relevant details, for example, the Second Republic and the reign of the Napoleon III in France. But nothing has been mentioned about the present situation in this country.

The grammar of the Arabic language is to be studied in the literary branch in such an extended way that one can easily claim it leaves out only a few grammatical points of classical Arabic. The aim, as stated in the preamble,<sup>1</sup> is to enable students to read Arabic sources about ancient Iran, and understand the Qur'an. But the outcome is very disappointing. Students can hardly succeed in expressing themselves in Arabic or understanding a text written in this language. The head of the Research and Curriculum Department in Tehran who was appointed recently remarked that, "The practical and useful aspect of the curriculum is neglected to a great extent. Much emphasis has been put on the theoretical aspect of instruction, the aim of which is assumed to be strengthening the mind and stuffing it with mere information."<sup>2</sup> Even psychology, to the study of which only four hours have been devoted<sup>3</sup> in a three year

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the First Cycle, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with the head of the Research and Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Education in Iran, June 26, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the Secondary Academic Schools, op. cit., p. 66.

program of the arithmetics and natural science branches, is limited primarily to the definition of psychological terms. The study of psychology, instead of being an integral part of the curriculum is considered part of the logic and philosophy course in the sixth class, and has the lowest place in the program of studies.

3. In being uniform the curriculum ignores individual differences.

Psychological research has clearly revealed the fact that each student has his own unique pattern of capacities. The differences of abilities within each class exist not only because of the effect of heredity which is the most important factor, but also due to the student's background and his growth pattern. Without considering such differences the makers of the curriculum emphasize that every subject which is included in the curriculum should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil. The implementation of the prescribed curriculum is secured by imposing formal state examination and rigid regulations and directions. "The teacher must teach the whole book<sup>1</sup> without leaving out a single part or a single page. He must call the students' attention to the point that they will be tested for the whole content of the book."<sup>2</sup> The curriculum should be flexible in order to provide opportunities for differences in ability, as well as variation in interests. The problem of ability becomes important as we consider the rapid increase in the number of secondary school students.

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<sup>1</sup>Text-books usually replace the courses of study, in Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the General Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 12.

4. The curriculum seems to ignore the differences which exist between communities.

By their continuance to refuse giving freedom to the teachers to adapt courses of study to the needs of the learners, considering differences in their environments, the makers of the curriculum tend to ignore considerable variations between communities. The economic, social, and physical conditions among communities vary to a great extent owing to tremendous differences in climatic conditions, localities, and the existence of mineral resources. The favorable conditions in the north and north-west of the country, for instance, make it necessary to put much emphasis upon agricultural education whereas in some cities such as Tehran, Abadan, and Isfahan industrial and commercial education should be considered important. In the north-west the student needs more to know how to protect himself against severe cold and such diseases as bronchitis, during long winters, and in the south of the country he should know how to defend himself against hot weather and the prevalent diseases in the area such as trachoma.

The concept of education, now commonly held by progressive educators, is that learning is the process of changing the behavior pattern through appropriate experience situations. This requires the implementation of a functional curriculum. But a functional curriculum should be flexible both in the content and organization. "Variation in climatic conditions, cultural differences, and differences in occupational activities require flexibility in the curriculum to meet markedly different community environments."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bossing, Nelson, L., Teaching in Secondary Schools (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952), p. 35

5. The curriculum consists of overcrowded isolated courses rather than selected, relevant and integrated ones.

The present curriculum includes courses of study some of which seem to be irrelevant considering the students' interests, needs, and abilities at certain stages of development. It seems that without sifting out unnecessary materials supplementary subjects have been added. In 1956, for example, courses in philosophy, logic, and civics have been included in the curriculum of the secondary academic schools without omitting other subjects of studies. Every year students have to sit for examinations in nine groups of subjects. Each group may involve three or four diversified subjects. The Persian language group, for example, includes the history of literature, grammar, reading, spelling, and composition in the program of studies of the natural science branch. One of the reasons of the Students' failure in being proficient in their studies may be due to the lack of sufficient time. Since, the great amount of information requires longer time to be imparted by experimentation in laboratory, as well as by practice. Students memorize subject matter and forget it easily after examinations. The makers of the curriculum have assigned, for instance, only one period (fifty minutes) for teaching the history of "The Second World War, its results, the independence of Pakistan and India with a reference to the United Nations."<sup>1</sup>

Imposing an overcrowded curriculum may prevent the student from getting adequate knowledge in the courses related to his specialization.

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, The Curriculum of the General Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 83.

Dr. Issa Sadiq the former minister of education and a prominent professor in education criticizing the present curriculum and its outcome remarked, "Out of 600 graduates of secondary academic schools, in the natural science branch, participating in the entrance examination of the school of science, in the university of Tehran, in September 1957, only fifteen students had attained an average of above eight out of twenty."<sup>1</sup> The educational authorities being aware of the problem have set regulations saying that a student in secondary academic school will be promoted even if he attains less than required grades in two subjects, for example, one out of twenty in English and seven in physics.<sup>2</sup> This remedial measure beside creating difficulties for teachers in the teaching process, does not seem to solve the problem, since despite it 20% of students are eliminated from schools every year.

The curriculum should be rich and include diversified courses not to overburden students, but to offer opportunities for them to select from among elective courses, with the help of the educational guidance system, the courses which suit their abilities and help them develop their latent potentialities.

6. The arrangement of the curriculum tends to impose the logic of the subject matter disciplines rather than utilizing the interests of students and considering their maturation.

The concept of continuity has led the makers of the curriculum

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<sup>1</sup>Sadiq, Issa, "The level of the students' knowledge has been lowered", Yaghma Review (XII, No. 5, April 1958), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>supra, p. 20.

to build up an order of learning which has rested its case upon relationships of the subject matter itself; in other words sequence seems to be thought the orderly development of parts within a special field of knowledge. Such an arrangement in every subject does not seem to be helpful in the learning process. Since it does not take into account the child's interests, needs, and maturation. The child is not ready to start with the completed experience of the adult. It is more difficult for a child to begin with the history of ancient times, which is something abstract to him, than to start with contemporary history of his own country. "The logical point of view ... assumes that the development has a certain positive stage of fulfilment. It neglects the process and considers the outcome."<sup>1</sup> The makers of the curriculum agree that the child learns better by beginning with the familiar and going to unfamiliar, but contradict themselves by imposing the logic of the subject matter disciplines, in the offered courses, which requires beginning with the unfamiliar.

The opposite extreme, that is, the arrangement of the subject matter based merely on the child's interests, also, does not seem sound to many educators. It may lead to incoherent learning and confusion on the part of the learners. "A sequence of basic concepts requires an advance agreement among teachers in a given school or community that certain ideas of major importance will be discussed during the time the child spends in school and these will be discussed at times most appropriate

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<sup>1</sup>Merian, J.L., Child life and the Curriculum (New York: World Book Co., 1920), p. 25, quoted in Brubacher, J., History of the Problems of Education, op. cit., p. 305.



to the maturation of the learner. Such a sequence is a guide in the selection and grouping of subject matter."<sup>1</sup>

7. The school program is too departmentalized to provide opportunities for guidance.

The program of each class, in the general secondary school, seems to be too departmentalized. Every student has to attend five periods a day, usually, to study five different subject matters. He is often led from one class to another and from one teacher to another teacher. Sometimes it happens that a course, for instance English, in one class is taught by two different teachers - one teaches reading and the other translation and spelling. Every teacher is responsible to complete the teaching of the amount of subjects which are predetermined and assigned in detail by the makers of the curriculum. Such situations offer little tendency and opportunity for guidance. Teachers and pupils meet each other a few times a week in the formal atmosphere of the class, hence they do not become well acquainted. Effective guidance needs a continuous warm and friendly student-teacher relationship which is hardly provided in the departmentalized school program. A teacher should know at least something about the student's family background, his physical health and handicaps, his mental and emotional health, his test scores, social adjustment, etc., in order to know him better and help him in solving his academic and emotional problems. Every student needs help to assess his

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<sup>1</sup>Leonard, J. Paul, Developing the Secondary School Curriculum (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1946), p. 137.

ability and potentiality to choose courses of study which suit him. In the absence of a systematic guidance program in Iran the teachers' view based on the careful study of the student might be very valuable for him. But as a matter of fact a prescribed subject-centered curriculum does not consider guidance as an essential part of the school's responsibility. According to the regulations the principal of a school, in Iran, must dismiss a student who fails in the second year of his study in the same class without caring about the reasons of his failure.

The outcome of the Present System  
of Education in Iran

1. The curriculum tends to neglect the majority of the students who are dropped out of school for different reasons.

"On the average only 80% of the students enrolled in a class of secondary school succeed in entering the following higher class."<sup>1</sup> In other words 20% of them are eliminated every year. This fact means that out of 100 students who enter the first secondary grade only about 25 students succeed to pass Leaving Examination and get a Diploma. In other words the college preparatory curriculum tends to neglect 75% of students. The students' failure may stem, to some extent, from the very existence of the rigid, overloaded and inflexible curriculum which does not provide opportunities for the individual student to develop according to his ability. The imposition of formal examination might be another reason for their failure. The great task of educators is to discover the backgrounds, aptitudes, interests and capacities of the individual

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education, Pictured Educational Statistics, op. cit.

student and then to utilize this information to provide courses which help him develop intellectually, emotionally and physically.

2. Secondary Education tends to neglect the farmers who form about 70% of the population.

"In 1961-62, there were about 300,855 students in the secondary schools throughout the country. There were 274,691 students in the towns and 26,164 in rural areas."<sup>1</sup> According to the same statistical source 69% of the population in Iran are living in rural areas. Considering the population of Iran (mid year 1958 estimate is 19,723,000) these facts represent that only 0.02% (two persons out of 10,000 people) of the population in the rural areas attend secondary schools. On the other hand very little attention is paid to the provision of agricultural schools to educate young farmers and to help them improve their productive activities. In 1962-63 there were only 822 students in the Agricultural Secondary Schools. It is only 0.2% of Secondary School Students in the country (see table 6, p. 89). Strange enough the number of students has decreased from 1,632, in 1957-58 to 822 in 1962-63.

It seems that, besides their economic problems, there is a tendency in the farmers to refuse sending their children to secondary schools. Since the curriculum does not seem to be related to their life situation and the subjects of study are of little use for them in solving their every day life problems.

On the other hand agricultural secondary schools seem to fail in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

attracting young farmers, because:

a) They are often established in the cities rather than in rural areas. This makes it difficult for the farmers to send their children to these schools.

b) There is a great diversity and variation in climatic conditions, and agricultural activities in different areas. So the prescribed uniform curriculum of these schools is less able to cope with the local needs and the farmers' problems.

c) The teachers are not awarded freedom to adapt curriculum or to include new courses to meet the local needs.

d) A fixed curriculum for the agricultural teacher training schools, throughout the country, fail to train qualified agricultural school teachers. It is doubtful to think that they acquire sufficient practical knowledge related to the needs of the areas where they are appointed to teach.

3. Secondary school graduates are often frustrated in their academic ambitions.

The following statistical facts reveal how a considerable number of the graduates of the secondary academic schools are frustrated due to the failure in their academic ambitions. In addition to the limited number of provided places in universities, there exists a lack of balance between the number of students in the academic branches and the provided places in the relevant colleges for which they are trained. Chart 2 (page 87) shows that the percentage of students attending the

different branches of the secondary academic schools are as follows: Natural Science branch 53%, mathematics 31%, literary branch 13% and home economics 3%, whereas the proportion of provided places in the different colleges of universities are: Medical Faculties and others which accept the graduates of the natural science branch 27.1%, faculties that admit the graduates of mathematics branch 15.5% and Faculties of Letters 38.7%. The remainder 18.7% seem to be provided places in the colleges that accept the graduates of different branches such as the Military college. Such discrepancy, therefore, has forced many students to study in colleges for which they are not prepared in secondary schools. For instance out of 197 students enrolled in the Faculty of Letters in Tabriz (the central city of the East Azerbaidjan which is a county in the north-west of Iran) only 66 students were the graduates of the literary branch of the secondary academic schools. The remaining 131 students consisted of the graduates of scientific branches, - 81 of the natural science and 50 of mathematics branch.<sup>1</sup> It would be safe to conclude that very few students have developed new interests and that most of the 131 remaining students were without interest or prerequisite knowledge and background.

As pointed out, occasionally, the limited number of provided places in the universities of Iran, is another reason for the students' frustration. Table 5 (page 87) represents that on the average only about 8% of the graduates who have taken part in the competitive entrance examination

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<sup>1</sup>Drawn out by the writer from the registrar's books of the University of Tabriz.

of the different colleges (except school of Arts) of the University of Tabriz, in 1961-62 and 1962-63, have succeeded to enter university. Considering the students' elimination during their secondary school studies (about 75%), and the failure of a majority of graduates in entering universities it seems one can conclude that the academic type of education is less able to realize the expectations and aspirations of a majority of students.

4. Considering the needs of the country less development has been made in the field of vocational education.

The students in technical and different vocational schools consisted only 2.7% of secondary school students in 1962-63. Table 6 (on page 89) shows that the percentage has gradually decreased during the last few years. On the other hand the same table represents that the students of the general secondary schools have increased rapidly. The number has stepped from 188,803 to 326,982 in five years, but the increase in vocational secondary school population is only 2,730. At the same time the needs of the Plan Organization, which is responsible for the implementation of developmental plans in Iran, have considerably increased.<sup>1</sup> Considering the new developments in the fields of industry, communication, transportation, commerce, mechanization in agriculture and irrigation owing to the building of many big and small dams, there is an increasing need for foremen and technicians. The need for skilled hands in different occupations, which has been, also, emphasized by responsible authorities and the experts of the Plan Organization in Iran, make it necessary to pay special attention to the development of vocational education.

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<sup>1</sup> supra, Table 4, p. 64.

TABLE 5

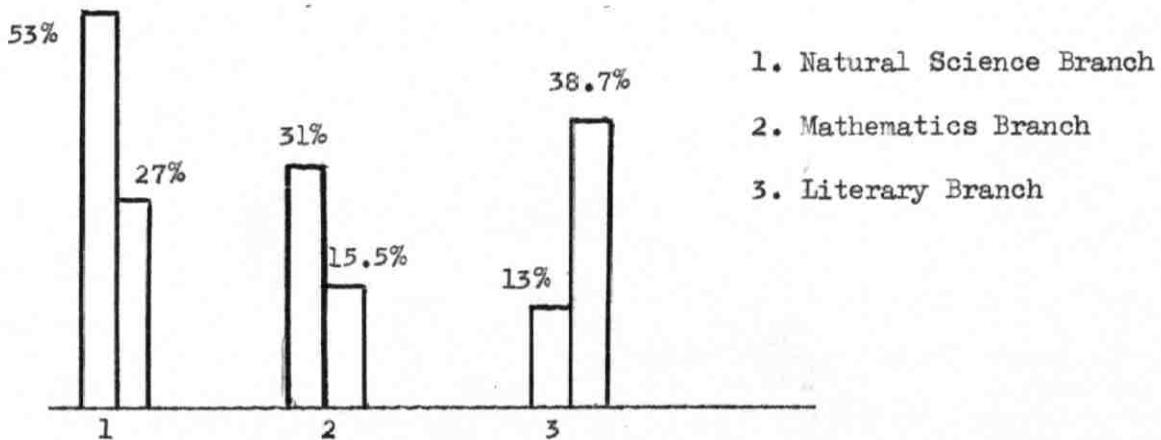
NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND PROVIDED PLACES IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF TABRIZ IN 1961-62 AND 1962-63.

The Name of the College	Year	Number of Applicants	Provided places	Percentage
School of Medicine	61-62	864	76	8.9 %
" " "	62-63	902	101	11.2 %
School of Pharmacy	61-62	510	31	6 %
" " "	62-63	576	46	8 %
School of Engineering	61-62	295	30	10.2 %
" " "	62-63	494	31	6.2 %
School of Agriculture	61-62	482	30	6.2 %
" " "	62-63	597	40	6.7 %
School of Arts	61-62	889	356	40 %
" " "	62-63	965	298	32.3 %

Source: Drawn out, by the writer, from the registrar's books of the University of Tabriz.

CHART 2

This chart represents the lack of balance between the number of students in different branches of secondary academic schools and the provided places in the universities that accept the graduates of each branch



Source: Ministry of Education, Pictured Statistics on Education in Iran.

Teaching a saleable skill should be given more importance, since it may provide for 75% of students, who are dropped out of school during their studies in secondary school, with a better chance in getting an employment and earning their living. The accumulated data about the present professions of the graduates of the technical school of Tabriz represent that a great majority of them are engaged in technical activities. On the other hand considering that the Government has undertaken some protective role towards the youth<sup>1</sup> by giving long-term loans to encourage them for independent and productive activities, it seems that teaching a saleable skill is more effective in meeting the economic needs of the learner and society than mere theoretical and academic education.

The main problem in the development of vocational education as stated by educational authorities is the shortage of funds, but it is questionable whether the cost of teaching a saleable skill, in the general secondary schools, considering the interest and aptitude of the student, will be too difficult to provide.

Many modern educators, being realistic, have given priority to that kind of education which helps the learner to earn his living. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) answering his own question, 'how to live completely' has arranged the aims of education in the order of their survival value concerning the individual and society. "First of all, education should aim to teach the art of self-realization; second it should teach one how to earn his living."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> supra, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Brubacher, John, S., Modern Philosophies of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1962), p. 16.



TABLE 6

A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IRAN

Type of Institution	1957-58 <sup>1</sup>		1959-60 <sup>2</sup>		1962-63 <sup>3</sup>	
	Students	Percentage	Students	Percentage	Students	Percentage
General Secondary Schools	188,803	94.7 %	255,799	95.1 %	326,982	96.4 %
Total of Vocational and Agricultural Schools	7,228	3.7 %	8,382	3 %	9,958	2.9 %
(Vocational Schools)	(5,596)	(2.8 %)	(7,400)	(2.7%)	(9,136)	(2.7 %)
(Agricultural Schools)	(1,632)	(0.9 %)	(982)	(0.3%)	(822)	(0.2 %)
Teacher Training Schools	3,365	1.6 %	4,771	1.9 %	2,369 <sup>4</sup>	0.7 %
Total number of Secondary School Students	199,396	100 %	268,952	100 %	339,309	100 %

## Sources:

1. Educational statistics published by the Ministry of Education.
2. World Survey of Education, Vol. III. p. 683.
3. Sadiq, I., History of Education in Iran, op. cit., p.498.

4. Excluding the students of special classes where secondary school graduates are trained to teach in Primary Schools.

### Critical Analysis of the Present Evaluation System

Evaluation is an integral part of any school program. There is a vast difference between examining the educational growth of a student in terms of his individual capacities and abilities and that of considering the degree he meets certain grade standards which are determined arbitrarily. The present system of examination does not seem to be a sound way to measure the achieved goals which are set by educational authorities.

1. The examination tends to measure the acquisition of facts and information rather than the achievement of the sought goals.

The existing regulations on the examinations and promotion, based upon a grading system, and giving great importance to formal examinations, imply a non-thinking type of evaluation. It aims to measure the amount of information and acquisition of some mechanical habits such as solving a mathematics problem, rather than the degree to which educational objectives have been transferred and incorporated into the students personality. These examinations seem to ignore the **essence** of the basic aims of education, that is, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual development of the individual. Educational objectives set by the curriculum makers do not imply such evaluation, but imposing a subject-centered curriculum and formal examinations tend to lead to these unsatisfactory and incomplete results.

2. The examination has become an end rather than being a means to determine the effectiveness of the offered courses and the methods of teaching.

Examinations now have become an end, for both teachers and students. Holding of Leaving Certificate (Diploma) seems to be the most

important aim of a majority of students as well as their parents. Since, the certificate is officially considered one of the main required qualifications for the employment in government organizations. Even the ability of the teachers and the standard of the schools are measured by the number of students who pass the examinations. A kind of statistics showing the number of students who succeed in the entrance examinations of universities and the names of the high schools where they have studied is prepared annually with the collaboration of universities and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry sometimes circulates the results expressing its own appreciation and concern about them.

3. Examinations tend to force teachers to import information and to teach only the subject matters rather than utilizing better ways to achieve the educational objectives.

This kind of evaluation prevents teachers from being creative and stifles their initiative concerning the determination of subject-matter and the improvement of the method of teaching. The authorities interfere in the implementation of the curriculum by setting and imposing formal and rigid regulations. "For the most part the implementation of the curriculum is a professional function. It is a predominant responsibility of the teaching staff of the school for which the curriculum was designed."<sup>1</sup> The teacher's responsibility has been limited now to complete the teaching of the curriculum contents. It is strange to say that sometimes even the required number of lessons in prescribed textbook for teaching a foreign language, is determined from above.

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<sup>1</sup>Beauchamp, George, A., Planning the Elementary School Curriculum (New York: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1956), p. 260.

4. Examinations tend to frustrate many of students rather than guide them and reinforce learning.

The formal examination often frustrates students and force them to repeat many courses in which their achievements have been satisfactory; for, students have to succeed at least in sixteen subjects of study included in the program of each class, otherwise they will not be promoted. This kind of evaluation fails to reinforce learning, since it does not provide opportunities for the individual student to develop according to his own ability. According to educational statistics about 20% of students in each class are eliminated from schools every year. "On the average only 80% of the students enrolled in a grade of secondary school succeed to enter the following higher grade."<sup>1</sup> This fact means that out of one hundred students enrolled in the first grade of secondary schools only twenty five students pass final examination and get a certificate. Examinations seem to be one of the main reasons of the failure of 75% of students. On the other hand this method of evaluation which gives such a great concern for grades sometimes leads less able students to use dishonest means to gain them. This is contradictory to the realization of some educational objectives as developing ethical character and training a good citizen.

Evaluation should involve the measurement of all aspects of students' growth concerning educational objectives. "Evaluation means the gathering, recording, interpreting of evidence on student growth in

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, Pictured Educational Statistics, op. cit.

educational objectives."<sup>1</sup> In general evaluation should be an effort in the light of which sound judgement can be made on the basis of evidence of the relative success of educational endeavors.

Criticism of the Requirements for Admission to the  
Second Cycle of Secondary Schools

The main requirement to enrol in the second cycle, where students are trained to enter a university, is that a student must earn a grade of at least twelve (12 out of twenty) in the relevant group of subjects. For instance he has to get at least an average of twelve in the mathematics group of subjects, in the third grade of the first cycle, in order to be admitted to the mathematics branch.<sup>2</sup>

It is doubtful to think that this is a reasonable criterion to conclude that a student has ability for university studies. The mentioned criterion seems to be less reliable and valid, because:

a) The examination questions of the third grade in the first cycle, set by the teachers in each public school, are subjective and in a different level of difficulty. Hence the results of evaluation may not be valid. It is doubtful to think that they can show the ability of a student for academic studies.

b) It seems that there is a tendency in the managers of some private schools to promote a majority of students by giving them good grades. The justification seems to be that this policy will satisfy

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<sup>1</sup>Edward A. Krug, Curriculum Planning (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), p. 252, quoted in Beauchamp, G.A., op. cit., p. 262.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p.22.

many parents and students, who are interested in getting a certificate, and will attract more students to enrol in the school.

c) No intelligence tests<sup>1</sup> are given to determine the student's I.Q. which is of paramount importance to succeed in academic studies. As at the age of sixteen<sup>2</sup> more constancy in intelligence is expected, there is less probability to do injustice to the students who develop late. The view held by modern educators is that above average and superior students have ability for university studies.

d) No records other than school achievement grades, from the teachers of the student, concerning his interests, ability, aptitude, progress, etc., are accumulated and consulted in the admission of the student.

e) The convincing fact which may represent the invalidity of the present criterion is that a great majority of the students who have planned to continue their studies after completing the first cycle course, enter academic schools in some way, whereas in a heterogeneous group intelligent students who are fit for university studies consist of a minority of the group.

#### Criticism of Building the Curriculum

1. The curriculum is made by experts and subject specialists in the capital city rather than with the cooperation of the teachers who must put the curriculum into practice.

Considering the procedure by which a curriculum is made or

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<sup>1</sup>At present there is not an active guidance system in Iran and I.Q. tests are not given to students.

<sup>2</sup>Schooling in Iran begins at the age of seven. A student is not usually less than sixteen when he enters the second cycle of a secondary school.

revised, in Iran,<sup>1</sup> it can be seen that students, parents, teachers and local educational councils have not been awarded freedom to become involved in its construction. Curriculum building is relegated to subject specialists, experts, and central educational authorities. Local educational councils and teachers have not been given freedom, at least, to adapt the curriculum to meet the local needs of students. The National Educational Conference,<sup>2</sup> held in Tehran, in the summer of 1957 was the first step towards seeking the view of the teachers' representatives about the aims of education and the ways of their achievement. But it was neither sufficient nor so helpful, since the final decision was taken by central educational authorities on the basis of educational principles and policy they believed in. On the other hand, although teachers in Iran are, in general, relatively a highly literate group, yet it is doubtful to accept that a limited number of teachers are fully aware of the students' needs and their parents' aims. To discover the learners' needs and the relative success of educational endeavor, it might be more helpful to consider each school as a unit in which all teachers will participate in the discussion and study concerning the contents of the curriculum. Teachers will also ask students and their parents to cooperate in the determination of educational aims. The accumulation of the views of these units and a careful study of them will provide valuable helps for the makers of curriculum in discovering common

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 30-32.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 32.

aims as well as some specific objectives of students in various communities. In the light of such study they may design a core curriculum and help teachers in the making of diversified courses to meet specific objectives of students. Teachers involvement in curriculum construction might have, also, the following advantages:

a) They will be encouraged to develop their professional efficiency through their personal studies and attending in-service teacher training seminars.

b) Teachers are more likely to support and implement effectively decisions which they or their representatives have had a part in making.

c) A broader understanding and deeper sympathy will, probably, be created between the teaching staff and administrative groups.

2. Curriculum revision seems to be the adoption, addition of subjects or putting emphasis upon some of them rather than taking into account new changes in society, individual needs, and educational theories.

Curriculum revision, as it exists in Iran, is crystallized and reduced to the addition, subtraction, or adoption of some limited subjects or putting more emphasis upon some of them. The procedure of revision seems to be inadequate to lead to the introduction of new courses of study. The makers of the curriculum tend to be conservative and disregard modern educational theories, new social needs, and the emerging needs of the learner. Keeping the old subject matters, refusing to introduce new courses may represent the fact that revision is not based upon a systematic investigation concerning the new educational needs and



without taking into consideration the degree to which the curriculum in practice secures the realizational objectives. Such revisions fail to bring about satisfactory changes in the curriculum. The Minister of Education, Dr. Parviz Natel Khanlari who is also a professor of Persian literature in the University of Tehran said, "Each year we spend, on the average, about 10,000 Rials (\$125) on each student and in this way we lose one billion Rials annually; for, each year about 100,000 young men enter society without having acquired useful skills or knowledge. Consequently we waste our budget and national wealth. The Ministry of education must aim at two things: One to provide elementary education for all in order to give every body a sense of human dignity, and the other is to train individuals according to the needs of the different organizations in the country."<sup>1</sup> (Italics mine).

3. Re-examination and revision of the curriculum is periodic rather than being continuous and based on constant research.

The last revision, or better, the last rearrangement of syllabi in the curriculum of the first cycle was made in 1956. The preambles concerning the curriculum of the general secondary schools represent that the new changes, made in revision, are limited only to the inclusion of the study of civics in both cycles and the study of philosophy and logic in the program of the sixth secondary grade.

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<sup>1</sup>Ettela'at Air edition, No. 4196, November 10, 1963, p. 2.

Since that time important changes have happened in the life of the people in Iran, but the curriculum has remained constant, though even the revised curriculum seemed to fail to meet the needs of students due to lack of flexibility. The implementation of land reform, the increasing participation of women in social activities, a considerable increase in the number of secondary school students,<sup>1</sup> the decrease of need for white collar workers, the development of industrial, commercial, and technical activities are some of the considerable changes in the life of Iranian people.<sup>2</sup> To give an illustration, the number of telephones (automatic ones) in Tehran, which was about 30,000 lines in 1955, "has been stepped up to 67,000 lines in 1960 .... In other parts of Iran the same Siemen Type automatic telephone systems has been installed, in 1960, in seven cities in the country with 22000 lines."<sup>3</sup> All these changes in the fields of industry, agriculture, commerce, communication, social relationship, etc. have created new needs for skilled workers, mechanics, technicians, clerical profession, competent and skilled farmers, understanding new family relationship, and needs for creative and initiative individuals who can adjust themselves to new and everchanging environments. A fixed curriculum which is not constantly revised tends to ignore such new needs.

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<sup>1</sup>In 1957-58 there were 188,803 students in general secondary schools; the number increased to 326,982 in 1963.

<sup>2</sup>supra, pp. 49-63.

<sup>3</sup>Iran Almanac 1962 and Book of Facts, op. cit., p. 763.

A curriculum should be examined and evaluated continuously.

Rapid social change in contemporary life demands on-going curriculum development for secondary schools by utilizing every available procedure to keep it dynamic as social life. "As education proceeds from its present status towards one that is more significant in the realization of the practical and social aspects of adjustment of individual members in society, it will be more apparent that constant reorganization and revision of teaching materials and methods of procedure are essential."<sup>1</sup>

### Summary

The present curriculum which is highly academic and aims at giving general education and preparation for university studies is less able to meet the needs of students and Iranian society. The secondary education in Iran instead of being the symbol of hope and confidence of the future generation, and playing an effective role in the development and improvement of the life conditions of Iranian people, tends to create many economic, social, and psychological problems. There is a great need for a considerable revision in the method and process of planning, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum, and in the organization of the educational system in secondary schools. Such a revision seems to be necessary to make secondary education compatible with the dynamic nature of the society.

In the following chapter an attempt is made to give some suggestions concerning the curriculum of the secondary academic schools. It is hoped that these suggestions, which will be made in the light of the analyses in the previous chapters, will be of some use in the solution of problems concerning secondary education in Iran.

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<sup>1</sup>Draper, Edgar, Marian, Principles and Techniques of Curriculum Making (New York: Appleton-Century Company, 1936), p. 32.

## CHAPTER V

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

The problems mentioned in the previous chapter necessitate making a considerable revision in the curriculum and in the organization of secondary schools in Iran. Secondary education must be brought into harmony with the needs of society and those of the secondary school population. Furthermore, education should aim at the improvement of the present society. To achieve these important aims the responsible authorities would have to introduce a flexible curriculum, to develop terminal schools, to emphasize particularly technical and agricultural education, and to limit the number of students in the academic secondary schools. Since the most essential element in the realization of educational aims is the nature of the curriculum and the method of its construction it seems appropriate, first, to bring into notice the principles which should be taken into consideration in making or revising a curriculum. An attempt is made to take care of all these principles, as far as possible, in the suggestions which are made later.

#### Factors to be Considered in Curriculum Construction

##### 1. Continuous Curriculum revision is imperative.

Society is always in the process of development. Activities, values, home life, and human relationship are constantly changing. The character of students, parents, their expectations from education, the op-

portunities in communities, etc., are undergoing a change. Psychology, philosophy, and sociology, upon which educational theories and practice are based, constantly furnish new information. Hence, continuous revision in the curriculum seems essential so that it can meet the everchanging needs of the learner and society. This should be done not only by central authorities, but also by local leadership groups, and teachers in every school. They should develop new courses of study as soon as new needs arise. They should even try to anticipate them and preplan education to meet them.

2. Curriculum making is not to be confined only to central authorities.

It is true that there is need for experts and subject specialists in curriculum construction, but this does not necessarily imply that the curriculum should be prescribed and other groups should be deprived of having a voice in curriculum planning at different levels of the educational system. The teachers' cooperation can be so valuable and effective in introducing the courses which are to meet local as well as the students' specific needs in each school. Teachers should be prepared to make at least some parts of the program of studies they are to teach. Experienced and qualified teachers in the counties should be trained for leadership in curriculum construction in local levels. Laymen and students should also participate in the discussion and the study of educational objectives. It is difficult for the makers of the curriculum in the capital city to have a clear notion about the specific needs of students and people in various areas without the cooperation of all these groups. Making a functional curriculum requires participation of all of them in different

levels or allowing wider opportunities for local modification<sup>1</sup> or both.

3. Curriculum making must recognize the differences which exist between communities.

Communities vary to a great extent in Iran. The development of industry and commerce in some cities such as Tehran, Isfahan, and Abadan and a few towns such as Shahi, Behshahr and Chalooos in the north is more considerable than in other areas. Differences in climatic conditions have had great influences in the kind of agricultural activities. The abundance of water and fertile land in some areas in the north, north-west, and Khoozistan in the south make it necessary to put much emphasis upon agricultural education in these parts of the country. On the other hand the existence of universities in the larger towns such as Tabriz, Meshhad, Shiraz, Isfahan and Ahvaz provides more opportunities for the students, in these towns, to continue their studies at a college. A uniform curriculum for such different areas can not be equally useful. The types of schools and the offered courses in them should be considerably different. In the agricultural schools in the north, for instance, the production of rice, cotton and citrus should be emphasized whereas in the north-west the cultivation of wheat, barley, vine, and various fruit trees should have primary importance in the curriculum. To achieve this goal local leadership groups and teachers should be given freedom to develop courses of study which suit local needs and conditions. The central leadership group can help teachers and local group, at the beginning stages, by preparing study guides for various communities on the basis

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<sup>1</sup>The specific roles of each of these groups in curriculum planning have been discussed later. See pp. 135-145.

of their specific needs and their suggestions. The teachers should be perfectly free to make any revision in them. The purpose is merely to help the teachers in remote areas who do not have access to libraries or other materials to develop new courses.

4. In making a curriculum common needs of the students and national ideals of the people should be taken into account.

The curriculum must also have common features to achieve common goals, to secure national unity and to prepare healthy, cooperative and well adjusted citizens. The study of Persian, history, geography and civics, and a foreign language (in the second cycle) should be included in the program of studies of all secondary schools. These courses should be developed by central authorities. The teachers should be free in the method of teaching, but will not be permitted to omit some parts of the contents of these courses which are required. The prescription of these courses may create confidence in central authorities towards the realization of national solidarity by providing a common area of study for all students. Social studies are assumed to cultivate a feeling of belonging to Iranian society and to create a tendency for cooperation with different ethnic groups to realize the national welfare. The study of Persian which is the official language is essential for all students. It will also facilitate communication and understanding among different groups who speak in different languages.

5. Curriculum making must be based upon constant investigations, studies, and reports.

There is a great need for investigations and studies concerning the emerging needs of society, the outcome of educational system in practice,

the assessment of achieved goals, the new demands of youth, and the probable needs of students and society in future. A sound curriculum can be made and carried out only in the light of such studies and careful analysis of accumulated data. It might be difficult to achieve this goal in Iran due to the lack of sufficient organizations or personnel and facilities to collect data, but this principle in making the curriculum is too fundamental to be overlooked. The "Department of Research and Curriculum" in Tehran is in charge of fulfilling this duty. This department needs the cooperation of other ministries which have their own statistical offices. There must be also local investigators in the counties for collecting and presenting new data. The help of the teachers and students is inestimable in the evaluation of achieved goals and determination of the weak aspects of program of studies.

6. The curriculum must provide for individual differences.

In designing a curriculum it is necessary to consider variation in the intellectual abilities of students. Psychological research has shown that each learner has his own unique pattern of capacities. The I.Q. of students in a class may vary from borderline normal to genius. Not only each learner has his own unique combination of capacities, but also has his own growth pattern. There are also dissimilarities in the experience background of each student. The conditions of family life, home environment, contact with others, educational and economic level of parents cause experience difference. Therefore, differences in intellectual ability, in capacities, in the speed of growth and in experiential



background call for curriculum planning that takes the uniqueness of each learner into account. This goal may be achieved in the following ways:

a) Providing elective courses in the curriculum of all types of secondary schools.

b) Helping the individual student to discover his abilities and choose the type of school and even the kinds of courses, among the elective ones, which suit him more. The achievement of this goal requires the establishment of a guidance program in national, local, and school levels. The guidance agencies in the national and local levels will be responsible to determine employment opportunities, the needs of society and to provide tests and measurements. Those responsible for guidance in each school should determine the common needs of the students in each school, apply I.Q. tests and aptitude tests, provide cumulative records for students and help every student to understand his own potentiality.

c) The classroom teachers should find out the ability and potentiality of each of their students by consulting his cumulative records and considering his actual school achievement. They should take into account the individual difference in teaching, giving assignments, and providing opportunities, in group works, for the student's special talent to progress.

d) Changing the present system of examination and promotion regulations. The examination should provide opportunities for the student to grow and develop according to his abilities. According to present system of examination a student is doomed to repeat the class if he fails in three subjects out of about sixteen ones, though his achieve-

ments in the remainder might be quite satisfactory. Such a policy tends to waste the student's time and energy and prevents him from following the courses for which he is fitted more.

e) Special provisions should be made in every town for slow learners, handicapped, and gifted students. The contents of the curriculum, the method of instruction, and teaching materials will be quite different in order to provide opportunities for such students to develop according to their unique pattern of capacities. Special teachers, perhaps being shared by several schools may be one advisable means of handling this need.

7. Curriculum planning must proceed according to certain limitations.

It is true that there is need for a rapid modification in the curriculum and for a considerable reorganization in secondary schools, but the following factors should be taken into account in introducing new changes. The implementation of the new curriculum, which is assumed to realize new objectives, is dependent upon these conditions.

a) Financial condition.- Most of secondary schools in Iran are public schools though many of them charge small fees to provide money for school supplies, - library facilities, laboratory equipment and other teaching materials or audio-visual aids. The provision of qualified teaching staff, large school plants, and sufficient school facilities and equipment, which are needed in carrying out a modern curriculum, depends upon financial possibilities of the Government and the people.

b) The professional training of teachers sets some limitations to introducing new changes in the program of studies. The preparation of teachers for participation in the process of curriculum revision and for the adaptation of courses of study, to the local and individual needs of the learners requires special attention. It seems essential to organize regular in-service training courses for experienced and competent teachers who should play, later, the role of leadership in designing programs of study in the counties.

c) Community interest.- In making a curriculum the lay opinion of community, particularly influential and religious groups in Iran, and those who are interested in education and whose support is valuable in bringing about new changes should be given great consideration. The racial and provincial mores and customs, opinions and beliefs of local societies, and above all political forces and their view on education put great limitation in curriculum revision. A study of these forces may help the makers of the curriculum in introducing more acceptable changes in educational programs.

d) Students' interest and needs and provided opportunities in the community and in the country limit introduction of new changes. The general level of intelligence among students is also a deciding factor in determining the type of curriculum. If few of them enter higher educational institutions, or a majority seek employment after graduation, or leave school before completing the course, the program of studies should be selected and arranged in a way to meet their needs.

### How to Determine Educational Objectives

Goals of life give directions to curriculum construction. When the educator can see the definite relationship between these life goals and the educational process, there is hope for progress. Determination of educational aims at different levels should be confined to different groups, namely, central leadership group, local leadership group, classroom teachers, laymen and students.<sup>1</sup> The central group, for instance, is responsible to determine common aims, in the national level, in the light of the study of national needs and common demands of all students in the country. The local leadership group will try to discover and determine the common needs of the people in the region. If people in one region, for example, consist of various religious and racial groups among whom there is a kind of misunderstanding and hostility, a principal aim of the education in that area should be the cultivation of understanding, cooperation, friendship, and mutual respect among those groups.

There seems to be two ways which may lead to failure in designing a curriculum: First the selection of goals which are not basic in the life of people to be educated, and second, failure to translate the valid goals into educational practice which should secure the realization of them. Hence, it is of utmost importance to study carefully the needs of the society, existing conditions and opportunities in the country, and the life goals of students in order to determine educational aims and objectives. The study of the following can provide valuable data about the goals at different levels.

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<sup>1</sup>infra, pp. 135-145.

### 1. Activities and interests of students

In the first place the future activities and the desirable interests of the students in each school should be discovered and studied carefully by the school staff. The most usual way to do this is to accumulate their views through questionnaires, the survey of opinions of teachers and parents, and to study the activities of the graduates of the same school. After a careful study of the accumulated information the teachers should develop courses of study to meet the specific needs of the students in that school. If, for instance, students in an agricultural school are interested in planting tobacco, special courses which provide sufficient and useful information in this field should be developed by the teachers and included in the curriculum of the school. To develop such courses the teachers in the school might demand the collaboration of the local leadership group, the department of agriculture, and other qualified people who have experience and information about the cultivation of tobacco.

### 2. The needs and deficiencies of students

The study concerning the needs and deficiencies of students might be made in national, local, and school level and accordingly courses should be developed and introduced by different groups to remove them. As pointed out in the third chapter the graduates of the academic secondary schools are accused of being indolent individuals who dislike labor and despise manual work. The students in one community might be delinquent towards their family. It is not unusual, in Iran, to see that the students in one school being grouped in gangs waste their time and energy by competing

in an undesirable way and sometimes in a hostile manner. The discoveries of such deficiencies at each level and devising new courses of study or extracurricular activities to eliminate or reduce these defects are to be part of activities for curriculum planning.

This research is important since it evaluates the outcome of the curriculum in practice and represents the points which have been neglected. On the basis of such research new revision in the program of studies may lead to better results. It is necessary for the makers of the curriculum to have standards by which needs and deficiencies can be definitely determined. The emphasis is here upon what the learner needs to know, what deficiencies he has in his reaction according to standardized tests and sought goals, and what difficulties he is encountering in his daily life.

### 3. The needs and deficiencies of adult society

If the needs and deficiencies of adult society concerning social and family relationship or civic responsibility can be more accurately determined at different educational levels, it might be possible for curriculum makers to set new objectives and to design educational programs the implementation of which will eliminate or minimize those undesirable qualities in the next generation. Determination of these deficiencies should be made both at national and local level. To give an illustration, it is often said that the adults in Iran show little interest in cooperative activities. It is necessary to investigate and find the roots of this deficiency and try to eliminate them and cultivate, in students, a tendency

for cooperation. To have a standard the activities of those adults who represent high standard in living and in behavior in each economic and social group must be studied. The investigator should select a man, for instance from among technicians, and study his characteristics which are judged to be desirable. Then the curriculum makers should try to cultivate similar qualities in the students of technical schools through applying appropriate teaching activities. A continuous research about the deficiencies of adult society at different levels and, the introduction of new courses for their elimination, and satisfactory implementation of the revised curriculum may realize, finally, the attainment of a highly desirable society in the succeeding generation.

4. Determination of occupational and vocational needs and provided opportunities in the country.

In the research concerning the determination of vocational and occupational objectives three points should be investigated and clarified: (a) Research concerning the existing employment opportunities and the vocational needs of the society at present and in future. To achieve this aim there is need for a large and careful economic survey both at the national and local level. It must be made with the cooperation of economic and social organizations in the country. This research should be made primarily at local level and reorganization of vocational schools should be based upon it. The reason is that students and their parents will, probably, accept more readily an employment in the region where they live rather than in remote areas in the country. (b) The kind of skill,

knowledge, and trait which must be acquired by the learner should be investigated and determined. In the development of vocational curriculum it is important to analyze the skills into specific concrete activities.

(c) As it is essential that the list of objectives and activities to be as complete as possible, the investigators should also be interested in determining both physical and mental characteristics of a successful professional man or a technician. Research concerning job analysis and mental characteristics of an individual is not so easy to do. Different methods such as the analysis of job by the worker himself, by the expert, by the investigator, interview with qualified skilled men, and questionnaire are used to secure the accumulation of reliable data.

#### 5. Translating aims into curriculum content

The second problem after the determination of the goals of education is the translation of them into educational practices. The fulfillment of this responsibility is to be undertaken by different groups of the curriculum makers according to the nature and the type of the objectives. National aims such as the training of citizens, and creation of national unity should be analysed into specific and concrete activities by the central leadership group, but the specific objectives in school level should be examined and translated into teaching activities by the teachers in the school.

In the translation of educational objectives there is need to break down the aims or ideals into subgroups and very specific objectives and state them in behavioral terms. By continuing to break objectives



down into more and more minute parts the curriculum makers would come ultimately to specific immediate activities to be performed. It is not sufficient, for example, to say that education should aim at the preparation of healthy and strong individuals. It should be indicated what kind of activities, information, and habits are needed to be healthy and strong. The curriculum maker, after having analysed the objective, might say that the aim will be secured if the student practices the habits of personal hygiene, knows the important body organs and their functions, follows a balanced diet, knows the ways in which contagious diseases spread, knows how to heat, ventilate, and clean his room, takes physical exercise, plays games, appreciates the importance of health for successful living, and knows when he should consult the doctor. Each of these, for instance the functions of the important body organs should be clarified and determined in detail. It is only after such analysis that the construction of a functional curriculum and the evaluation of the sought goals are possible. Sometimes a further selection of the more important teaching activities had to be made in terms of the time available. In other words when the time is too short for instance to teach about all contagious diseases, giving information about the most common ones in the region and the way to protect oneself against them should have priority.

#### Statement of the Principal General Aims of Secondary Education

Educational aims should involve both the needs of the individual learner and those of society. They should cover both immediate and future needs. Although there is an interrelation between them, putting great emphasis upon each of them may not be desirable. As pointed out in the previous section,

the determination of educational aims requires careful studies concerning the needs of the individual student, communities and Iranian society as a whole. However, it might be possible to suggest some general aims for the secondary education in Iran, on the basis of some similarities among students and communities and considering the urgent needs of Iranian society.

1. Secondary education should provide opportunities for all abilities and should help the individual learner discover his ability and potentiality in order to follow studies that suit him more.

2. Secondary education should provide opportunities for a majority of students to develop a salable skill and those understandings and attitudes that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life.

3. Secondary education should aim at the creation of common ideals and national unity through developing attitudes, habits, skills and concepts necessary for accomplishing civic responsibility. Education should bring up united citizens who are ready to cooperate willingly for the welfare of Iranian society. To do so there is need to develop concepts of law, government, economics, politics, and social institutions which can play a role in building a free and prosperous society. There is need also for the study of geography and history of the country and the development of feeling of respect and appreciation towards various Iranian ethnic groups and their culture.

4. Secondary education should help students to be constructively critical rather than obedient or pessimist, in order to express their

thoughts clearly, to think rationally, to be creative and have initiative to be able to solve their life problems and to adjust to their environments.

5. Secondary education should aim at the development of agricultural and technical education which are two fundamental needs of Iranian society. Secondary education should put great emphasis on the training of skilled individuals who can play a leading role, in intermediate level, for the development of effective farming and productive enterprises. These individuals will act as liaison between experts, engineers, architects, etc; and unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

6. Secondary education should aim at the cultivation of the spirit of cooperation with others to achieve common objectives. Iranian youth who seem to be individualists and show little interest for cooperation need to develop a desire for social cooperation. This cooperation spirit must be inspired by the faith that the common objectives can be achieved, only, through cooperation and that most of economic, social and political problems prevailing in Iranian society are the results of lack of cooperation. The student should be habituated to accept his role as a group member, to respect group decision, to share his knowledge with others, to participate in social organizations and to appreciate group work by experiencing these activities in the classroom and the school.

7. Secondary education should help students develop and maintain good health and physical fitness. The present system of teaching hygiene and physical education does not seem to be satisfactory. The problems

of health are not similar in all communities. The kinds of diseases, living conditions, environmental situation and climatic conditions differ considerably. It is the responsibility of the secondary school to fulfill its role concerning the students' health through the development of clear concept on the health and strong body by many studies such as biology, hygiene, by the provision of regular medical examination for the students, teaching the way of protection against the most common diseases in the area, providing teachers with some necessary information to be alert towards symptoms of infection, contagious diseases, emotional disturbance, and notation of the health condition of each student in his cumulative record to help the school staff to be more alert towards his health.

8. Secondary education should aim at the creation of emotional independence and self-reliance. Family life in Iran tends to make youth less independent individuals. Iranian adolescents seem to expect too much from their parents compared to those in western countries. Greater independence is desirable for Iranian youth. Secondary education should help students to become free from too much psychological and economic dependence upon their parents. Education should also attempt to cultivate a feeling of respect and affection for parents without dependence upon them.

9. Secondary education should help the student know how to use his leisure time. In city life there are many undesirable amusement places attractive for adolescents. In the absence of constructive and healthy hobbies or some such activities to occupy a person in his leisure time, the temptation is too great not to respond to the appeal of such influences.

The development of habits which may provide for proper use of free time, therefore, is to be one of the tasks of secondary schools. To do so schools should aim at the creation of a liking in students for sports, games, dramatics, art, music, drawing and literature. The ultimate aim of such activities should be the cultivation of a taste for the kind of past-time works which have both social and personal value.

10. One of the important responsibilities of secondary education should be to equip the young generation with knowledge which will help him to have a well adjusted family life. Such educational aim seems essential considering emerging values among many families who live in the cities. The rise of conflicting opinions between parents and children sometimes creates maladjustment and serious problems for Iranian families.<sup>1</sup> The students of secondary schools in higher classes, therefore, should master and appreciate some specific knowledge concerning marriage, home-making, the roles of parents in family, income budgeting, cooperation in the family affairs, the importance of cultivating creativity and initiative in children through giving opportunity to self expression, undesirable results of authoritarian method of child training, and the importance of family for both individual and society.

#### Suggestions for the Achievement of the Aims

To achieve the above mentioned aims the following suggestions concerning the construction of the curriculum and the organization of the secondary schools in Iran seem advisable. Each of these proposals will be

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<sup>1</sup>supra, p. 51.

discussed in detail in the following pages.

1. The curriculum should consist of the required courses, which should be studied by all students throughout the country, and the elective ones to meet local needs and the specific objectives of the individual student.

2. Terminal schools - technical, agricultural, commercial, etc., should be developed to provide opportunities for the majority of secondary school students, who are not intended or are unable to continue their studies at a university, to progress according to their abilities and aptitudes. These schools will also train sufficient skilled individuals needed by society.

3. The number of students in the secondary academic schools should be limited. Students who intend to enter these schools should be selected in the light of reliable criteria which should be a combination of the student's I.Q. tests score, his achievement records in the first cycle and in the selection examination, his teachers' view concerning his habit of study, his interest and his ability.

4. Considerable revision should be made in the method of curriculum construction. Opportunities should be provided for the participation of local leadership groups, classroom teachers, laymen and students, at different levels of educational system, in the determination of the aims and their translation into courses of study.

Other improving measures are necessary to implement the new curriculum and the proposed suggestions. The establishment of a guidance program to help the student discover his ability and aptitudes, revision

in the system of examination in order to make evaluation more meaningful and useful both for the appraisal of the achieved goals and the assessment of the curriculum and method of teaching, and training teachers to accomplish new responsibilities are some important steps that should be taken. These improving measures being beyond the scope of this paper, which is confined to the study of the curriculum, will not be elaborated and discussed here.

#### The Problems of Introducing the New Curriculum

The problem of introducing a flexible curriculum into a secondary school presents many difficulties. These difficulties, however, should not discourage the educators and responsible authorities in Iran from taking fundamental steps towards the introduction of a flexible curriculum if it is considered desirable. But, certainly, these difficulties impose some limitations and make it necessary to shift gradually and slowly. The definite commitment to highly discrete subject type of curriculum, the extreme specialization of teachers in very limited subject areas, lack of equipped libraries and teaching materials in many secondary schools, inability of many teachers to develop new courses of study, and the tendency of the central educational authorities towards centralization and control of the curriculum are the main difficulties which have made the development of a modern curriculum a serious problem. These difficulties, however, will be gradually solved if the roles of different groups, namely, the central leadership group, local leadership, classroom teachers laymen and students become clear. At the beginning stages greater responsibility

of providing study guides for inexperienced classroom teachers, who are unable to develop courses of study, will be put upon the central leadership group, but the prescribed courses in the national level will be limited only to a few ones. The central group will develop some required courses as Persian, social studies (history, geography and civics), and religious and moral education. The central authorities may agree with the new curriculum since their principal goal seems to be training citizens and the creation of national unity which are assumed to be secured by the study of mentioned courses. On the other hand the provision of study guides will make the central authorities less doubtful about the development of the elective courses, in school level, by the teachers who are not professionally qualified or do not have access to necessary sources and equipped libraries.

#### The New Curriculum

The flexible curriculum which is desirable to introduce into secondary schools in Iran will consist of two parts: Required courses and elective ones. The former are courses of study, at the national level and developed by central authorities. These courses, which should be studied by all secondary school students throughout the country, are intended to provide the youth with proper orientation into Iranian culture. They are assumed to secure the creation of a feeling of belonging and loyalty to Iranian society and the development of national solidarity. The required courses should also meet the needs which are common to all youth, such as getting proficiency in the official language, and should



primarily be concerned with the individual non-specialized activities.

In the first cycle the required courses, at the national level, will consist of the following subjects around which the program for different classes will be designed: a) The Persian language; b) Social studies (history, geography, and civics); religious and moral education which should include fundamental Islamic principles and exclude some details that may weaken national unity or create turbidity and indignation among different sects or religious groups for example Shiites and Sunnites. In the second cycle where specialization begins required courses, at the national level, should be confined only to Persian literature, a foreign language, and civics. It is important to point out that the required courses at the national level should not take more than one third of the official school time.

Some courses which meet the common needs of the people in one area may be added, as required courses, by local educational authorities. Such courses should be developed by the local leadership group. When the majority of people in one area are engaged, for instance, in some specific agricultural activities such as producing raisins, it seems advisable to include one required course of study which helps students in this field and will be economically effective in their life. The inclusion of some required courses in school level will be also advisable if the teachers in the school consider it necessary to meet the common needs of the students in that specific school. If the students in one school intend, for example, to study law, Persian literature, or philosophy

at a college, it will be reasonable to include Arabic as a required course in their schedules. The reason is that knowing Arabic is an essential prerequisite to study in the above fields.

The elective courses will consist of courses of study which deal with local needs and the individual interest. These courses are intended to provide opportunities for the student's ability to develop. The elective courses which might be developed by classroom teachers, as soon as new needs arise, will secure the flexibility of the curriculum. Numerous courses of this type are to be developed, especially at the beginning stages, by central or local leadership groups on the suggestions of classroom teachers in order to be used as guides of study by them. The able teachers, who may not need such help, will develop new courses, in their schools, with the cooperation of other teachers and students.

#### Advantages of the New Curriculum

Such a flexible curriculum will have the following advantages:

1) In many small towns and some large villages where students terminate their studies in the first cycle, elective courses will provide students with the useful knowledge concerning their every day life activities. Such schools may offer many courses about agriculture and crafts. This may stimulate farmers and workers to send their children to secondary schools in order to acquire some skills or competency which will help them get better results of their activities and labor.

2) The students in the large cities will not be dropped out of school owing to the lack of ability in some subjects of study such as mathematics. Every student will have the opportunity to progress according to his unique capacity and aptitudes. The student, in the first cycle may develop interest in some kind of vocational skill and enter a terminal school. The achievement of this aim is important if we consider that the Iranian students look down upon manual work and usually tend not to go to vocational schools although society is badly in need of skilled individuals in various occupations.

3) The student's time and energy will not be wasted by the study of numerous isolated subjects. Instead of being frustrated he will begin to grow in a special direction. His success in some courses will clarify his ability for his parent, hence, they will be more realistic in the selection of the school which fits him more rather than insisting upon sending him to the academic secondary school.

4) The student's time in the second cycle will not be wasted for the study of some subjects which may be unrelated to his specialization. A student, in the second cycle, who has planned, for example, to study English at a college is compelled to spend a lot of time to learn Arabic, mathematics, history, geography, philosophy, and religious law. Consequently he is 'jack of all trades and master of none'. As the curriculum is overcrowded a student in the second cycle is permitted, according to the regulations, to go to the higher class even if he gets one out of twenty in two subjects - English and chemistry, for example, in the mathematics branch. In this way about one fifth of the student's time in class is wasted.

5) The great advantage of such a flexible curriculum is that it provides opportunities for classroom teachers in each school and the local leadership group to make constant revision in the curriculum and to introduce new courses to meet the emerging needs of the students and the community. Such flexibility will also facilitate the application of progressive theories of learning both in making the curriculum and in the method of instruction. Changes and progress in the community and in education will go hand in hand.

#### Terminal Secondary Schools

The rapid increase of the secondary school population and the growing need for technicians makes it necessary to establish as many terminal schools as possible. These schools are intended to offer various courses to suit the needs of the greater number of students who are not fit or willing or economically able for university studies, but need competencies and knowledge to enable them to earn their living and lead an effective and useful life.

The required courses will be included in the program of studies of these schools, but the main aim is to provide the student with the specialization which suits his ability or aptitude. Choice of specialization will be made under the guidance of qualified teachers and in the light of a careful survey of existing employment possibilities. The Iranian society is in need of foremen and technicians, that is, those people who can play the role of leadership at the intermediate level. The graduates of these schools will occupy technical positions between professional

persons such as engineers, doctors, lawyers, architects and unskilled or semi-skilled labor. It is the responsibility of secondary education to provide opportunities for the training of such individuals. The problem of terminal schools or vocational schools, being so important in the life of the youth and Iranian people as a whole, deserves more discussion concerning the difficulties and suggestions for their solutions.

### Vocational Education

Only about three per cent of the secondary school students were studying at vocational schools in 1963.<sup>1</sup> Rapid development in the field of industry, construction of dams, implementation of land reform, the establishment of new banks and commercial organizations, etc., have provided ample opportunities for skilled, creative, and active young men. The economic inefficiency of the people which is, to a great extent, the result of lack of vocational competency is among other factors responsible for the backwardness of society. One of the effective ways to secure prosperity, to raise the standard of living, to help the individual acquire psychological independence, and to make of him a useful citizen, is to help him learn a vocational and professional competency.

One important problem in the development of vocational education is that the majority of students in secondary schools and their parents despise manual work. To remove or to reduce such feeling and to cultivate the tendency for vocational activities a concentrated effort of influential

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<sup>1</sup> supra, Table 6 , p. 89.

authorities in the country seems necessary. Vocational schools should be given some privileges. Popular leaders and the important authorities in the country should encourage students to study in vocational schools in various ways such as (a) finding employment in government sponsored or private organizations, (b) giving long-term loans to encourage them for independent enterprises, and (c) facilitating entrance conditions to higher technical institutions for abler graduates.

Another problem is the choice of occupation or the kind of skill the student should master. In most cases neither the students themselves nor their parents are competent in the choice of an occupation. It is not unusual to see technical school graduates who fail in doing something quite skilfully or in finding employment suitable to their competencies. Vocational guidance, therefore, should help the student be aware of the employment opportunities and recognize his own aptitudes and potentialities. As the development of the vocational efficiency of youth is fundamental, it might be reasonable to give some more suggestions about possible ways of its development.

Developing skilled and trained personnel requires the employment of three different methods: (a) Bringing foreign experts, technicians, and teachers to Iran under contract; (b) sending Iranians abroad to be trained in different educational institutions; (c) training technical leaders and foremen in Iran. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Bringing foreign experts, for example, has the advantage of direct impact upon many Iranians who would work under their supervision, but the problem of language, lack of sufficient equipment and acquaintance with the cultural

background of Iranian people are disadvantages. Sending Iranians abroad may assure the best technical training owing to the existence of equipped organizations and modern method of teaching, but the problems of disorientation and readjustment after return are disadvantages.

The third method is the training of technical leadership in the country. In the lower and intermediate level, this is the only practical and desirable solution. It is only through this way that great numbers of technicians, foremen, skilled workers can be possibly trained considering the financial aspect of the problem. However the first and the second methods cannot be completely ignored. A combination of the three methods, in proper proportion, might secure the most desirable results.

Training of skilled and semi-skilled workers may be also, secured in three ways: (a) Training in industry itself in some form of apprenticeship; (b) through in-service training as part-time study in the evening or daytime technical schools; (c) training in technical schools before employment. An expanded discussion about each of these methods is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it might be appropriate to say something about technical schools, since to decrease the number of students in academic schools the development and improvement of vocational schools is indispensable.

#### Technical schools

The present technical schools should be developed both in number and in quality. Teaching materials, the equipment in the workshops and laboratories should be increased. The curriculum must be flexible, and it

should be arranged according to the industrial needs of the area as determined by a carefully directed industrial survey and job analysis. The practical aspect of the study is to be emphasized. The present technical schools are working without having close relations with industrial organizations. Lack of contact with real technical life may cause adjustment problems when the graduates start to work in a factory or in a similar organization. To get acquainted practically with the factory environment they need practice in available industrial organizations. The development of plant skill also requires more equipment, and actual practice with machines. In addition to acquiring practical and theoretical skill students should be trained in a way to take pride in workmanship, understand the economic problems of society and the importance of skilled hands in the prosperity of people.

The development of technical education needs a concentrated effort and cooperation of many government sponsored as well as private organizations engaged in vocational activities.

### Rural Education

The implementation of land reform and construction of new dams implies rather expanded discussion concerning rural education. About 70% of the population in Iran live in rural areas. However, they are hardly able to provide food for the people in the country. Their failure stems to a great extent from their inefficient information about agricultural activities. Schools in rural areas should be oriented to the people's life situation and agricultural activities. The school program should help the people get more satisfactory results of their work through providing them



with appropriate education. Health education should be emphasized and adapted to the village life. In short, one of the major objectives of rural education should be to help the farmer learn specific practices which will increase his productivity.

The realization of this aim requires the implementation of educational programs with the cooperation of other agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture. Four programs might be undertaken by these agencies:

a) Establishing rural elementary schools in as many villages as possible. Education in these schools should be primarily related to the village life.

b) Forming well equipped travelling educational missions to visit each village at least twice a month. These missions will be responsible to teach adults new techniques of agriculture possible in the area with emphasis upon demonstration.

c) Preparation of rural elementary school teachers competent and interested in agricultural activities. The school teacher in the village, who is usually the best educated man among villagers, might be given more responsibility to direct agricultural activities. To do so they need special training in agricultural teacher training schools to carry out their leadership role. The teacher in the village should become a community leader who recognizes and appreciates rural values. Calling the attention of parents and involving them occasionally in teaching some skills or experiences they have acquired in agriculture or horticulture, may change the school into a leading educational center.

d) Development of agricultural secondary schools in rural areas, especially in some small towns and in groups of villages. The programs should be flexible and stress the types of agricultural activities, most usual in the region. The practical aspect of program should be emphasized. It is also important to cultivate in students interest in village life. To provide opportunity for practice each school must have its own farm in the village. The main specific objectives of agricultural secondary schools should be: To help students possess skills in techniques of agricultural production - sowing seeds, tilling, irrigation, preventive measure for control of plant and animal diseases - know how to pack and sell agricultural production, how to use new agricultural tools or machinery, understand the benefit of cooperation, and appreciate rural life.

The Problem of the Secondary Academic School  
Graduates and University Studies

One important educational and social problem for the secondary academic school graduates, their parents, and the Government is lack of balance between the number of the graduates and provided places in the existing universities in the country. Despite the rapid expansion in the recent years the universities can admit only a small number of the secondary academic school graduates. Many of them seek a white collar job in a government office or private organizations, but few of them succeed. As they have not acquired a salable skill during their studies at the secondary school, they hardly find employment to earn their living.

Consequently they become frustrated and aggressive and constitute an "explosive political group." A considerable number of these graduates who fail to enter universities in Iran go abroad to continue their university studies though, sometimes, it might be difficult for their families to afford it. The flow of such students swells every year. "In 1957 there were about 4,000 students in foreign countries"<sup>1</sup>, but the number increased to 16,037 in 1963.<sup>2</sup> Many of them refuse to return to Iran because of disorientation with their country, lack of better employment opportunities compared with those in some foreign countries, and some other reasons. The provision of their expense creates economic problems for the Government concerning foreign exchange. The rapid increase of the secondary academic school students makes the problem more serious. In short, the limited number of university places, the absence of sufficient employment opportunities for white collar jobs, the rapid increase of the students in the secondary academic schools, the avoidance of manual work, lack of guidance program to encourage students for vocational studies, the limited number of terminal schools, and the very existence of the theoretical program are some of the major factors which have been effective in the creation of this problem. The following suggestions which seem advisable to remove some of these factors or to reduce their effect might help to the solution of this difficult problem.

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<sup>1</sup>Wilber, Donald, N., op. cit., p. 205.

<sup>2</sup>Source: Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 492.

1) The number of students in the secondary academic schools should be reduced.-- The achievement of this goal requires the establishment of a guidance program and a reorganization in secondary schools. The bulk of students should be directed towards studies in terminal schools. The educational policy should aim at preparing only more able students for college studies. The implementation of this policy needs guidance to help students recognize their abilities. The student's parent should be convinced that it is unsound to expect a child to achieve beyond its potentialities. Undesirable psychological and social results of unrealistic expectations should be clarified to parents.

As the tendency towards university studies is so wide-spread and great in the students of secondary schools and their parents, it seems difficult to convince them merely through guidance. Laying down some regulations which will limit entrance to secondary academic schools is, probably, necessary. The criteria for the selection of students should be based upon various sources of data such as (a) the student's I.Q. tests score, (b) his achievement in the selection examination which should consist of objective type of tests, (c) his achievement records in the first cycle, (d) the views of his previous teachers concerning his habit of study, and the tendency of his parent. Consideration of all these points, as a criterion to enter the secondary academic school, and putting deserved emphasis upon each of them after a careful study will minimize the question of chance or favoritism, hence, may convince many parents to send their children to terminal schools.

2) Along with such limitation there is need for a considerable development of terminal schools.- These schools should not be separated from academic schools as far as possible. It is not difficult, for instance, to combine a commercial school with an academic one. To do so may reduce disinclination towards vocational education. It is for the same reason that the establishment of comprehensive schools in the large cities seems advisable. As it has already been pointed out, the creation of the feeling of respect for manual work, and encouragement for independent technical activities are to be made in different ways. The most effective way to encourage students for vocational studies is, probably, to help them find an employment when they have acquired some salable skills in these schools. The achievement of this goal needs the help of the central and local guidance agencies as well as the cooperation of some government organizations such as job finding section in the Ministry of Labor.

3) The establishment of vocational evening schools and technical evening colleges is recommended.- These schools and colleges would provide more chance for the graduates of the terminal schools to complete their professional competencies. These evening schools would provide opportunities for greater number of the youth, who leave secondary schools before completing the course, and even the graduates of the secondary academic schools to learn some skill and find an employment.

4) The competency of the individual as well as the holding of certificates especially "Diploma" and B.A. or B.S. degrees should be considered in determining employment, rate of pay, and promotion.- At present

one of the required qualifications for employment in a government organization is the possession of a license degree or a "Diploma". These papers are quite effective in the salary scale of employees. The values of these certificates should not be ignored, but there must be a balance between the consideration of these privileges and that of actual competency of the individual. It does not seem reasonable, for instance, to pay much less to an accountant than his colleague merely because of the possession of the certificate while the achievement of the former is more satisfactory than the latter. Consideration about the professional efficiency of the government employees and the appreciation of the skill they have learnt may create a tendency in the secondary school students for acquiring some skills by studying in terminal schools.

5) The existing universities in the country should be improved and some new ones should be established.- The program of studies in these universities should coincide with nationally needed areas of specialization. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the suggestion in detail.

6) In the terminal schools it is advisable to provide opportunities for more able students to enter higher technical institutions or some other colleges.- Giving some privileges, in this respect, to the top students and providing courses of study to prepare them for higher education may acquire prestige for terminal schools and attract more students. This will save terminal schools of being condemned as blind alley schools which block off the students' progress.

### Who Should Make the Curriculum?

Curriculum construction and revision is confined, at present, to experts and subject specialists in Iran. Although the leadership of this group is indispensable in curriculum planning, it is advisable to provide opportunities for the following groups to be involved in making the curriculum: (1) Central leadership group; (2) local leadership groups; (3) classroom teachers; (4) lay people; and (5) students.

The area of the contribution of each group will differ considerably. There are, certainly, controversial opinions concerning the participation of these groups in planning a curriculum. Owing to the effect of crystallization there seems to be a tendency in central authorities to support the traditional method of curriculum construction. The clarification of the roles of each group might reduce this tendency. Thus, it seems necessary first to point out some advantages of the participation of each group and, second, to examine certain peculiar responsibilities and contributions each of these groups might make to the total process of curriculum planning.

#### 1. Central leadership group

This group may consist of the members of the present curriculum committees, consultants drawn from staffs of universities and Teachers Training College, and some other qualified persons whose help will be useful in looking at education in a state-wide basis. The responsibility of leadership, in national level, lies upon central leadership group, but such responsibility does not justify the prescription of the whole curriculum and domination of control as it is customary in Iran. The parti-

icipation of the central group in curriculum construction will have the following advantages:

a) The central group with their long experiences and professional knowledge and efficiency can play valuable roles in guiding other groups in the field of curriculum planning, especially at the beginning stages.

b) Through their constant investigation concerning the results of the courses of study and the method of instruction that are being tried in different areas of the country and in advanced countries they can give teachers valuable information and suggestions concerning the development of new courses and the method of teaching.

c) They can take care of the national ideals and common needs of the people at national level through developing and including required courses of study in the curriculum.

d) There is need for a kind of harmony in education throughout the country for purposes of transfer of credits. Scattered activities of local communities cannot be harmonized properly without having a central leadership group. There must not be, for example, great differences between the academic courses of study offered in the mathematics branch in different counties. There must be a balance between the educational background of the students who enter, for instance, school of engineering. The establishment of such harmony, especially, in academic branches seems, also, necessary if the students' transfer from one city to another is taken into account.



e) A state-wide survey concerning the needs of the society for skilled individuals and the number of the academic school graduates will be of paramount importance in the determination of the number of different types of school. When for instance the number of needed technicians for textile factories is investigated and determined, the number of students, interested in such specialization, in vocational schools will be harmonized accordingly. In the light of such survey at national level the probability of the surplus of technicians in one field and the shortage in another will be minimized.

#### The role of the central leadership group

The following responsibilities are to be fulfilled by central leadership groups.

1. In the light of the study of the common needs of society the central group will develop the courses to be studied by all secondary school students throughout the country. As it has been pointed out before, these courses are assumed to contribute to national unity, a better understanding among ethnic groups, to cultivate common ideals, and to meet the similar needs of the students at national level. The development of these courses would save much time for teachers in local communities. But the leadership group should not interfere in the details of the implementation of the curriculum. The content of the required courses, determined by central group should be taught completely, but the freedom of the arrangement and the correlation between various courses or elaboration should be confined to the teachers.

2. The central group should help local leadership group, teachers and laymen in the study of educational objectives. They might be able to get together, discuss the functions of education, and determine their local and specific educational aims if the central leadership group prepares study and discussion guides for them.

3. Some supervisors and experts from the central group should participate occasionally in the meetings of the local leadership groups as consultants. Their participation will be useful both in guiding less experienced local groups and in stirring up local interests in curriculum study. The help of such consultants seems to be essential to translate objectives into teaching activities. Such a help is indispensable at the beginning of decentralization, since in some regions teachers might be less acquainted with curriculum construction.

4. Another contribution of the central leadership group at the beginning stages should be the preparation of numerous study guides as suggestions. They would develop these courses for various communities on the basis of the suggestions of local leadership groups and classroom teachers. Although it is not always possible for central leadership groups to take on a publisher's role, it seems advisable that they accept, for a few years, the responsibility of producing books and teaching materials about the new courses for which sufficient books and sources are not easily available in some local areas. Their valuable experience in producing such teaching materials can be very helpful to local groups and teachers.

5. The central group should constantly study and evaluate the outcome of the curriculum in practice and should examine the evidence of its success or failure in the light of the sought goals. They should not wait until some citizen or a group begins to question or criticize the curriculum.

#### The role of the local leadership group

The local leadership group will consist almost of the same types of people who form the central leadership group, as far as possible. Some experienced teachers, supervisors, and principals of school should be consistent members of this group. The participation of the local group in making the curriculum might have, at local level, nearly the same advantages mentioned for the central group. There is need for this group to survey common local needs, to develop courses to meet them, to investigate employment opportunities in the area in order to determine the organization of secondary schools, to guide inexperienced teachers in curriculum planning, and to harmonize educational programs at local level. Some of the important responsibilities of the local leadership group are:

1) To encourage the teachers and lay people in the area to make use of the help offered by the central group and take part in the determination of educational objectives.

2) To develop program of studies which are intended to meet the local needs of the students in the area. The local group should also provide teaching aids for the courses of study which have been developed by them.

3) To help the classroom teachers in the adaptation of the courses suggested by the central leadership group.

4) To survey employment opportunities in the area and determine the required qualifications, which the student must acquire, for provided occupations. This responsibility of the local group is fundamental and should be carried out carefully.

5) To develop, on the basis of the demand of inexperienced classroom teachers, written statements of some objectives at school level. In other words they should analyze and break down the aims into more specific objectives and translate them into behavioral terms. Then, they will clarify concrete activities which may lead to the achievement of objectives. They should help teachers learn and accomplish this duty by themselves, later.

#### The role of the classroom teachers

The teachers' constant close touch with students and their unique and fundamental role in the implementation of the curriculum make them acquainted with the educational as well as life problems of students and defects or strong aspects of the curriculum in practice. Hence, their participation in the determination of objectives and in curriculum planning seems necessary. The teachers' involvement may also stimulate them to develop their efficiency by reading the professional journals, and trying to keep up-to-date with ideas in their fields of specialization. Furthermore, they will most likely support and implement willingly the program of studies in the presentation of which they, or their representa-

tives, have had some role. However, it should be pointed out that it is neither practical nor desirable to overload them with the heavy responsibility of designing the whole curriculum. The teachers' contribution in curriculum planning are to be:

1. Participation in the study and discussion of the objectives of education in relation to the problems that the teachers recognize and consider important. They should also participate in the group discussion of students and parents for the determination of objectives on which courses of study will be developed at school.

2. Adaptation of suggested courses of study to the local circumstances. Teachers should be given freedom to discuss in their committees the value of the courses, which are assumed to secure objectives at school level, in the light of attained results, and make revision in them if necessary. The teachers should be completely free in revising or even refusing such courses which are study guides as suggestion.

3. Adaptation of the required courses at national, local, as well as school level. To do so each teacher should consider the age and interest of the students in his class. It is also advisable to create an integration between these subjects of study and elective courses by preplanning, with the cooperation of other teachers. The teacher should also be free to utilize other teaching aid, which will facilitate and improve learning rather than following the prescribed text-books. In short the freedom of adaptation of the required courses will be limited to the method of instruction and the arrangement of the contents rather than changing them.

4. The development of new courses with the cooperation of the teachers and the students in the school is to be one of the fundamental responsibilities of the teachers. These courses are assumed to realize the specific objectives of the students. With the help of leadership groups teachers should be gradually prepared to accomplish this responsibility. They should be grouped in small committees and study the common as well as specific needs of the students in the school. They should make continuous revision in the curriculum by introducing new courses of study to meet the emerging needs. Furthermore, each teacher can make the curriculum more useful and functional by bringing students in on the planning. With the help of them he will know which parts are more worthwhile for his students and will emphasize them. The teachers' active participation in curriculum making is almost the only way of the introduction of a flexible and functional curriculum.

#### Laymen and the curriculum

Parents are not professional educators, but they can state the types of growth they want their children to achieve and can supply evidence of the results which have been secured by the curriculum in practice. Parents will willingly cooperate with the teachers in discovering the needs and difficulties of students. It is more possible, in this way, to relate education to the actual life problems, hence, to create incentive in people, especially in the lower class, to send their children to secondary schools. The people's involvement may also encourage them to contribute effectively in the solution of financial problems which hinder the develop-

ment of schools and provision of sufficient teaching materials and school supplies. Joint curriculum planning increases the respect of the parent for the teacher and vice versa. Better education for youth might result, because home and school work together to provide the learning experiences that have been accepted as desirable.

To secure the participation of parents, and lay people in general, in the discussion of educational objectives, is a problem that should be solved by local leadership groups with the cooperation of teachers. People should be encouraged, in various ways, to take part in these discussions for which the guides should be prepared either by local or by central leadership groups. It is also helpful to meet them in their own societies rather than insisting upon inviting them to get together in school. Another way to secure their participation is to form a committee of the representatives of different groups and guilds and request them to discuss educational purposes in their professional societies. In this way more people will be involved in discussion. Raising the interest of people in Iran may be more important than emphasis upon creating agreement on educational purposes. "Home and School Associations" in Iran are organized groups, interested in the education of their children. Calling their attention to the study and discussion of objectives is easier and can be the starting point in the participation of lay people.

### Students

The main aim of education is to enable students to solve their life problems and to acquire skill and competency which may help them to lead a happy and useful life. Evidence can be secured concerning the suc-

cess of instructional procedures and the value of the content used if the judgments of students who are experienced them are sought. They should be given opportunities to express their own interests, problems, and objectives. Their participation in the study and discussion of their aims seems quite reasonable and can be secured in the following ways:

1. Providing carefully arranged questionnaires and helping students to answer them clearly. The important point to consider here is to include the kind of questions the answers to which may clarify the individual interest and objectives as well as their common aims..

2. Arranging public panel or group discussion by students under the guidance of teachers and discussion guides prepared by central or local leadership groups.

3. When the teachers become competent enough to plan some part of program of studies in school, the students' participation in planning curriculum and developing units of studies becomes vital. Since they may know their daily life problems, their interests are to be considered important in student-teacher planning.

4. Students' help and participation in collecting data about prevailing social problems in the community can be valuable for curriculum makers. If students take part actively in the gathering and study of these problems, they will be able to take part in the discussion concerning the improvement of conditions revealed and the solution of the existing problems.



### Conclusion

Planning a curriculum, then, is not to confine only to curriculum committees in the capital city. Each of mentioned groups should be given freedom to contribute effectively to curriculum construction. Helping each group make its important contribution to the total process of curriculum making is the responsibility of the central leadership groups who have had long experience in curriculum planning.

### Summary

To introduce a flexible and functional curriculum modern principles of education should be taken into account. The determination of educational aims and their translation into concrete activities should be as scientific as possible. The curriculum should consist of two parts: (a) required courses of study which are assumed to secure general aims, and (b) elective courses which provide opportunities for individual differences and local considerations. The needs of Iranian society for skilled individuals and the problem of the surplus of the secondary academic school graduates require the development of terminal schools, the establishment of comprehensive schools in large cities, and the limitation of entrance to the secondary academic schools. To achieve these goals it has been considered advisable to provide opportunities for the participation of different groups, at different educational levels, in the total process of curriculum making.

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