CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
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1.1 The Accepted Meaning and Aim of Education

In fact proper education is a process which broadens a person's horizons; makes him socially more active; extends his opportunities of participating in management and administration; helps him to choose the right career, and develops a creative attitude to work. It is also a process of full realization of human potential; a process of proper modification of human behaviour and a process of character-building and international understanding. To achieve the harmonious development of an individual, proper elementary education is the first step.

1.2 Human Rights and Education

Human rights have been defined as a relationship between the state and the individual. They are designed to fix the position of the individual in the community and to give him safeguards which are considered necessary for his protection against the state. They are developed as internal concern of every state. But human rights have been violated throughout the history of mankind. In the present age of space, when man claims that he is civilized enough to realize the importance of human dignity, rights
of others have to be protected and respected. But human rights are violated by many states. Rights of many people in many countries are being violated in different ways and under different names. They are put in jails by their governments, sent to exile, tortured and executed. There are different excuses advanced by different states for violation of human rights such as people being called anti-government, anti-nation, anti-religion, anti-society and so on. In fact, many people in many countries are tortured and executed due to their creeds, beliefs, ideology and even due to their struggle for liberty, freedom and justice. The latest report which has been published by Amnesty International in London on October 27, 1982 said that 121 out of 157 states had violated human rights since 1981 in different ways with different names. In this report the London-based Amnesty said: "Secrecy and censorship often prevented free flow of information about human rights abuse." The 367 page report said that as year ended, thousand of men and women were in prison because of their beliefs, many were still held for years without charge or trial. Prisoners were subjected to torture, and people had been executed or were under sentence of death in a number of countries, often for political offences. Still others were put to death without any pretence of judicial or legal process, selected and killed by governments and their agents.
No doubt, attempts have been made by many groups and individuals who believe that the security of world-peace would depend, upon the security of human rights. The various international agreements for the universal abolition of the slave trade in nineteenth century contributed to the promotion of principles of humanity and universal morality. Through other devices like Slavery Convention (1926), The Convention on The Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (1921 and 1933), and The International Labour Legislation, international laws have been promoted for the welfare of man. The actual movement for international protection of human rights was started after the Second World War due to humanitarian reaction to the Nazi atrocities in Europe during the Second World War. The Nazis committed outrageous acts in violation of fundamental human rights. The Commission on Human Rights was set up on February 16, 1946. The Commission was primarily responsible for the conversion of the principles of human rights into an international Bill of Rights which came up at San-Francisco Conference. Later on the United Nations authorized the Commission on Human Rights, to prepare such an International Bill. In its three sessions the Commission formulated and approved a Draft Declaration as the first part of the proposed International Bill of Rights. The Bill was approved by General Assembly of United Nations on December 10, 1948 as
as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The purpose of passing this Bill of Rights was to bring about international control and supervision on human rights through International Bill of Rights. This doctrine in practice, seeks to guarantee that every state treats its citizens in a way which will not violate the dictates of humanity and justice or shake the conscience of mankind. According to this Bill all human beings are born free, with equal rights and duties. They are endowed with reason and shall act in a spirit of mutual brotherhood. Every one has a right to live in freedom and personal safety. The slave trade is prohibited. No one shall be subjected to torture or other acts of degradation. Every one has the right to appeal to a national court if his human rights are violated. No one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest or shall be forced to go into exile. This manifesto was approved by 58 members of United Nations including Iran. It was stressed by United Nations that all states would publish this Bill and would distribute it in their schools and educational institutions.

Article 26 of this Bill deals with education in which education has been considered as a birth right of every individual. It has asserted the right of free and compulsory education for every one at least at the elementary and fundamental stage, technical and professional education to
be generally available and higher education equally to be accessible to all on the basis of merit. In the second part of this article stress is laid on the aim of education for development of character of mankind to its higher level and respect for human rights and freedom. Good relations among all nations, respect for opposite creeds, peace and peaceful co-existence have been emphasised. In the third part of article 26, parents have been given option for selection of any type of education for their children.

1.3 Illiteracy - A Major Problem

Man has made a great progress in many spheres of life particularly in Science, Technology and Space. But man with all his abilities and capabilities for achieving such progress has not been able to solve the many problems which have surrounded him. The most ticklish problems which he is facing nowadays are poverty, Starvation, population explosion leading to other problems like problems of food, accommodation and employment and above all the problem of illiteracy. Illiteracy itself is a source of many other social evils. Illiteracy affects each man and woman, both as an individual and as a member of the community. It hampers his or her personal development. In fact, illiteracy, in many respects, is more than a problem of an individual or even the problem of an individual nation. Its dimensions are world-wide. Illiteracy has also direct and far-reaching
economic and social effects on the development of the whole world. In this regard, less developing nations are especially deeply concerned with the problem of illiteracy.

In the words of Amadou-Mahtar M. Bow (1976), "... Despite remarkable efforts made by so many third world countries in the field of education, it is estimated that in 1980 there will be 240 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 not attending schools and 820 million illiterates - 20 million more than at present". Thus, reversing the present trend towards constant increase in world literacy is a major challenge of the present time.

1.4 Background of Iran

Iranian civilization is now known to be at least ten thousand years old. It is one of the longest continuing civilizations. For much of its long history Iran embraced a far larger area than is included within the boundaries of the country today, which is one reason, why Iranian cultural influences have affected so many other cultures in East and West.

Iran's position between the low-lying Mesopotamian region, the Caucasus and the Steppe Lands of Central Asia, all regions which at various periods, have formed part of Iran, has meant that the country has always been a bridge between the East and the West, across which has streamed
wave after wave of migrants and invaders - Aryans, Greeks, Arabs, Turks and Mongols. As a result, Iran has undergone moments of great hardship and suffering as well as long periods of glory. Iranologists, whether specialists in archaeology, art, history, religion, philosophy or literature all attest to the remarkable continuity of Iranian civilization.

The land area of Iran is some 1,648,000 sq. kilometers (6,36,000 square miles), roughly five times the area of England or Italy and three times that of France. Some two-thirds of this is mountains and desert, which account for the relatively low density of population (about 20 per square kilometer).

Iran has land frontiers with The Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Turkey. Iran is also separated from Soviet Union by the Caspian Sea, the world's largest inland body of water. The South of Iran borders on Persian Gulf, where Iranian Coastline is the longest of any littoral State. Across this vital waterway lie Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

Temperature of Iran varies considerably from 50°C (122°F) or even more, in the South, to lowest of -25°C (-13°F) in North West. It rarely freezes along the Caspian littoral but never in the Persian Gulf.
At the last census in the Autumn of 1976 the population of Iran was about 33.6 million with an annual rate of population growth of 2.7 per cent. In early 1980 the population was estimated at about 36 million. The last census conducted in 1976 showed that 51% of the total population were male and 49% female. It also showed that 53% of total population were below the age of twenty, out of which 45% were below the age of sixteen. It also showed that 53% of the total population were living in rural areas and 47% in Urban areas.

The people of Iran consist of a wide range of ethnic groups. The majority belong to Mediterranean, Caucasian or Alpine branches of Indo-European family, descendants of the first Aryan settlers of the Plateau, but migration and invasions have brought numerous other ethnic groups to Iran. These include the Turkish, Turkoman, Arab, Armenian and Assyrian people.

Persian, the official and literary language of modern Iran, is the most important of the group of languages known as Iranian. Modern persian is direct descent of Pahlavi, which is the middle Persian language spoken in Sassanian times, to which during Islamic time, a great many Arabic words were added. It is an extremely rich language.
Persian has, in fact, changed very little in the past eleven centuries and an educated Iranian can read works written a thousand years ago without much difficulty. The other modern Iranian languages are - Kurdish, Pushtu (in Afghanistan), Baluchi, the Caspian languages, Ossetic (in the Caucasus) and one or two others which are spoken in Central Asia.

1.5 Education in Iran:

The wealth of a nation is based upon its power to develop and to effectively utilize the innate capacities of its people. The present technological age requires greater expertise and specialization to assist in nation-building efforts. Upto the beginning of the present century, tradition and religion formed the nucleus of Persian education. However, a series of extreme educational developments and modernization programmes were initiated and carried out during the 1920's and 1930's. Actual systematic planning for socio-economic coordinated development began in 1949 when the first seven-year plan was executed. Since then, five year development plans differing widely in extent and scope, have been launched. Expansion in education and economic planning has resulted in remarkable internal stride towards the success of Iran's economic progress through several carefully planned and rigidly executed reforms. With current economic demands, greater emphasis is placed on the
role of education in transforming Iran's human resources into efficient manpower.

As a result of studies carried out in 1975, a new system of education, approved by the High Educational Council in August 1975 is now being practised. It consists of twelve (5 + 3 + 4) years course namely primary, guidance cycle and higher secondary. Technical and vocational education has been also diversified and expanded. Simple technical courses have been included in the syllabi of academic high schools to make the students familiar with the basic tools and techniques of an industrialized society. In technical and vocational education the emphasis is on encouraging every student to acquire a few skills, rather than just one. In short the objective of new system of education was to bring about changes in the country's social and economic structure, especially the serious shortage of skilled manpower in industry, agriculture, services and the need for better co-ordination between secondary and higher education and training needs of both society and individual. Thus education from primary upto higher secondary is nationalized and centralized with uniformity of syllabi in the whole of the country under direction and supervision of Ministry of Education in the capital city of Iran - Tehran. The total allocation to education in the budget of 1976-77 amounted to $ 2.5 billion which was 8.5 per cent of the total budget and 37 per cent higher than the previous year figures. The bulk of Iran's educational
expenditure was devoted to primary level which absorbed over a quarter of the total funds. In the words of Frade Halliday (1978), "the rate of literacy has increased from 5 per cent in 1900 to 15 per cent in 1956 and to 35 per cent in 1970." It was also estimated that the rate of literacy in Iran, as a whole, was about 40 per cent at the end of 1980.

At present Iran's higher educational system consists of both private and public institutions. It includes universities and other degree giving establishments and institutions affiliated to government agencies. The oldest University is the University of Tehran which was founded in 1934. Tehran University remained the only institution of higher education until 1947, when Tabriz University was established. At present there are twenty universities in the whole of the country. There are also 150 other institutions of higher education, including 87 affiliated to such bodies as the Ministry of Health, The Ministry of Agriculture and the National Oil Company, which meet the manpower needs of specific sectors or industry. There are also 40 private institutes which provide tuition in languages, commerce, computer, science, management, banking and other subjects. In the words of Frade Halliday (1978), "the total number of students undergoing higher education in colleges, universities and other higher institutions of Iran was 25,000 in 1956 which increased to
170,000 in 1977". In 1979, the total was estimated at about 190,000 with the total number of teachers and professors at about 12,000 in the whole country. Admission to all universities and higher institutions is based strictly on the entry examination, the number of seats are limited. Up to 1979 thousands of students including those who could not get admission to any university or other higher institution of Iran but wanted to continue their higher education in other countries and had financial possibilities could go easily without any limitation, except to communist countries and to a few other states for which permission of government was needed. The government of Iran also used to pay scholarships to all students who were doing higher education in Iran and other countries up to the end of 1978 with the condition that they should serve the government on completion of their studies. At present this facility has been stopped and going to the other countries for studies is now limited. The government may send a limited number of students and scholars to specific countries. According to Persian newspaper Kayhan No. 10997, page 14, May 15, 1980, the total number of Iranian students in higher education in other countries was 87,300 in 1979-80 in which the total number of students in United States was about 52,000; in West Germany 42,000; 4,000 in India, 3,000 in Canada; 2,600 in Italy; 2,300 in England and about 19,200 in thirty other countries. In the United States, according to
the latest report broadcast by the Voice of America in its Special English Programme entitled Foreign Students in America on February 7, 1983 the number of Iranian students was about 36,000 - the highest among foreign students in the States.

The higher educational institutions including universities have been completely closed since May, 1980. It was partly due to political unrest among different groups of students but mainly due to cultural revolution on the basis of Islamic ideology which the present Islamic government is going to apply in all aspects of educational system including higher education. It was due to this reason that a good number of staff, teachers, principals, administrators, professors and even students from primary level up to higher educational level, including universities in Iran have been expelled, dismissed or retired since 1980. A good number of experts and professors of different higher institutions and universities have also left Iran since 1979. According to the authorities of Islamic government, those who were expelled, dismissed or retired were considered to be not suitable for teaching, serving and studies in Islamic regime of Iran. At present a few colleges and departments in Tehran and some other big cities have been re-opened with limited seats. These are the institutions which are more urgently needed and where students are in the final stages, such as medical, technical, agricultural and teachers' training colleges. The present
Islamic government is trying to re-open other institutions of higher education including universities.

1.6 Place of Elementary Education in the Educational System of Iran

At present education in Iran begins at the age of five when children become eligible for a year of pre-primary education, to prepare them for school. Primary education begins at the age of six plus and lasts for five years and is followed by a guidance cycle which covers grade 6, 7 and 8. The guidance cycle includes practical subjects like carpentry and theoretical work for girls as well as boys. Eight years' schooling in Iran is considered as elementary education.

Elementary education from grade one to eight is unconditionally free, but has not been made compulsory so far. According to Persian publication by the Ministry of Education, Department of Design and Planning, Statistical Section in Tehran (1980), the total number of pre-primary schools was 3492 in 1979-80 with total number of 2,59,497 students out of which 1,39,835 were boys and 119,662 were girls. The total number of primary schools in Pre-primary schools was 12,180 out of which 12,155 were women and 25 were men. The total number of primary schools in the whole country was 26,075 in 1979-80 with total number of students 4,394,973 out of which 2,625,343 were boys and 1,769,630 were girls. The total number of primary school teachers was 174,942 out of which 72,654 were men and 102,288
were women. The total number of guidance cycle schools was 5,721 in 1979-80 with a total of 1,535,263 students out of which 972,137 were boys and 563,126 were girls. The total number of guidance cycle teachers was 77,550 out of which 42,343 were men and 35,207 were women. All primary and guidance schools are run through the government educational administration of their area and supervision of educational administration is done from the provincial level". In addition to primary and guidance cycle schools the government of Iran set up in 1963, the Education Corps, the Health Corps and Extension and Development Corps for challenging illiteracy in remote rural areas and the places where there were no schools and also for dramatic mobilization of human resources to combat ignorance, disease and poverty. Instead of the usual two years compulsory military service, the government has made it compulsory for the young Iranian higher school grades to serve as rural teachers. In addition to teaching village children, literacy corps teachers carry out a wide range of other duties also including adult education. In 1979-80 there were in the whole country, 14,122 corps primary schools with total number of 624,306 students out of which 436,812 were boys and 187,494 were girls. They were run by 27,302 literacy corpsmen and corpswomen, out of which 14,899 were corpsmen and 12,403 corpswomen (Appendix D - Tables 1.4 and 1.5).
The history of the province of Isfahan goes back as far as 2,000 years ago and legend even tells of a history of 3,000 years. The written records of the history of this period are limited. The first available reference is during the reign of the last Parthian King Artabanos V (219-224 A.D.) when Isfahan is mentioned in the Karnamah-e-Ardeshir-e-Papakan, an epic written in Pahlavi language. Isfahan then was a province in the Parthian Empire. Coins from the Sassanid period bear these three letters "ASP". These three letters probably signify the name of the town at that time "Aspahan" or "Sepahan" meaning the armies. The ideal strategical position of the city might well have made it a garrisonal area.

In 643 A.D. after a campaign of about four years Isfahan was captured by the Moslems. It was ruled by Arab rulers like Omayy-Yads and then by the Abbassids until 930 A.D. During the 10th century, Isfahan was governed by local dynasties. For much of the next century and a half Isfahan was ruled by Buwayids. During this period Isfahan was a great commercial centre famous for its silk and cotton weaving. In 1051, the Seljug Toghrrol-Beyk seized Isfahan and made it the
capital of his growing Empire. Isfahan drew enormous benefits from the munificences of this monarch and his successor, Alp Arsalan and Malek Shah. Later on Isfahan became part of Mongol or Il Khans Empire. In 1354 it came under the domination of the Mozaffarids. In 1388 it was captured by Tamerlane. In 1453 Jahan Shah, the last Qora Qoyunlu monarch succeeded the Timurids for a short period. He, in his turn, was deposed, by the Uzun Hassan, a ruler of the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty.

Under the rulers of the Safavid period in 16th century, however, Isfahan once again became a major centre of trade, culture and manufacture. It was a new landmark in the history of Isfahan as well as Iran, as a whole. Shah Abbas, one of the most popular kings in Iranian history, brought much progress to Iran, particularly the province of Isfahan. In 1598 he made Isfahan his capital, uniting Persia once again and creating a vast Empire. During his reign so many mosques, palaces and caravanserais (Inns) were built. After Shah Abbas other Safavid's kings made much contribution to the progress of Isfahan, during 1622-1722. In 1722 during the reign of last Safavid's king named Shah Hossein the whole part of Iran including the province of Isfahan was captured by the Afghan invaders in which over nine-tenth of the population of Isfahan was massacred and a large area of this province was razed to the ground. The Afghan invaders were completely defeated and
were expelled from the whole of Iran including Isfahan by the famous brave Iranian General named Nader Qoli. Later on, he proclaimed himself as the King of Iran and was called Nader Shah. He made the city of Mashhad, the capital city of Iran.

Under the Qajar's Kings (1796-1925) Tehran became the capital city of Iran and Isfahan was reduced to the rank of merely a provincial town. Again after 1925 to the present time, special attention was paid to the development and progress of this province by the government of Iran. Its historical monuments were preserved and repaired. It was made the centre of Iran's textile mills which manufacture wool, cotton and thread. It is also the centre of a steel industry complex which is situated 45 km. from the capital city of Isfahan. This province is also the centre of agriculture. It is noted especially for its fruit, vegetables, nuts and cereals.

The province of Isfahan, including its capital city of Isfahan is situated in the centre plateau of Iran. It is irrigated by the famous river named 'Zayandeh-Rud', which rises from Eastern slope of the Zagrosa Mountain and disappears in the marshes of Gav-Khaneh. The province is situated at 1500 meters above sea level.
The land area of this province is some 104,700 sq. kilometers. It has land frontiers in the North with the provinces of Semnan and Markazi (Arake); in South with the provinces of Yazd and Fars; in East with the province of Khorasan and in West with the provinces of Lorastan and Bakhteary.

The climate of the province varies from place to place. In western districts the average amount of rainfall is rather high and the region is in winter usually buried under heavy snow. The Eastern districts with a vast plain have almost no rainfall and have rather hot summers and cold winters. According to the latest census held in the Autumn of 1976 the total population of this province was 2,178,678 in which the capital city of Isfahan with about 500,000 stood first among other main cities. The capital city including its rural jurisdiction had total population of 1,041,649 which was also first among other parts of the province. The other main cities including their rural jurisdiction had following population: Lanjan 290,167; Kashan 203,740; Najafabad 154,571; Faradan 144,035; Shahraza 105,388; Golpayagan 85,816; Ardastan 42,585; Samerem 41,956; Nasin 40,774 and Natanz 27,997 (Appendix D, Table 1.6). The density of population in the whole Province was 18 per square kilometer and in capital city of Isfahan it was about 40 per square kilometer.
1.8 The Capital of the Province:

Isfahan, the capital city of this province, is said to be one of the oldest cities in Iran. In history there have been references to this city which was founded even before the rise of the Achaemenians who ruled Iran in fourth and fifth centuries B.C. After Achaemenians Isfahan was the centre of a large province for almost a thousand years during the reign of Parthians and Sassanians. At present also this city is a centre and capital of large province of Isfahan. The city is situated on the fertile plain to the South-West of a vast oasis, near the strangely formed hills known as Kuh-e-Soffeh. These hills, up to 1400 feet in height protect the city against the hot south-winds in summer. The city is irrigated by the famous river named Zayandeh-Rud which rises from the eastern slope of the Zagrose's Mountain. The elevation of the city is 1570 meters or 5181 feet above sea level. The rainfall in the city is almost from mid-autumn to mid-winter and to a smaller degree in spring also. Snowfalls are less frequent. The city is nearly always covered with snow in winter. The average temperature in spring is 14°C; in summer 27°C; in Autumn 14°C and in winter 2°C. At present this city is one of the most advanced and developed cities not only in Iran but also in the whole of the Middle East. No other city of this province can be compared to Isfahan. It is a fine specimen
of architecture with beautiful gardens, monuments, a large number of mosques and palaces. It has picturesque mountains overlooking the pastoral air of villages. It has modern facilities like two modern universities, a good number of schools, hospitals, airport, T.V. and radio station, so many factories and a modern refinery along with modern offices and streets which all add to the harmony and beauty of this marvellous oriental city.

1.9 Rural Areas of the Province of Isfahan

The rural areas of this province like so many other rural areas of other parts of Iran are quite backward. They cannot be compared to the urban areas of this province. It is estimated that more than 52% of the total population of this province is living in rural areas. There are hundreds of villages and sub-villages scattered indifferent parts of this province (Appendix D - Tables 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13). Most of the rural people are farmers and agriculture is the main source of their income. In most parts of the rural areas, there is lack of needed facilities of life, like approach roads, medical care, electricity etc. The majority of the rural people are poor and they are living in sub-standard filthy houses along with their cattle, which can be easily seen by any visitor. The most popular Persian carpet is woven mostly in the rural areas of this province by females especially
very young girls aged 6 to 15 years and young married ladies. Carpet weaving is the second source of income of the rural people. Some of them have their own workshops, but mostly they are exploited by the owners of the workshops due to their poverty. The condition of the workshops is terrible. These innocent young females are working under inhuman conditions in workshops without ventilation and sun-shine in gloomy wet dark places. Most of these young females are suffering from multiple diseases of eyes, legs and lungs etc. During data collection the researcher visited many of these carpet-workshops and saw the terrible condition of workers. The rate of illiteracy in the rural areas is high and almost double among females, as compared to the urban areas of this province. In remote rural areas and in sub-villages with sparse population ranging from three to six families, there is lack of schooling facilities. The eligible children of these places are either not going to the school or they are forced to go to other villages nearby where there is a school. In most of the big villages there are schooling facilities up to 5th grade and in some main villages maximum up to 8th grade. The condition of schools is also not good. There is lack of proper buildings, equipment and teachers. The number of drop-outs and failed students is also high in most of the rural areas.
The land reforms in the whole of Iran, including this province and its rural areas which were started in 1969 and ended in early 1971 have released the poor rural people from slavery and exploitation of feudal landlords. Later on steps have been taken by the government of Iran to improve the life of rural people. But proper attention has not been paid so far. Therefore, the rural people are still suffering from backwardness, poverty and above all, illiteracy.

1.10 Life and Customs in the Province of Isfahan:

As in other provinces of Iran life in this province is also conditioned by age-old social and religious traditions. Isfahan is predominantly an Islamic province, but like other parts of Iran it has preserved many of its colourful pre-Islamic customs. One of the most significant Pre-Islamic customs is the Spring Festival of Now-Ruze (The Persian New Year). The Persian new year begins at the precise moment, when the sun passes through the Vernal equinox, almost always on the 21st of March, and the following thirteen days are marked by a series of festivities and visits to relatives and friends. For several weeks before-hand housewives are seen making new clothes and preparing sweetmeats for visitors. On the last Wednesday of the old year bonafires are lit in open spaces and gardens over which people jump which signifies that they rid themselves of their sorrows and cares. Every
house prepares a display known as (Haft Sin). The seven SS consisting of the seven objects, the names of which in Persian begin with the letters S, completed by a copy of The Holy Quran, a mirror and a bowl of goldfish. These objects are kept from new year up to thirteen days after. On the thirteenth day of Now Ruz Festival massive National picnics take place, the favoured spots being grassy river sides and gardens. Almost all the people leave their houses to these places. It is considered unlucky to stay at home on this day of Now Ruz Festival. The National Holiday is Friday. On this day also, most of the people are either at home taking rest or visit their friends and relatives or go to the grassy river sides and gardens.

The people of this province like other parts of Iran observe Islamic Holydays, the most important of which are 'The Eid-e-Fetr', the Islamic Festival at the end of 'Ramazan' the month of abstinence and self-purification as well as the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad and Shiite Imams and their death days being their mourning days. The month of Moharram in which Imam Hossein and his family were martyred, is a particularly mournful occasion in which religious activities are intensified. Religious people wear black dress and no marriages are celebrated during this month. Although 99 per cent of the people in this province are Muslims, yet there are about
15,000 Christians and 6,000 Jews living mostly in the capital city of Isfahan and a small number in other cities of this province.

Climatic conditions and the easily available building material especially in the rural areas have naturally led to great variation in housing styles. Where the rainfall is far less, houses are usually constructed of mud and sun-baked bricks with wooden beams supporting flat roofs used for sleeping purpose in the summer. In the main cities modern houses are built with bricks, cement, and iron beams which at present are quite costly. A modern house of this type may cost from twenty thousand U.S. dollars to a hundred thousand dollars to accommodate five to ten persons. In really hot areas, ingenious wind towers (Bad-gir) that convey the slightest breeze to a cold underground chamber (Zirzamin) alleviate the summer heat. Other characteristics of Persian domestic architecture in this province are the enclosed courtyard (hayat), usually containing a small pool (Hwz), and columned porch fronting the house which protects the house from heat. In most of the enclosed courtyards of these types of houses, flowers and trees are grown.

European dresses which had first been introduced towards the end of the nineteenth century and were encouraged in the twentieth century in Iran are used by most of the
people in urban areas and main cities of this province. Most of the town women and girls are dressed in European style, sometimes covered with a long piece of cloth from head to foot known as (chador). The long robe with mantle and turban, brought to Iran by Islam, is only worn by the priests. The veil, which was officially abolished in the nineteen thirties is rarely seen. In the rural areas use of European dress is negligible. They have their own different type of dress like long shirt, trousers along with Kerchief and chador. At present, according to the order of priests and Islamic regime, women and girls in the whole of the country including this province must appear in public places like streets, markets, offices, schools and restaurants wearing suitable dress along with Kerchief but mostly chador which at present all females must wear.

Marriage as in other provinces of Iran is considered to be a holy thing. The official marriage age which was declared by the government of Iran for the whole of the country including this province in 1976 is minimum 18 years for girls and 20 years for boys. All marriages must be registered through special government offices called (Mahzar). One of the most important qualifications, irrespective of educational qualifications, for any girl is her virginity. All girls before marriage should be virgin. The most
important qualification for a boy is his educational qualifications, especially in urban areas. The official marriage age is mostly adhered to in urban areas and at marriage time both boy and girl should officially sign a paper in the office of marriage that they willingly agree to marry each other. In urban areas parents play the role of advisers rather than imposers of their will on their wards. There are exceptional cases in which parents try to impose their will on their daughters. Only one marriage is officially allowed, divorce is also officially allowed through court if the couple agrees for divorce. The custom of marriage in rural areas is not exactly as it is in urban areas. In rural areas the official marriage age may not be followed and sometimes the marriage ceremony may not be registered officially. In most of the rural areas a girl may marry at the age of 13 to 15 years. The parents select husbands for their daughters according to their wishes and the girls have no point to object. Another characteristic of marriage in the rural areas and even in urban areas is that the girl should have some movable property like Persian carpets, refrigerator, furniture, T.V., two-in-one which is called 'Jahaz'. Jahaz is a tradition and is not officially recommended.

People of this province are busy in different types of jobs. In rural areas most of the men are agriculturists, shepherds, workers in different farms and factories in the
big cities of this province or other parts of Iran. Some of them are shopkeepers. Women of the rural areas are either housekeepers and farmers, but most of them are carpet weavers. In urban areas men are busy in different types of jobs like government officers, workers in different factories, businessmen, and shop-keepers. Educated women in urban areas are mostly government officers but majority are in the teaching line. Other women are either house-keepers or in low income families, they are carpet weavers especially in the cities of Isfahan, Kashan, Golpaygan, Naain, Shahraza and Najafabad and some other cities of this province.

1.11 Education in the Province of Isfahan

Education from primary up to higher secondary level has uniformity in curriculum in the whole of Iran. It is centrally administered under the direction and supervision of Ministry of Education headquartered in the capital city of Iran-Tehran. The implementation policy is chalked out at the centre of every province of Iran. It is the responsibility of Central Department of Educational Administration in the capital city of Isfahan to run and supervise all educational activities in this province according to the orders and direction of Ministry of Education at the centre. The school education at all levels is divided into 26 sub-centres of educational administration which are responsible to the central Department
of Educational Administration in the capital city of Isfahan. Out of these 26 sub-centres, five sub-centres are in the capital city of Isfahan. Another five sub-centres are in the rural zones under the jurisdiction of the capital city of Isfahan. Ten sub-centres are in ten main cities of this province and the remaining six sub-centres are in different central rural zones of this province (Appendix D, Tables 1.7a and 1.8b). According to the Persian report published by the Central Department of Education in Isfahan city in the session 1980-81 (Appendix D, Tables 1.9 and 1.10), the total number of pre-primary schools in the whole of the province was 215 with total enrolment of 15,353 students out of which 8,371 were boys and 6,982 were girls. The total number of teachers was 700 out of which only one teacher was man and the rest 699 were women. Regarding primary schools, there was a total of 2043 schools in the whole of the province and a total 362,493 students out of which 214,339 were boys and 148,154 were girls. The total number of teachers in primary schools was 15,880 out of which 7057 were men and 8,823 were women. For guidance cycle schools (grade 6th to 8th) there was a total of 531 schools with total enrolment of 111,557 students out of which 73,828 were boys and 37,729 were girls. The total number of teachers for these schools was 6,896 out of which 4,061 were men and 2,835 were women. Regarding higher secondary schools, there were 181 schools in the whole of the province
with total number of students being 58,759 out of which 35,973 were boys and 22,786 were girls. The total number of teachers for these schools was 2,912 out of which 2,120 were men and 792 were women. The total number of schools for exceptional children in the whole of the province was 12 with total of 592 students out of which 433 were boys and 159 were girls. For these schools there were 102 teachers out of which 54 were men and 48 were women. Regarding professional and technical schools there were 59 schools in the whole of the province with a total enrolment of 19,596 students out of which 17,721 were boys and 1,875 were girls. The total number of teachers for these schools was 1,852 out of which 1,721 were men and 131 were women. The total number of teachers' training institutions in the whole of the province was 13. For these institutions there was a total number of 2,249 students, out of which 1,559 were boys and 690 were girls. The institutions were run by a total of 142 teachers out of which 119 were men and 23 were women. In addition to the above-mentioned educational institutions in the whole of the province according to the same report of central Department of Education in Isfahan City in 1980-81 there were 1442 evening classes for primary education in which the total number of students was 33874. For guidance cycle (grade 6th to 8th) there were 274 evening classes with total number of 11,596 students. Regarding higher secondary there were 135 evening
Glasses with total number of 6,600 students. There were also 16 evening technical schools in the whole of the province with total number of 720 students. All these evening educational institutions were run by a total of 1440 evening teachers. The opening session of the schools in the whole of the country including this province from primary to higher secondary starts almost on September 23 and continues up to June 21; generally from 8 A.M. to 12 A.M. and 1.30 to 4.30 P.M. The office time in all educational administrations is from 7 A.M. to 2.30 P.M.

1.12 Statement of the Problem:

The proposed study has been entitled specifically as, "Factors Impeding Compulsory Elementary Education in The Province of Isfahan, Iran."

1.13 Justification of the Problem

The present study is justified because during the present age of space, man has reached the highest level of success in most aspects of life, especially in science and technology. It has brought economic growth for all which calls for an active participation of the whole population, but illiteracy is a major obstacle in the way. Slow progressing nations including Iran are, especially deeply concerned with this serious problem. Illiteracy is the main source of so
many social evils. It also hinders human development and it checks the spread of social progress and economic growth. Illiteracy might lead to growth of disparities in social and economic development. At present slow progressing nations face the biggest challenge from illiteracy. To face this challenge they have to find the quickest short-cut to close the gap between themselves and the industrially developed nations. The development of science and technology certainly appears to be the best and most effective way to bring this about. Man with his capacity for planning, organization and innovation, is the chief driving force for this radical transformation through proper education. It has been true at all times in all countries that education can play an important role in removing social evils and bring about social progress and economic growth. In the words of S. Gopinathan (1977), "Studies in Washington show that, even more important than investment, the major factor for expansion in the United States since 1925 has been the education and training of men and women". It is in this context that children come to the scene. Children occupy a prominent role in shaping the destiny of their nations and of the world as a whole. They are citizens of tomorrow and their present conditions shape the future of their adulthood which has a great significance for their society. So, proper attention and care to be
bestowed upon the development of the children through proper education is the official and moral duty of their states.

In advanced countries the importance of education of the children, especially universal free compulsory education has been realized long time ago. In developing countries, for the past twenty years the governments and people have launched out into a vast fight to overcome their illiteracy and raise their educational level. In India with a huge population of about 680 million and with limited financial resources, universal free and compulsory education to every child up to the age of 14 has been officially introduced since 1960. In 1960, the governments of Asia adopted the now-famous "Karachi Plan" which foresaw seven years of compulsory Primary schooling for all children by 1980. In 1961, African Ministers for Education agreed to an ambitious programme in which six years' compulsory education for all African children was emphasised by 1980. In 1962, the countries of Latin America followed suit with their own plan to provide six years of primary schooling for all children throughout the continent by 1980.

So, the importance of universal free compulsory elementary education has been also realized by developing countries for their social progress and economic growth. In most of the developing countries despite their limited
sources especially financial resources a good amount of funds has been devoted to education. Most of them devoted a higher proportion of their national income to education than the developed countries do, which, in the words of S. Gopinathan (1977), "... the figure is often as high as 25 per cent and sometimes even higher, compared, for example, with France's 17 per cent". In Iran also efforts have been made by the state to overcome illiteracy and raise its educational level especially during the last two decades as compared to the past. According to the last report published by the government of Iran in the English book 'Iran Today', 1977, page 95, the total allocation to education in the budget of 1976-77 amounted to $2.5 billion which means 8.5 per cent of the total budget and 37 per cent higher than the previous year figures. The bulk of Iran's educational expenditure was devoted to primary level which absorbed over a quarter of the total funds. But it is a fact that in spite of such heavy budgetary allocations, adequate measures have not been taken by the Iranian authorities so far although Iran is economically a rich state with population of about 36 million. According to many studies and official reports, illiteracy is still a major challenge in Iran. It is estimated that at present about 60 per cent of the total population of Iran is still completely illiterate including children eligible for schooling.
The latest official report published by the Ministry of Education of Iran in the Persian newspaper "Kayhan" on July 9, 1980 on number 11040, page 6, showed that there were about one million eligible children in the whole of Iran including the province of Isfahan who did not attend the school so far. Isfahan stands fifth in population among 21 provinces of Iran with about 2,178,678 as its population. In this province also thousands of eligible children are not going to the school and like many other provinces here also the rate of drop-outs from schools is high. Above all, although education upto grade 8 (elementary) has been made free in the whole of Iran, yet compulsory elementary education has not been adopted so far as in any part of Iran including this province for reasons unknown. The word "compulsory" does not include any legal obligation over the parents to send their children to school. So the present problem emerged out of the need to study the illiteracy and drop-out problem so as to find out factors which stand in the way of Compulsory Elementary Education in the province of Isfahan.

1.14 Purpose of the Study:

The study is undertaken with the following objectives:

(1) To examine the defects in the present system of elementary education in Iran.
To study the problems coming in the way of compulsory elementary education in the Province of Isfahan, Iran.

To find out if the problems standing in the way of compulsory elementary education in this province can be reduced.

To clarify how compulsory elementary education can be made practicable in this province.

To examine, what reforms are needed to attain this goal in this province.

1.15 Hypotheses of the Study:

The hypotheses of the study were as follows:

(1) There are some defects within the educational system of Iran which hinder compulsory elementary education in the country.

(2) In the province of Isfahan there are societal and environmental factors also which impede compulsory elementary education.

(3) Problems standing in the way of compulsory elementary education can be reduced.

(4) Compulsory elementary education can be enforced on compulsion basis by implementing radical reforms.