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Iran with a population of approximately fifty million (1986) and an area of 1,648,195 square kilometers has lower population density than most of the other Asian countries. Keeping in mind the position of Iran among the oil exporting countries, it is natural to expect a high literacy rate, but the censuses show that the total literacy rate was only fifteen per cent in 1956, twenty-eight in 1966, forty-six per cent in 1976, and around sixty-two per cent in 1986. The census figures given in the first chapter reveal that there has been a gradual increase in the literacy rate, but also there is a vast difference between the literacy rate of urban and rural population, and between males and females.

The present century can be divided into four phases in the history of Iran: (i) before the explosion in oil revenues in the early 1970's; (ii) the 1970's; (iii) the Islamic revolution followed by the unwanted war with Iraq which lasted almost far a decade; and (iv) after the war, that is, the current phase.

Ardabillie (1975) found that despite significant progress on many levels after the 1970's, Iranian education lacked both in quality and organisation. There was a wide gap between Iranian education and the needs of the nation, and the new reforms in education had not helped much in the modernization of Iran.
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Bakhshi (1978) found that the average decimal rate of literacy progress was only nineteen per cent through the combined efforts of all the agencies and concluded that Iran was facing an illiteracy problem.

The findings of Kaveh's study (1982) were that though the Iranian educational process had accelerated by constant multiples every five years the overall acceleration of the secondary students was higher than that of primary and higher education students in all the five educational plans from 1948 to 1978. New educational reforms, changing the elementary education span from six to five years in 1973, and free schools and lunches in 1974, had no effect in the acceleration of primary education. In the end he concluded that no significant results were obtained at all levels of education despite five educational plans.

Kashani (1983) found that wrong implementation of educational policy, wrong supervision and direction in the educational system, defects in the system of examination, and social and environmental factors stood in the way of compulsory elementary education. He also found that shortage of physical facilities, trained teachers and wrong teacher-pupil relationship were the factors hindering the spread of compulsory elementary education in Iran.
In the 1980's the war with Iraq affected all aspects of life in the country. The continuance of the war had crippled the resources of the country. It led to inflation, large migration from rural to urban areas, and high rate of unemployment. In any country such conditions can affect the growth of literacy. In such a situation people's attitude towards education can become negative. As per the census of 1986, the birth rate has increased during the 1980's and as this increased number of young citizens grows up the first burden on the country will be of fulfilling their basic needs among which education stands high. To plan for the coming situation it is essential to find out present defects and shortcomings. It is agreed that as planning is for the betterment of the people, their needs and expectations should be understood. Since the people are the consumers and beneficiaries of the educational system, it is essential to understand their needs and attitudes. The role of experts and planners in this connection, is to advise and provide the necessary managerial support. With this in mind it was considered appropriate to find out what were the various problems that the people perceived in the primary educational system.

The investigator searched related literature to find out what had been done so far in this field. He could not
find much except the promulgation of laws regarding the educational system from time to time and evaluating the educational plans almost regardless of people's views. With this in mind the study was planned to find out "PROBLEMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION AS PERCEIVED BY PARENTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN KERMAN STATE OF IRAN", separately for urban and rural areas, for parents with different educational and income levels as well as parents of sons and daughters. Their attitude towards education was measured firstly with the purpose of highlighting whether their attitude towards education was influenced by their differences, and secondly to find out the relationship of the attitude of the parents towards education and their perception of problems.

In this study a multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to minimise the bias of sampling. To select five hundred parents as respondents the Kerman State was selected keeping in view that this state was fairly representative of the conditions in the whole country. Between the parents, the Perception of fathers was considered to be important, because of the patriarchal nature of families in Iran. A father being the head of the patriarchal family has the greater role in shaping the thinking and practice of other family members.
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To collect relevant data from the present study some tool was required to record the perception of fathers regarding problems of primary school education and their attitude towards education. Practically no worthwhile tool could be located in the literature. Attitude scale was found in the literature but had to be modified and translated into the Persian language. The questionnaire for the problems had to be developed afresh altogether.

While developing the questionnaire of problems of primary school education to record the perception of the fathers regarding problems of primary school education different sources were tackled. Fathers were interviewed, teachers were approached, educationists and administrators were interviewed to elicit the problems of primary school education in general. The statements were framed, face validity was checked and response consistency was determined before considering them ready for inclusion in the study. The developed questionnaire of problems of primary school education consisted of fifty statements and had 0.87 as an index of consistency of responses over a period of one to two weeks. The statements were in simple Persian language and were to be answered by the respondent fathers in 'Yes' or 'No'. All the items were grouped into four categories, like: (1) Physical facilities; (2) Socio-economic, motivational and recreational activities; (3) materials and
methods of instruction; and (4) teaching staff, administrative aspects and examination system.

The attitude scale by Runguist and Sletto (1936) was modified and translated into local language and its validity and reliability were determined before inclusion for data collection.

Equal number of fathers from rural and urban areas were taken. Their age ranged from 25 to 45 years. The proportion of fathers having only male or female child in primary schools in urban and rural settings did not differ significantly. Income-wise as anticipated more fathers in urban areas belonged to upper strata. Nearly forty-one per cent of the urban fathers had a family income of upto 50,000 Rials per month and fifty-nine per cent had above 50,000 Rials, whereas in rural areas about seventy-four per cent of the fathers had a family income of upto 50,000 Rials per-month and only twenty-six per cent had family income of above 50,000 Rials per-month. The range of the income was narrow in rural subjects as compared to urban subjects. Similarly on the variable of education thirty-six per cent of the fathers in urban areas and sixty-six per cent in rural areas were found to be illiterate. This clearly indicated that the rural and urban differences with regard
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to education and income were significant in the respondent fathers.

All the fifty statements that were asked from each respondent father were divided into three groups based on the endorsement by the respondents: (A) the statements which were endorsed by more than fifty per cent of the fathers were considered as indicator of major or severe problems; (B) the statements that were endorsed by thirty to fifty per cent of the fathers were considered as moderate problems; and (C) the statements that were endorsed by less than thirty per cent of the fathers were considered as minor problems.

Out of fifty statements twenty-one were considered to reflect severe problems, eight were moderate and twenty-one were minor. The most serious problem that was endorsed by ninety-nine per cent of the fathers was that, 'writing materials are expensive'. The other problems in order of severity were: 'there is no provision for guidance and counselling'; 'teachers are not having thorough knowledge of regional culture'; 'teachers are not sympathetic towards the problems of students'; 'there is no provision for co-curricular activities'; 'examinations are not held frequently'; 'audio-visual aids are not used in schools'; 'text-books are not received from school in time'; 'parents
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are not informed about performance of their children'; 3text-books are not available round the year'; \textit{t}oppers are not encouraged'; 3there is less emphasis on creative activities'; 3examination system measures memory only'; 3physical lay-out of school is not attractive'; 3there are not enough teachers'; 3there is no provision for medical care'; 3students are afraid of their teachers'; 3parent-teacher association is practically unproductive'; 3there is no provision for education of handicapped children'; 3there is inadequate seating arrangement in the class-rooms'; and 3different competitions are not organized in schools.

A large number of problems belonged to 3Socio-economic, motivational and recreational activities' followed by 3teaching staff, administrative aspects and examination system'. It has been documented in the review of literature that the socio-economic problems are major hindrances causing poor enrollment, wastage, and stagnation (primary Education Department, Bombay, 1956; Primary Education Department, Bombay, 1957; Sharma and Sapra, 1969; Bureau of Economics and Statistics, 1970; Das, R.C, 1970; Agarwal, 1972; Finance and Planning Department, 1974; Atllah Salwa Gamil, 1974; Caspar, 1975; Hossain, 1978; Dutt, 1979; Pillai, Benjamin and Nair, 1980; Srivastava and Gupta, 1980; ISEC, 1981; Gupta, 1982; Kashani, 1983; Diniz, 1986; Dreyden, 1988).
Among both the urban and rural respondents the total number of problems perceived by fathers having different educational and income level and having only male and female children in the primary schools did not differ significantly. Thus the total number of the problems as perceived by fathers remained the same but the nature was different. Each father on an average had endorsed almost twenty-two statements out of fifty to be problems in the way of providing proper primary school education for his wards. The nature of problems, however, were different for urban and rural fathers and for fathers with different educational and income level.

Regarding the habitat, the rural respondents perceived significantly more that, the school is far from their residence; there is not enough arrangement to keep the class-rooms warm during winter; there is no provision for clean drinking water; school building is not safe against natural calamities; there is no provision for education of handicapped children; there is no library in the school; providing uniform is beyond reach; child's help is needed at home; teachers are not sympathetic; there is no provision for guidance and counselling; there is no provision for co-curricular activities; toppers are not encouraged; the curriculum is heavy; text-books are not available round the
year; students get their text-books long after commencement of session; language of text-books is difficult; there is insufficient emphasis on learning by doing; there are insufficient number of lady teachers and; teachers do not have thorough knowledge of regional culture.

On the other hand the urban respondents perceived more frequently that there are not enough schools in their areas; the school building is too small; there is no provision for play-grounds; there is lack of hygienic and sanitation facilities in the schools; students are afraid of their teachers; audio-visual aids are not used in the schools; subjects of study are not related to daily life; mass-media techniques are not sufficiently used in the learning process; teaching methods are traditional; physical education as a subject is ignored; there are not enough teachers; teachers are not trained properly; parent-teacher association is practically unproductive; there is no provision for regular medical care and examination system does not encourage competition. These problems when compared with the problems as found in other countries are more or less the same. In the rural areas the craving is for basic amenities, where as in urban areas it is more towards quality because amenities are already there. It therefore showed that the hypothesis "Parents with rural and
urban background will perceive the problems of Primary School education differently" was retained.

Bakhshi (1978) also found the differences between the educational needs of rural and urban people and had recommended certain remedies, viz funds be allocated to education for rural areas, adequate teaching staff should be provided, school building equipment and audio-visual aids should be supplied, curriculum and instructional materials should be revised, and to overcome the distance problem between home and school he suggested that mobile schools should be operated in areas of scattered population, which means rural areas. For the shortage of teachers in the rural areas, he recommended that more corps personnel should be sent to rural areas, and the roads should be improved between villages for better transportation. Shortage of trained teachers in the primary schools was also noticed by Kashani (1983). Defects in parent-teacher association which is the only formal link between the parents, teachers and school authorities, was reported by Kashani (1983). In the present study more urban fathers expressed that parent-teacher association was unproductive as compared to rural fathers. The reason behind this might be that generally human relations are stronger in villages than in cities and also population density and size of the villages are smaller than cities and this makes for more interaction between
parents and teachers in rural areas. One reason why fathers do not co-operate with school authorities in urban areas might be that they have a very busy schedule of life and have very little time for this. Regarding rural-urban differences Sarhan (1986) also reported that school facilities of rural areas were much less than urban areas in Makkah district of Saudi Arabia.

As per the sensuses of Iran for the year 1956, 1966, 1976, and 1986 the urban population is always and constantly found to be more literate compared to rural population. In the present sample of study, high school and college education was almost absent among the rural population. It could be construed that the sample might be biased and the schools included in the study might be only those which do not cater to the needs of upper strata of the society. But this argument does not hold as far as the Iranian situation is concerned. The prevailing educational system in Iran is government run and every one is supposed to admit his ward in the nearest school. Thus, schools in Iran are generally common for children irrespective of the status of their parents. However, urban/rural differences might be reflected in the educational and income level of parents. As found in the case of rural fathers, low literate fathers (illiterate + primary education) also perceived more
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frequently that, school is far from our residence; there is no provision for clean drinking water in schools; school building is not safe against natural calamities; there is no provision for education of handicapped children; providing school uniform is beyond reach; child's help is needed at home; teachers are not sympathetic towards the problems of students; the curriculum is heavy; there is insufficient number of lady teachers; and teachers do not have thorough knowledge of regional culture.

Fathers with no education and lower education perceived more frequently that; school is far from our residence; there is no provision for clean drinking water; school building is not safe; there is no provision for education of handicapped children; providing school uniform is beyond reach; child's help is needed at home; teachers are not sympathetic towards the problems of students; curriculum is heavy; there is insufficient number of lady teachers; teachers do not have thorough knowledge of regional culture.

Fathers with higher level of education perceived significantly more frequently that; size of school building is small; subjects of study are not related with daily life; teaching methods are traditional; physical education as a subject is ignored; there is less emphasis on personal
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hygienic habits; there are not enough teachers; teachers are not trained properly; parent-teacher association is practically unproductive and; examination system does not encourage competition among students. To conclude it can be said that the second hypothesis "parents with different educational level will perceive the problems of primary school education differently" was also retained.

In the studies reported in related literature; parents. Das (1970, India) reported that one of the main causes of wastage was illiteracy of parents. He also held that socio-economic causes were more responsible for stagnation. Tadesse (1974, Ethiopia) concluded that performance of children in schools was dependent on parental characteristics. Caspar (1975, Brazil) in his research stated that socially privilaged families recognized the importance of education for the vocational future of their children and encouragement was better in their case. Pillai, Benjamin and Nair (1980, India) found that lack of education of parents was a factor which increased the tendency to dropout. Srivastava and Gupta (1980, India) reported that the educational back-ground of the parents of the non-enrolled children showed that one-third of the parents were illiterate and one-fourth had studied upto the middle standard and that the children of uneducated parents in urban areas were more irregular than those of uneducated
parents in rural areas. In their study the major reasons
given by the parents for non-enrollment, non-attendance, and
dropping out were the need of the children to work in homes,
unsympathetic teachers, dull curriculum, lack of utility of
education, lack of interest in education, lack of text-
books, and lack of education among parents. But in the
study by ISES (1981, India) a contrary view was expressed
that irregular attendance was almost equal both in the
children of illiterate and literate parents. Similarly
Staffored (1986, Haiti) found that students' socio-economic
status was not an accurate predictor of educational survival
and parents, regardless of their education, vocation, or
SES, had a strong influence on students academic
achievement.

In the studies reported in the literature by Kashani
(1983, Iran); Primary Education (1957, India); Sharma and
Sapra '1969, India); Bureau of Economics and Statistics
(1970, India); Das (1970, India); Agarwal (1972, India);
Caspar (1975, Brazil); Hossain '1978, Bangladesh); Dutt
(1979, India); Srivastava and Gupta (1980, India); ISEC
(1981, India); Gupta '1982, India) and; Diniz (1986,
Brazil), it was clearly demonstrated that dropout rate was
generally higher in the lower strata of society compared to
family of upper economic strata. In the present study
fathers having low income (upto 50,000 Rials) perceived significantly more frequently that: there was no provision for clean drinking water, school building was not safe, there was no provision for education of handicapped children; providing school uniform was beyond reach; childs' help was needed at home; text-books were expensive; curriculum was heavy, language of text-books was difficult; there was insufficient number of lady teachers; teachers did not have thorough knowledge of regional culture; whereas fathers having a family income of more than 50,000 Rials per month perceived significantly more that size of the school building was small; there was less emphasis on creative activities; audio-visual aids were not used in the schools; teaching methods were traditional; physical education as a subject was ignored, there was not enough number of teachers; teachers were not trained properly; parent-teacher association was practically unproductive; examination system did not encourage competition and; examination system concentrated on students memory. Thus, the results indicated that the third hypothesis "Parents with different levels of income will perceive the problems of primary school education differently" was also retained.
The sex of the ward, whether male or female did not make for much difference with regard to number of problems of primary school education. As happens in patriarchal societies, the education of the son is more emphasised compared to the education of daughters and therefore, fathers having sons in primary schools should have perceived more problems but the present study has not supported this and it may be due to the fact that in the culture of Iran, girls enjoy comparatively better status than girls in other third world countries. Thus the differences between the problems perceived by the fathers of sons and daughters had to be the same. In the present study, only on three problems significant differences were found. More fathers of daughters perceived child's help was needed at home; and there was insufficient number of lady teachers. Whereas more fathers of sons reported that the number of teachers was insufficient. The difference between three statements out of the fifty may suggest that the efforts of the government and other agencies to reduce the discriminations in the upbringing of male and female children have succeeded in Iran.

In the questionnaire of problems of primary school education there is a statement, "Teaching methods are traditional". Only about one fourth of the subjects perceived that the methods were traditional still. Thus,
new technology and advancement disseminated through the mass-media have been influencing the thinking and practice of the population. This might have influenced positively the perception of fathers of sons and daughters regarding problems of primary school education, therefore, perception of two groups of fathers did not differ significantly. Thus the fourth hypothesis "Parents of sons and daughters will perceive problems of primary school education differently" by and large stood rejected.

The mass-media techniques are said to be responsible for change in the attitude of the masses. Therefore, any issue related with behaviour and perception may not stick in the same form for a long time, if continued efforts of re-education, information on T.V., Radio and other means are there. In the present study it was found that urban and rural fathers did not differ in their attitude towards education. However, there were some significant differences in the attitude of fathers with different educational and income levels. Illiterate fathers had significantly poorer attitude towards education compared to fathers having primary, middle and high school education. Like-wise fathers in the lowest income group had significantly low attitude towards education, but when compared with their perception of the total number of problems of primary school education the relationship was not significant.
Sex of the school going child had no significant relationship with the attitude towards education. One can argue that if the education and income of the respondents are associated significantly with the attitude towards education, then, urban and rural respondents should have different attitudes because a large number of rural fathers were illiterate, belonging to the lowest income group compared to urban fathers. Since the attitude scale used in the study had twenty-two items and each rated on five point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (scores 1 to 5), a respondent with average attitude should have had a score of 66. In the present study the mean score is about 90, indicating that as a group respondent fathers, irrespective of their education or income, had favourable attitude towards education. Whatever the differences there are they are very small and irregular giving no clear linearity in the progression. Thus the expression poor attitude is statistical and is only a relative term.

Attitude towards education was also not found to have any significant correlation with the total number of problems of primary school education perceived. These results and discussion provide enough support to justify the rejection of two other broad hypotheses, "Parents with urban/rural background, different level of education, varied income groups, and having children of different sexes in the
primary schools will differ in their attitude towards education", and "there will be a positive relationship between the parents' attitude towards education and their perception of the problems of primary school education".

As a matter of dissatisfaction with current administration nearly all of us have one or other complaint against the ruling authorities. This was true even for the perceived problems in primary school education. The responses (nature of problems) of urban/rural fathers and fathers belonging to different educational and income groups differed significantly, but when the number of problems were considered the groups did not differ significantly. On an average over forty-five per cent of the statements were perceived as problems. The higher number of problems perceived by the respondents might indicate that they had favourable attitude towards education in general and, therefore, might have articulated many problems in primary school education system. This could be because of their good knowledge about the needs of education but poorer resources to fulfill the desired goal for their children's future.

To sum up, it can be concluded that:

I. There are a number of major problems which the Iranian fathers are facing regarding primary school education of their children. These problems in order of their severity are: writing materials are expensive; there
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is no provision for guidance and counselling; teachers do not have thorough knowledge of regional culture; teachers are not sympathetic towards the problems of students; there is no provision for co-curricular activities; examinations are not held frequently; audio-visual aids are not used in the schools; text-books are not received from the school in time; parents are not informed about performance of their children; text-books are not available round the year; toppers are not encouraged; there is less emphasis on creative activities; examination system concentrates on student's memory only; physical lay-out of schools is not attractive; there are not enough number of teachers; there is no provision for medical care; students are afraid of their teachers; parent-teacher association is not productive; there is no provision for education of handicapped children; there is inadequate seating arrangement in the class rooms; and competitions are not organised in schools.

II. Amongst the hierarchy of the problem areas, the problems regarding (a) socio-economic, motivational and recreational activities' topped the list, followed by (b) teaching staff, administrative aspects, and examination system; (c) physical facilities', and (d) materials and methods of instruction'.

III. Urban and rural fathers perceived different problems in the existing system of primary education, but did not differ significantly with regard to the total number of problems.

IV. Fathers with higher income and educational background perceived significantly different problems in primary school education than the fathers with low family income and education but did not differ, in total number of problems.

V. The total number of problems perceived by fathers of sons and daughters were not significantly different.

VI. Rural, low literate fathers (illiterate + primary education) and low income fathers(below 50,000 Rials) had comparatively more complaints in the areas of socio-economic, motivational, and recreational activities', followed by physical facilities' in the existing primary educational system. Contrary to this, the urban, high literate(Middle School and above) and upper income group fathers(above 50,000 Rials) had perceived more number of problems in the area of teaching staff, administrative aspects, and examination system', followed by materials and methods of instruction'.

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VII. Rural, low literate (illiterate + primary education) and poorer strata (below 50,000 Rials) of fathers had more or less similar pattern of complaints about the existing system of primary school education in Iran. They want more basic amenities, whereas, the urban, high literate, and upper strata respondent want quality of education. This fits to a great extent in Mas Low's hierarchy of needs.

VIII. The sex of the ward had almost nothing to do with the perception of the problems. There was no significant difference in the perception of fathers of sons and daughters except for three problems. A large number of fathers of daughters had invariably endorsed two statements compared to the fathers of sons. These statements were: child's help is needed at home; and number of lady teachers were insufficient, whereas fathers of sons perceived that number of teachers were not enough.

IX. The attitude towards education for urban and rural fathers did not differ significantly but education of fathers and their income had significant relationship with the attitude towards education.

X. The attitude towards education did not influence the perception of total number of problems in primary schools.