Educational System and Institutions in Persian Civilization: An Historical Description and its Impacts in Present Iran

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A B S T R A C T

Persian civilization had its rich culture since the pre-Islamic era. It left its impacts on those areas where the Persian language had adopted like contemporary India, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Tajikistan, and the Central Asian States. Its pre- and post-Islamic educational system-generated hundreds of scholars which are well-nominated all over the world along with their inventions, philosophies, literature, and poetry. This article highlights an educational system in the Persian civilization since 2500 BC. Educational institutions before the conquest of Islam and post-Islamic changing patterns in it are going to be discussed in this article. There is also a focus upon educational institutions in modern Iran before the Islamic Revolution of 1979 that became the reason for the end of Pehlavi dynasty. Its hypothesis is that the present socio-economic and political development in Iran is a reason to strengthen the educational system that is protecting Persian civilization for centuries. The research is based on theoretically and historically descriptive, analytical, comparative, and qualitative and methods. The data is collected from books, research journals, newspapers, internet interviews, results of different dissertations, and personal visits to Iran in which attending several seminars, workshops, and training classes including visiting several universities and Research Centers in Qom and Tehran

Keywords: Persian civilization, Iran, Pehlavi dynasty.Educational System, Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The educational system in present Iran has its roots in centuries. According to Hegel, Persian civilization has the ability to absorb modern trends according to its own legacy. And contemporary Iran is an example of Hegel's research. Religious, Modern, and Spiritual education had also different paradigms before the revolution but after 1979, these paradigms have been amalgamated into one educational policy that has been adopted by Iran after the Cultural Revolution. This study is highlighting the historical background of the educational system and institutions and their impacts on present Iran.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Abrahamian (2008), Maeterlinck (2012), Eisenstadt (2003), Harris (1994), Ankerl (2000), and Jaffery (1981) define the concept, meanings, and characteristics of

civilization with the special perspective of Persian. On the other hand, Curtis (2005) mentions the historical background of Persian civilization in different times.

Miller (2010), Sam (2001), Sadiq (1931), and Becker (2007) discuss old academic higher education institutions before the conquest of Islam in Iran. They highlight the attributes of an Academy of Gundishapure, Reishehr, Sarouyeh, and the School of Nisbis. While Hefner (2010), Ghirshman (1954), and Miller (2010) show the working and structure of Islamic higher education institutions. The historical background of Nizamiyya by Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi and Howza by several Ayatullahs is described in their books.

Hefner (2010) and Ghirshman (1954) present the history and culture of Persian civilization: before and after the conquest of Islam.

There is a historiography of Najam-ul-Haq (1973)

describing the life of Imam Ali Raza (8th Imam according to the Shia sect of Islam) and his three years stay in the Khorasan (Iran). He also describes the history of all the other members of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) family.Similarly, there are several historians like Massignon (1994) about the history of Mansoor Hallaj, Ferdowsi (2008) on the life of Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi, Memon (1936) on thinking, planning, and management of Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi, Gohrab (2012), and Namdariyan (2009) about history and poetry of Umar Khayyam, Albert (2013) on the philosophy of Imam Ghazali, Sherazi (2007) on literature, poetry and thoughts of SaadiSherazi, Bilka (2008), Gamard (2004) and Kausar (2009) on the poetry of Rumi, and Davis (2012) about the life of Jami.

Menashri (1992) discusses higher education in modern Iran from 1851 to before the revolution of 1979 with highlighting western influence in Iranian higher Education. Similarly, he pointed out the efforts of Shah regarding opening Iranian Studies Departments in American Universities.

ESSAY

Contemporary Iran has its roots back in the great Persian civilization which had been separated out on the areas of contemporary Egypt, Syria, Armenia, Pakistan, and India till Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Palestine. It was one of the superpowers in history, but its territory was altered due to the invasions of Greeks, Turks, Arabs, Mongols, etc. Persian Empire was remained got changing from time to time. It was the journey of centuries that can be observed through studying different rules in Persia (Abrahamian, 2008: 02). Before studying any civilization, there is a need of understanding what civilization is. Civilization is a controversial term that has so many meanings in its usage. Sometimes, this term refers to the human culture regarding the material and development side, and this approach is related to the urbanized society (Maeterlinck, 2012: 04). On the other hand, the classical approach refers to this term to civilized society instead of barbarians or primitive people. Samuel P. Huntington says about the civilization that

"The highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species (Eisenstadt, 2003: 518)."

V. Gordon Childe defines characteristics of a civilization

that every civilization gets its economic development firstly by agriculture, but the foremost thing, which protects its territory and its popularity, is its literature and socio-economic system (Harris, 1994: 106).

Usually, any civilization depends upon its culture that controls its territory, and it creates influence upon people, but in the real sense, this is a very complex term. Civilization can be based on different cities that can have separate cultural aspects among each other (Ankerl, 2000: 74). So, analysts argue that there can be any common characteristic which can design their civilization like Roman Empire got its popularity just due to its armed passion. So, it can be concluded that a civilization can have so many cultural aspects, and it can be designed on any of those aspects of culture. These cultural aspects consist of literature, socio-economic norms and developments, political system, geography, and military (Ankerl, 2000: 74).

Literature of any civilization shows its non-formal face, while the educational system shows a formal face. Literature has no restrictions upon its writers, while education and the educational system are designed by the regulatory authorities. Therefore, education and the educational system can be politicized while literature cannot be politicized because of open publications (Ankerl, 2007: 75).

Similarly, Persian civilization had its rich culture since the pre-Islamic era. Even it has been lost mostly but it covers two and a half millennia. Persian literature left its impacts on those areas where the Persian language had adopted like contemporary India, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Tajikistan, and the Central Asian States. Moulana Rumi, Umar Khayyaman Saadi Sherazi was` famous Persian poets, are also well-known poets in all these areas till today (Jaffery, 1981: 08).

Historians highlighted some significant periods which created huge impacts on Persian civilization till modern Iran (Curtis, 2005, P.02). These periods are as follows:

- The Elamite Empire (2500-644 BCE)
- The Median Empire (728-550 BCE)
- The Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BCE)
- Seleucid Empire (306-150 BCE)
- The Parthian Empire (247 BCE - 224 CE)
- The Sassanid Empire[1] (224-642 CE)

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[1] Before Muslim conquest, this empire was considered as a large historical empire. In this era, Roman Empire and most of the European areas were inspired from

- Islamic Conquest[2] (636 CE)
- Saffarid Dynasty (861-900 CE)
- Samanid Dynasty (819-999 CE)
- Turks and Mongols (10th-15th Century)
- Safavid Empire (1502-1736)
- Afsharid Empire of Nader Shah (1736-1757)
- Zand Dynasty (1757-1794
- Qajar Dynasty (1794-1925)
- Pehlavi Dynasty (1925-1979
- Islamic Republic of Iran (1979) (Curtis, 2005: 02-06)

Another important thing is that Iran has so many languages within its territory like Arabic in the Persian Gulf Coastal Region, Azeri in the Northwestern areas, Kurdish in the western areas, and Turkmen in the northern areas (Jaffery, 1981: 11). Similarly, books, articles, research papers, or poetry within the ancient Persian Empire or in contemporary Iran are presented in these languages, but the basic aspect of this literature is to highlight just Persian norms, values, and traditions with historical background. Persian language is also written in Arabic syntax. Even Persian literature has its history as old as the Old Achaemenid Persian Empire (550-330 BC), but after Islamic Conquest with the ending of the Sassanid dynasty in 651 under the leadership of Khalid-bin-Waleed, changed the value of Persian literature (Jaffery, 1981: 17). In Abbasids' rule (750 CE), the Persian language was fully used as a bureaucratic and literary language, starting from the area of Khorasan due to somewhat political differences. These differences also made the reason for early Persian dynasties, Tahirids (821-873) and Samanids (819-999) (Jaffery, 1981: 21).

Persian poets like Sheikh Sa'adi, Omar Khayam, Moulana Rumi, Ferdosi, Hafiz Attar and Nizami are well known also in all over the world and their literature has a deep influence. In other words, Persian literature is usually considered by the work of these six thinkers all over the world. Due to such popularity of these thinkers and their

PersianCivilization as well. Its cultural impacts influenced directly to India and China.

[2] Besides the several historians, most of the historians argued that Iranian people fought against the Arab conquest with giving tough time. Even Arabs introduced their own culture of rewards and punishments there, but Iranian people remained tried to preserve their own traditions. And they got success in it.

literature, students from all over the world came here and got education. This trend facilitated the Persian educational system in a formal way that became a reason for Persian educational popularity most (Curtis, 2005: 113).

This article is trying to present an educational system in Persian civilization before and after the conquest of Islam till the end of the Pehlavi dynasty. This is as follows.

PRE-ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN PERSIAN EMPIRE

There were four universities in the pre-Islamic era. Their names were The Academy of Gundishapur, Reishahr, Sarouyeh, and the School of Nisibis.

The Academy of Gundishapur

The academy of Gundishapur was in the city of Gundeshapur, was also famous for the slogan of an academy of learning. There is written in The Cambridge History of Iran that, "It was the most important center of the ancient world during 6th and 7th centuries" (Miller, 2010: .02). This academy had offered training in philosophy, science, theology, and medicines. This is contemporary called Jondishapu University of Medical Sciences, near the city of Ahvaz, established in the Pehlavi dynasty in 1959 (Miller, 2010: 112; Sam, 2001: 123).

Reishahr

Reishahr was the name of a city, located in the south of Tehran, in Fars's province, during the Persian Sassanid Empire. The value of this city regarding higher education is founded in the work of several historians, like Hamdullah Mastoofi's "Nuzhat-ul-Quloob" and Ibn-e-Balkhi's "Fars-namah" (Sadiq, 1931: 61; Sam, 2001: 125).

Sarouyeh

There was a large library near-contemporary Iranian city of Isfahan. This library was called "Sarough" in the literature of Ahmad-bin-Rustah in the 10th century (Sadiq, 1931, P.66). Ibn-e-Balkhi called it "Haft Halkah" in his "Fars-namah", but usually, this is called "Sarouyeh" by several historians (Sadiq, 1931: 68; Sam, 2001: 126).

School of Nisbis

The School of Nisibis was a spiritual educational center, established in the Nisibis in 350, which is now in Modern Turkey (Becker, 2006: 22). The base of this center was on the philosophy of Gundeshapur. Sometimes, this educational center is referred to as the first university in the world. It has three main teaching departments,

Medicine, Philosophy, and Theology (Becker, 2006: 22-23; Sam, 2001: 127).

EDUCATION AFTER CONQUEST OF ISLAM

After the conquest of Islam, traditionally, there were two major institutes for getting an education. These were called Nizamiyya and Hawza. But several scholars define the pyramid of post-Islamic educational setup on two bases. These bases are Institutions and individuals. There were a lot of Muslim scholars who were themselves a university within their own personality, and people from several parts of the world had gotten an education on different topics from them. Now, there will be a discussion about it.

Nizamiyya

In the 11th century, Khuwaja Nizam-ul-Mulk established a group of higher education institutions, which is called Nizamiyya due to his own name. This was an era of the Seljuk Empire. These schools were belonged to Ash'ari Shafi's theological school of thought and called Madrassas (Miller, 2010: 02-03; Ghirsman, 1954: 133-140). These institutions were considered as well organized and managed institutions for higher education in all over the Muslim world. Elite classeshad supported them spiritually, financially and politically. Some historians argue that this system was designed for countering new emerging sect of Muslims, "Ismailis". Nizam-ul-Mulk specified a chapter in his famous book "Books of Politics" (Siyasat-namah) against Ismaili doctrine (Miller, 2010: 04-05; Ghirsman, 1954: 133-140).

The famous branch of NizamiyyaSchool was Al-Nizamiyya of Baghdad, where Nizam-ul-Mulk appointed a well-reputed theologian Imam Ghazali as a professor. Persian poet Sheikh Sa'adi was also a student of this branch. Similarly, some other famous branches were located in Isfahan, Heart, Balkh, Nishapur, and Amol (Miller, 2010, P.23) (Ghirsman, 1954: 133-140).

Nizam-ul-Mul was assassinated during traveling from Isfahan to Baghdad in 1092. Several historians argue that a member of Hashshashin which was a group of the Ismaili sect assassinated him (Miller, 2010: 45; Ghirsman, 1954: 133-140).

Hawza

Hawza is actually considered a traditional madrassa in the Shia Muslims community. This system of higher education was constituted by several grand Ayatullahs (or called Mar'aj-e-Azam). Such institutes are situated still in Najaf (Iraq) and Qom, Isfahan, and mash'had (Iran) (Hefner, 2010, P.250) (Ghirsman, 1954: 140-143). Since the 10th century, there are big Shia Muslims religious institutes for higher education in Qom city of Iran. During the Safavids' rule, Hawsa of this city became prominent due to declaring Shia Islam as an official religion. There are also several women's hawza, located mostly in Iran. Women's hawza was initiated in the 1800s when firstly, Salehiyya madrassa in Qazvin city, established where several women got religious higher education (Hefner, 2010: 251). In 1973, grand Ayatullah Muhammad Kazim Shariatmadari started a women section in his madrassa Dar-ul-Tableegh, called Dar-ul-Zahra. Similarly, all over Iran, there are several other women madrassas in which Maktab-e-Fatima opened in 1961 in Fasa, Maktab-e-Zahra opened in 1964 in Shiraz, Maktab-e-Fatima opened in 1965 in Isfahan, Zahra-e-Athar opened in 1966 in Tehran, and Madrassa-e-ilmiyya Nargis opened in 1966 in Mash'had (Hefner, 2010: 251; Ghirsman, 1954: 140-143).

Usually, traditional subjects are the part of hawza syllabus. The list of subjects is given as follows.

- Mantiq or Logic (منطق)
- Asool-e-Fiqh or Principles of Jurisprudence (اصول فقہ)
- Fiqh or Jurisprudence (فقہ)
- Tafseer-e-Quran or Quran Exegesis (تفیر قران)
- Aloom-e-Quran or Quran Sciences (علوم قران)
- Ilm-ul-Hadith or the Study of Traditions (علم الحدیث)
- Ilm-ur-Rijaal or Science of Narrators (علم الرجال)
- Tareekh or History (تاریخ)
- Aqaed/Kalaam or Theology (عقائد)
- Lughat or Language Studies (لغت)
- Falsafa or Islamic Philosophy (اسلامی فلسفہ)
- Irfan or Islamic Mysticism (عرفانیت) (Hefner, 2010: 256-257)

Although Persian civilization has so many thinkers and philosophers in its influenced land after the conquest of Islam, there were several well-nominated Muslim scholars in Persian society (specifically in the contemporary region of Iran) who participated in the promotion of Islamic as well as modern and professional education in the Persian society (Hefner, 2010, P.260) (Ghirsman, 1954, PP.140-143). These personalities are famous till now due to their knowledge and have been considered as a university and a source of education within their personalities. Students from all over the world came towards them and get a lot of knowledge in

their fields of interest. Similarly, their thoughts, philosophies, literature, and poetry had a vital influence all over the world. Some of such personalities are discussed herein given below:

Muhammad Bin Musa Al-Khuwarzmi (780-850)

Al-Khuwarzmi (الخوارزمی) was also a famous Persian astronomer, mathematician, and geographer during Abbasid rule. He was a scholar in the House of Wisdom, situated in Baghdad (Iraq). During the renaissance period of Europe, he was considered as an original inventor of algebra, even his work was just based on older Greek and Indian concepts. He also revised the Geography of Ptolemy and wrote on astrology and astronomy. His famous book on mathematics was "Al-Kitab al-Mukhtasir fi Hisaab al-Jabarwal-Muqabla" (The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing) in which he presented systematic approaches regarding solving quadratic and linear equations (Famous Scientists). The book "On the Calculation with Hindu Numerals" was becoming the reason for promoting the Indian system of numeration all over Europe and other countries of the Middle East. He also worked out on mechanical devices like sundial and astrolabe. His book "Kitaabsurat-ul-Arz" (The Image of Earth) was the book of geography, has been written under the supervision of Mamun-ur-Rashid, is still available in only one university of the world, and that is in Strasbourg University Library (Famous Scientists).

Imam Ali Raza (765-818)

Ali ibn-e-Musa Al-Raza (امامعلیبنموسیالرضا) was the 8th Imam according to Shia sect of Islam and belonged from the holy family of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. During his travel to Khorasan, and stay in Nishapur and Tus, there was a rule of Mamoon-ur-Rasheed (the son of Haroon Rashid, from his Persian slave Marajil). Due to political conflict with him, Imam Ali Raza left Medina city and traveled towards the Khorasan where he stayed the last three years of his life in Tus. Here, he organized several debate programs with scholars of other religions like Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrians. These debates highlighted his religious educational skills in front of the public that became a cause of spreading Islam and Islamic thoughts, and his personality became the source of spreading knowledge through his speeches, addresses, and debates with scholars of different areas. People also loved and respected him due to his belonging to the family of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. His shrine (Roza) is also in Mash'had city of contemporary Iran (Najm-ul-Haq, 1973: 419-471).

Mansoor Hallaj (858-922)

Mansoor Hallaj (منصورحلاج) was a famous Persian teacher of Sufism, revolutionary writer and mystic. He is most famous due to his poetry. He wrote several books on prose and poetry. His famous book is "Kitaab-ul-Tawasin" which is consisted of two chapters between dialogues of Allah and Evil (Shetan) (Massignon, 1994: 02).

His death was due to a controversial decision by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Muqtadir, and he was hanged due to his saying that "He is the truth". According to the judges, he was claiming his personality as God, but contemporary critics argue that this was the peak point of Sufism wherein everything; an existence of God is reflected for the observer (Massignon, 1994: 09).

Firdowsi (940-1020)

Hakim Abul-Qasim Firdowsi (حکیمعبدالقاسمفردوسی) was another highly famous poet, belonged from Tus city of Khorasan province of Persia. His books were "Shah-namah", "National Epic of Iran", and "Related Societies". The Shah-namah was written for the princess of the Samanid Dynasty who was responsible for the revival of Persian culture after the Arab invasion. There were also the stories of pre-Islamic Persian kings. He continued his work, but the Samanid dynasty was conquered by the Ghaznavids. New ruler Sultan Mehmood Ghaznavi had no interest in Firdowsi's work; therefore, he lost the support of the royal court regarding his continued research. He complained about this attitude in his poems as well. Shah-namah is also one of the major influent books in Persian literature. (Ferdowsi, 2008: 03-29)." National epic of Iran" was his book of poems regarding generating national spirit and patriotism for Iran. Similarly, the book "Related Societies" is covered all the contemporary countries which were under the influence of Persian culture at that time like Pakistan, Xinjiang of China, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and Iraq (Ferdowsi, 2008: 29).

Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi (1018-1092)

Even Nizam-ul-Mulk (نظامالملکطوسی) was the founder of the religious higher educational system of Nizamiyah in Persia, but his personality was also a source of spreading education. Due to his educational skills, he was appointed as chief administrator of the entire Khorasan province in 1959 under the service of Ghaznavid sultans. He opened several schools for higher education in

several cities, which were famous with the name of Nizamiyah schools. He was also widely known sue to his two famous books titled Siyasat-nama (the Book of Government) and Dastoor-ul-Wuzara (Laws for Ministers) (Memon, 1936: 02-13).

Umar Khayyam (1048-1131)

Umar Khayyam (عمرخیام) was a great Persian poet, philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician. He wrote several books on Islamic theology, music, mineralogy, geography, and mechanics. His native city was Nishapur in the Khorasan province of Persia. Al-Zamakhshri called him "a philosopher of the world" due to his philosophy. His literature left deep impacts on all those societies where the Persian language is spoken or understood still. According to Thomas Hyde, Umar Khayyam was the first Eastern famous poet in the West due to his "Rubaiyat of Umar Khayyam" (Gohrab, 2012: 11).

Being a mathematician, he wrote the book titled "Treatise on Demonstration of Problems of Algebra" in 1070 which draw out several formulas of algebra (Gohrab, 2012: 13). He created several important achievements in Geometry and especially on the "Theory of Proportion" (Gohrab, 2012, P.14). As he was also an astronomer, several scholars argue that the medieval Iranian calendar which had 2,820 solar years and 1,029,983 days, was designed according to the measurements of Umar Khayyam and his colleagues. He was died and buried in Nishapur on December 4, 1131 (Gohrab, 2012: 39).

A controversial issue is that still several historians consider that the Khayyam either accept the existence of God or not. Some consider him a drinker while some tell him pious. But in a real sense, every historian argues about his own self-perception. The use of quotations from Hazrat Ali (R.A) in the poetry of Khayyam, declares all the controversies in a way that he is pious and has a strong belief in God (Namdariyan, 2009, P.56).

Abu Bakar Al-Bayhaqi (384-458) certified the poetry and books of Khayyam by arguing that his philosophy is searching for the existence of One God in the universe (Namdariyan, 2009, P.58).

Imam Ghazali (1058-1111)

Imam Ghazali (امامغزالی) was a Persian Muslim philosopher, jurist, theologian, and mystic, belonged from Tu's city in Khorasan (خراسان) province of Persia. Several historians called him a single most influential person after the last prophet Muhammad S.A.W. He was appointed as a lecturer in the Nizamiyah school of

Bhgdad where he taught almost 300 students. His book titled "The Incoherence of the Philosophers" turned the major theories according to Islamic aspects. He rejected the theories of Aristotle, Plato, and other Greek writers in this book and drew out the new ideas about politics, government, and governance according to the Islamic teachings (Albert, 2013: 05). Another book titled "Ahya-ul-Uloom" (the revival of religious sciences) covers almost all the fields of Islamic education like Fiqh (jurisprudence), Kalaam (theology), and Sufism (Albert, 2013: 07). He also did relate Sufism with shariah and argued that both are the same. He was the first who presented formal descriptions in his literary work. After the assassination of Nizam-ul-Mulk, Imam Ghazali wrote several books against Baatniyat and Ismailis (Albert, 2013: 13).

Some other famous books were Al-Munqidhmina al-dalal (Rescuer from Erroe), Hujjat-tul-Haq (Proof of the Truth), Al-Iqtasad fil-tiqaad (Median in Belief), Mishkaat-tul-Anwar (the Niche of Lights), Mezan-ul-Amal (Criterion of Action), Nasihat-ul-Malook (Counselling Kings), Minhaj-ul-Aabdeen (Methodology for worshipers) and Asaas-ul-Qiyas (Foundation of Analogical Reasoning) (Albert, 2013: 19).

Saadi Sherazi (1184-1283)

Saadi Sherazi or famously known as Sheikh Saadi was also a major poet of the medieval period in Persia. He is famous not only in the areas where the Persian language can understand, but also famous in the west. His poetry is based on social and moral norms and values. His most popular work was the books titled "Bostan" (The Orchard) and Gulistan (The Rose Garden). "Bostan" is consisted of stories on basis of Muslim liberty, justice, modesty, and contentment, while "Gulistan" is consisted of poems and advice, having the aim of delivering awareness about human existence. Wherever the Muslim religious schools or Madrassas are established, his work has existed there as a compulsory part of the syllabus (Shirazi, 2007: VI-VII).

Rumi (1207-1273)

Jalal-ud Din Muhammad Balkhi (جلالالدینمحمدرومیالمعروفمولانارومی), also known as Rumi, was a popular Muslim Sufi, poet, theologian and jurist. His work has had a great influence upon the societies of India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Iran for the last seven centuries. His poems have been translated into so many languages of the world that shows his popularity (Gamard, 2004:

XIII). In 2007, according to a survey regarding observing the popularity of poets, he was highlighted as the most popular poet within the United States of America. his writings are in a new style of Persian language, while his "Masnavi" remains in the purest literature of Persia (Bilka, 2008: VIII). His poetry created influence not only on Persian literature, but also Turkish, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and Chagatai languages. His major work is "Masnavi-e-Manavi" (Spiritual Couplets) is a book of poems, consisted of six volumes along with 27,000 lines of Persian poetry. Some Sufis declared it as a Persian language Quran. His other major work is "Diwan-e-Kabir" (Great Work) or "Diwan-e-Shams-e-Tabrezi" (The Work of Shams of Tabriz). "Shams" was an honor name of Rumi. In this book, there were 90 ghazals in the Arabic language, 12 were ghazals in the Turkish language and 14 were in Greek language. His famous books regarding his prose work are "Fihi Ma fihi" (In it Whats in it), Majalis-e-Saba (Seven Sessions) and Makatib (The letters) (Bilka, 2008: IX).

Historians argue that there was Hazrat Shams Tabrez, whose company changed the thinking of Rumi towards romantic spirituality. Therefore, the poety of Rumi, is sometimes called a "Deewan-e-Shams Tabrezi". Due to strong religious impacts in the poetry of Rumi with the company of Hazrat Shams Tabrez, his poetry is looked like a praise of beloved from love but without sexual affection. And this is proof that love is based upon the obedience of God (Kausar, 2009: 76-77).

Jami (1414-1492)

Noor-ud-Din Abdur-Rahman (نورالدینعبدالرحمنالمعروفجامی), more famously known as Jami, was a mystic, scholar, composer of several lyrics and idylls, historian, writer and a greatest Persian and Sufi poet of 15th century. His famous books are "Haft Awrang", "Tuhfat-ul-Ahrar", "Layla-o-Majnu", "Fatihat-ul-Shabab", "Lawa'ih" and "Durrah-ul-Fakhira" (Davis, 2012: 03). His poetry is a reflection of Persian culture and is still famous in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asian States (Davis, 2012: 04). His work was used by different scholars of the world, from Istanbul to Samarqand and From Mughal Empire to Khayrabad in Persia. Diwan of Jami consisted of Baharistan (Adobe of Spring), Diwan-hae-Sehganeh (Triple Diwans), Haft Awrang (Seven Thrones), Nafahat-ul-Uns (Breaths of Fellowship), RisalaManasik-e-Hajj, Risala Tariq-e-Khuwajagan, Shawahidul-Nabuwwa (Distinctive Signs of Prophecy), and Tohfa-tul-Ahrar (The Gifts of the Free) (Davis, 2012:

12).

These impacts were going on and Persian civilization was turning towards modernization. Now we have to discuss the educational system during the Pehlavi dynasty which is considered an Americanized educational system according to several writers who are in favor of the Iranian revolution of 1979. On the other hand, supporters of Pehlavi regime opposed the new educational system in Iran after the revolution and declare it a conservative, theocratic, and rigid educational system. There is a historical description of educational system in Modern Iran from 1851 to 1979 which is a significant era in which Iranian educational system got lot of western influence.

EDUCATION IN MODERN IRAN FROM 1851 TO 1979

Education in western style was started in Iran (Persia) in 1851 with the establishment of Dar-ul-Fanoon (دارالفنون). This was established with the efforts of royal minister Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir who had an aim regarding making trained Iranian experts and professionals in the different fields of science and technology (Menashri, 1992: 113; Sharvarini, 2005: 09). "Ministry of Science" was established in 1855, and Ali Gholi Mirza Etezad-ul-Saltanah became the first Minister of Science (Menashri, 1992: 115; Sharvarini, 2005: 09).

In 1885, the Military College of Tehran was established, and in 1899, the College of Political Science (Madrassa aloom-e-Siyasat) was opened within the Foreign Ministry (Menashri, 1992: 132; Sharvarini, 2005: 10).

The specific Ministry for Higher Education was established in 1967. However, it was suggested by a famous Iranian physicist Mehmood Hessaby in 1928 in the shape of a central university in Iran. So, the University of Iran was established in 1934 on his recommendation and till the establishment of the Ministry of Higher Education, this university was dealing with all the affairs regarding higher education. Today, this is the largest university in Iran with consisting of almost 32,000 students (Sharvarini, 2005: 11; Menashri, 1992: 134).

The first medical school in Iran was established in 1878, which is also called the first contemporary medical college, founded by Joseph Cochran (Sharvarini, 2005, 11; Menashri, 1992: 135).

The State University of New York established its campus in Tehran with a permanent charter in 1932. This was called American College in Tehran (Sharvarini, 2005: 12;

Menashri, 1992: 139).

The University of Tehran was the only first and only modern university till the end of the first Pehlavi period. Although the Ministry of Science had been presented its plan regarding establishing universities in Tabriz, Ahvaz, Shiraz, and Isfahan with a special concentration on the subjects of medical and veterinary sciences, this was just a plan (Menashri, 1992: 140; Sharvarini, 2005: 12).

The next Shah soon started new projects regarding establishing new universities in the American style. The model was designed from the educational system of the University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Pennsylvania and MIT. Shah was also interested in starting Iranian Studies Department in American Universities, therefore he financially funded American universities regarding this, and University of Southern California and Washington University received such financial gifts (Sharvarini, 2005: 12-13; Menashri, 1992: 143).

IMPACTS ON PRESENT IRAN

Persian civilization has strict control over its trends therefore it has an ability to mold new western patterns in its own legacy. Hegel, a western philosopher, has also admired Persian trends, approaches, and the history of Zarathustra. Although, Iran has a very old educational system it can absorb modern trends and reshape them into its own culture and legacy. Therefore, the Iranian population is looking ready every time to face the challenges of the new world. So, we can say that the Iranian educational system creates impacts on its population according to its beliefs, culture, and norms.

After the revolution, Iran has changed its educational system according to the Shia sect of Islam, but it has still the ability to absorb modern patterns. And, for this purpose, the term "Ijtehad (اجتهاد)" is used. Religious specialists observe new patterns and define a way that how these patterns can be adopted so that they were not contradicted with religion. These religious specialists are called "Mujatahideen (مجتهدین)". Now, the importance of education can be observed through studying the Iranian Constitution after the revolution. In article 2 of the Iranian Constitution, clause 2 emphasizes public awareness and socialization, clause 3, focuses upon free education for everyone at all levels and especially facilitation and promotion of higher education, and clause 4 encourages researchers with establishing new research institutes.

Iran has an almost same educational policy after Ayatullah Khumaini's Iran' cultural revolution 1980, but in the fourth Five Year Development Plan (2005-2010), there was a recommendation of upgrading curriculum at all the levels, and there was more concentration towards labor market-oriented education and training (Soofi, 2011: 51).

But, according to 2012 educational reforms, the pre-university year will now be replaced with an extra educational year in elementary school. There is also planning on concentration on the subjects of research and knowledge production. The teacher will also be a facilitator and guide in this new educational system (Soofi, 2011: 52).

Some other goals are as follows.

- Higher educational level must be globalized.
- Making strong believer of one God.
- Education must be for all.
- Parents should be involved in educational system for look after their children.
- Educational system must be more efficient than today.
- Iran must have highest standard in education in this region (Soofi, 2011: 54).

60 percent of Iranian women get a university education in the fields of science and engineering, while 70 percent of Iranian women are associated with the teaching or other fields of the educational sector. This growth has been more increased since the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 (Bahramitash, 2011: 45). UNESCO has a world report through conduct a survey that Iran has highest female ratio than the male regarding enrolling at primary level in all the world among sovereign nations (Bahramitash, 2011: 46).

Iranian higher education system in the 21st century is competing for international standards. Its universities, at one end, are following Islamic laws and principles in their ways of teaching, and at the other end, are following the quotation of Imam Khumaini when he said: "Iran must be a leader in the field of science and technology in the up-coming 20 years in the Middle East" (Nadjmabadi, 2012: 178).

Although there are so many critics of the higher education system of Iran, overall analysis shows that Iranian people are satisfied with their higher education system. 60 percent of women of the overall population are getting higher education while more than 70 percent women are associated with the field of teaching. Such a

figure is an answer to all those critics who are propagated about banning higher education for Iranian women (Bahramitash, 2011: 47).

Iran has an old and rich civilization with an educational background. Its roots of academic developments can find back from 2500 BC. From then to today, Iran has generated several internationally recognized scholars, scientists, poets, artists, and historians. Persian civilization has its deep impacts also on those territories which were formally the part of Persian Empire but now the sovereign countries like Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan. Iranian modern educational system has its roots back in 1851 under the Pehlavi dynasty, but after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, under the Iranian Cultural Revolution of 1980 by Ayatullah Khomeini, Iran has totally changed its educational system. The new educational system is purely designed based on Islamic teachings according to the Shia sect and there is no shadow of western influence like the Pehlavi dynasty.

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