Higher Art Education Reform in Iran After Revolution

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Abstract. The aim of this study is reviewing Iran's higher art education system, and how the lack of quality and effective management has influenced it. The systematic review method proposed in this article. Iran's antiquated higher art education system doesn't have the capacity to meet current needs. It faces plenty challenges and crises, so needs reform and transformation. In conclusion researcher recommend how to face current situation and build a better educational system in Iran higher education, such as; developed relations between universities and industry, consider employing international students, move toward knowledge production and management and train lecturer in modern educational methods and etc. On the other hand researcher suggest Discipline-Based Art Education as an approach to higher art education, which incorporates other rival alternatives and such, representational not a single framework but a synthesis of other models, for teaching art education in higher level.

Keywords: Higher education, reform, Iran

1. Introduction

The universities in Iran have faced a variety of challenges in the past three decades. These have been mostly related to intake increase the capacity of the acceptance of the student, scarcity of material resources, the uneven distribution of tertiary institutions in cities and towns, shortage of academics in certain fields, inflexibility of such institutions towards radical changes, their slow rate of expansion and development. It is clear from evidence that the issue of numbers and inadequacy of seats are not the only challenges of our higher art education system. The demand for advanced education and the appetite for university qualifications are still on the rise. A glance at the situation of the advance education in Iran in the past 25 years shows that there has been a radical development in the provision of higher education nationwide.[1]

2. Background

Education is the process designed for learning knowledge and skill as well as for teaching them. Education has started since the creation of mankind on the earth, gradually improved, and today it turned to be one of the fundamentals of societies' development. The role of Iranians in development of education is remarkable, toward that Islamic civilization indebted its success to a great deal to Iranian instructors and teachers**.**

The beginning of Constitutional Government and the Legislative Power was state-run and private schools to be foundation with the government and the ratification of the Compulsory Education Act. In addition, General Education in urban / rural areas was underscored by approval of a set of terms and conditions. Thereupon, extension of the education system was based on statute and practiced different stages.[2]

Majority of developing countries, higher education exhibits rigorous shortcoming, with system expansion an aggravating factor. Demand for enhanced access is likely to remain strong, with public and private sectors looking to meet it with a regularity of new higher education institutions. Rapid and chaotic development are generally the result, with the public sector usually under-funded and the private (for-profit) sector concentrated on short-term, market-driven requirement.[3]

3. Higher education in Iran

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The tradition of university education in Iran starts from the early centuries of Islam. By the 20th century, although, the system had become outdated and so was remodeled along French lines. In Iran, Tehran University was the first modern university founded in 1934; the Ministry of Science was formed in 1967 (CE). Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979 (CE) closed the universities for two years. Fifty-three universities, colleges, and higher education institutions were re-formed in four major: art; engineering and technical sciences; literature and humanities; business and administrative sciences.[4]

Governance of higher education in Iran is diffused between state-run, private (Azad), and distance-learning universities. Students at state-run universities must pass a centralized exam and are accepted according to their exam rank and special Points; it is free for all of the students, and very competitive. Students at private universities must pass a centralized exam and also pay tuition for full or part-time programs.[5]

According to Zahedi, the Science Minister, amongst the total Iranian population of 70 million is 3.5 million university students. Among them number about 1 million studying with distance-learning universities, 1.2 million in private (Azad) universities, 0.5 million in applied–scientific universities, and the rest in state-run universities. There are about 50,000 faculty members.[6]

In Iran higher education today suffers from an entire lack of quality. Much of this can be traced back to ineffectual management, growth enrollments, antiquated instructional methods, a shortage of technology, largely based on memorization, and misaligned motivation for teachers and students.

In most countries higher education systems face the same challenges, some of which conflict. They need:

- To raise their countries 'do more research attendance in a world where science and technology play an ever-growing role;
- To incorporate elite with mass higher education, in order to provide meaningful and useful information to millions who wish to learn and enhance their credentials;
- To provide lifelong education to a large public that seeks not only formal degrees, but to keep up and adapt to a rapidly evolving labor market;
- To preserve and grow their universities as centers for culture and scholarship, providing their societies with a space for the expansion and maintenance of critical knowledge, independent thinking, social identity building, and values.[7]

Schwartzman said that two main limitations face higher education institutions: First, resources. Similar factors inducing higher education reform also limit the access of resources for higher education institutions. The financial adjustments essential by a highly competitive and the growing requirement for social services by impoverished populations, unpredictable global economy, and, enhancement the cost of basic education and public health, and limit what is left over for higher education development and reform.[8] Second institutional arrangements and traditions, approximately everywhere, higher education institutions are formed as part of the public service, mostly with strong collegial decision-making mechanisms. But, the rules, regulations and operating practices of civil service and collegial management are not the most suitable for adapting rapidly to change.[9]

4. Higher Art Education in Iran

Art education University was first established in Iran on the Marvi School premises in Tehran in 1939 (AH 1319) and moved to its present location, at Tehran University campus, in 1949. The move was part of an evolutionary process of teaching art, as a specialized subject, at secondary schools (honarestan) founded by the late nineteenth-century Qajar court painter, Kamál al-Mulk. These schools taught art history, and the science of painting (elme naqashi) and carving (hajjari) in the style of the Academy of Paris. Some classes also taught design elements within the traditional Iranian art. Such new ways of teaching were in sharp contrast to the longstanding system of master-pupil apprenticeship. Currently there are roughly ten institutions in Tehran where the arts, and in some cases crafts, are taught awarding B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees.[10]

Art Schools in Iran after the Iranian Islamic Revolution, teaching modernism and learning style of painting in Iran's universities is taken from the Bauhaus School. [11] Art, especially visual art is a global language, with a symbolic way of representing the world, but they also allow understanding other cultures and create healthy emotional expression.[12]

5. The New Arts Program in Iran

In the year 2000 in Iran was the beginning of the long-term project that aimed at reviving art education. The first step was thought to be curriculum advancement. The new curriculum through a challenging and time-consuming process of deliberation that took more than 2 years,[13] was produced and then subjected to numerous rounds of validation and field-testing.[14] The new program will gradually replace the old curriculum, providing a realistic time frame for effectively managing the complex and multifaceted process of change.

6. Recommendations

The research offers that a transition from the current situation to a more desirable curriculum could use the following policies:

- Improvement courses that teach entrepreneurship and research methods;
- Revise quality of curriculum in context at university;
- Enhance motivation for teachers and students;
- Enhancement of material resources;
- Increase charging tuition and fees at state-run universities;
- Developed relations between universities and industry;
- Consider employing international students from other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and India;
- Move toward knowledge production and management, and away from simple knowledge transfer;
- Train professor in modern educational methods;
- Focus more on theoretical aspect in art education.
- Encourage cooperation between universities nationally and internationally;
- Document experiences in higher education reform so that best practices can be replicated;
- Constitute professional development centers for faculty members;
- Institute short-, mid-, and long-term strategic planning;
- Criterion and conduct comparative analyses of successful higher education systems in neighboring countries.

It is obvious from the evidence provided that a typical conventional system of higher education is not resilient to change or any form of development or even expansion. This is particularly the case where there are numerous applicants and limited available seats at universities.

7. Final Word

Students will experience a program, which has the potential to transform the current situation and to improve the quality of arts education with a depth unprecedented in the history of modern education in Iran. There is much strength associated with the new program and any deficiencies will be dealt with as the education system proceeds with its calculated and gradual implementation strategy.[15]

The last two decades have witnessed many debates and controversies revolving around the question of what the image or art education should guide the practical development process. As a result, art education discourse has experienced a dynamism and vitality unprecedented in this field. Discipline-based art education, [4] has evolved as a viable alternative, which could inform the curriculum deliberation process. The researcher suggests, Discipline-Based Art Education as an approach to higher art education, which incorporates other rival alternatives and such, representational not [1] single framework but a synthesis of

other models. It is therefore reasonable to use the assessment elements of this approach to judge the new curriculum imitative. DBAE refers to an approach that instructs and enables in learning art based on four foundation disciplines which are: Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Art Production. DBAE was originally developed for use by the visual art and then evolved to encompass the study of multiple fields dance, drama, and music. It may also be used in multiple settings, including higher education, lifelong learning centers and art museums, although it is most commonly applied to the visual art in a classroom setting. Eisner has been a prime mover in Discipline Based Art Education movement.[16]

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