AN ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTARY ART EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN IRAN

MINOO AIATOLLAHI TABAR

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to look at the practice of art education in Iranian elementary schools. This was done by examining the structure of art curriculum and the way it was translated into teaching practice in the schools. This attempt was also to chart out the status of the art curriculum, and to suggest possible alternatives for its improvement.

This study involved three forms of examination in the process of evaluation, each of which engaged a different method of data collection. To identify the objectives, approaches, and content of the curriculum, the method of examination involved collecting information from documents, using the content analysis approach. To examine the way art was taught in the classroom, the method involved a survey with sets of prepared questionnaires, plus observation. The third method used to determine the effects of teachers' performance on students' learning of art was a class test for assessing knowledge, skill, and attitude of children in the selected grade.

Purposeful sampling was done on a total of 18 schools from three states in Iran. From these 18 schools, 81 teachers were selected to participate in the survey and 440 students in knowledge and attitude tests.

The art curriculum in Iran focused heavily on "making" activities in two main areas, namely painting and handicrafts. Given this focus, children were to assume art learning mostly by producing works with less concern on art appreciation. There were no expressed philosophical and instructional contents appearing in major statements of the curriculum. This makes the meaning of visual art as a learning subject in schools less congruent with the global objective; thus, jeopardizing the target of developing visual literacy among Iranian children. Besides that, the current practice of art training for these non-specialist teachers in elementary school was only through in-service program with less than forty hours of instruction. Because of this limited exposure,

teachers were inadequately equipped, thus lacking well-grounded knowledge and skills in art teaching. The obvious neglect in the components of aesthetics and critical thinking as shown in the contents of teachers' handbooks, has contributed to the imbalance in the gist of art contents, only to end up with sidelining the notion of studying cultural heritage through visual art. Having poor support in educational facilities for art, teachers were faced with another critical issue in classroom teaching. Their access to sufficient materials and equipment in art teaching, what more new technology in art education left much to be desired. Understandably, the standard of Iranian students' art knowledge was, therefore, hoping for improvements. Generally, the students have shown limited understanding of art concepts and fundamentals of art knowledge. On the whole, they have not quite succeeded in achieving the desired skills, given that almost three quarters of them did not achieve encouraging results in both painting and handicrafts. Notwithstanding, the students have, in various degrees, shown positive attitude toward art. Their predisposition to art as a result of their learning was measured in terms of their interests, preferences, views of art benefits when asked to self-evaluate their own ability.

ABSTRAK

ANALISIS KURIKULUM PENDIDKAN SENI SEKOLAH DAN

PELAKSANAANNYA DI IRAN

Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengkaji amalan pendidikan seni sekolah rendah di Iran. Ini telah dilakukan dengan meneliti struktur kurikulum dan cara ia diterjemahkan ke dalam amalan pengajaran di sekolah. Usaha ini juga adalah untuk menampakkan status kurikulum seni, dan menyarankan alternatif yang mampu dilakukan bagi memperbaikinya.

Kajian ini melibatkan tiga bentuk penelitian dalam proses penilaian, setiap satunya melibatkan pendekatan pengutipan data yang berbeza. Untuk mengenal pasti objektif, pendekatan, dan kandungan kurikulum, bentuk penelitian melibatkan pemerolehan maklumat menerusi dokumen, menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan. Bagi tujuan memeriksa cara seni diajar dalam bilik darjah, bentuk penelitian melibatkan teknik tinjauani menggunakan set soal selidik yang telah disediakan, bersama pemerhatian. Bentuk ketiga, iaitu untuk menentukan kesan pengajaran guru pada pembelajaran seni murid, ujian kelas telah digunakan bagi mentaksir pengetahuan, kemahiran, dan sikap murid daripada kelas yang terpilih.

Persampelan bertujuan dijalankan ke atas sejumlah 18 sekolah dari tiga negeri di Iran. Daripada 18 sekolah tersebut, terdapat 81 guru terpilih untuk menyertai survei dan 440 murid dalami ujian pengetahuan dan sikap.

Kurikulum seni di Iran terlalu berfokus pada aktiviti "membuat" dalam dua bidang seni utama, iaitu: catan dan kraf tangan. Memandangkan kepada fokus tersebut, murid-murid kelihatan mempelajari seni hanya dengan menghasilkan barang seni serta kurang perhatian kepada apresiasi seni. Tidak terdapat penyataan falfasah dan kandungan pengajaran penting yang jelas disebut dalam kurikulum. Ini menjadikan

maksud seni visual sebagai satu mata pelajaran sekolah kurang selari dengan objektif pengajaran seni global, lantas menghalang sasaran untuk membentuk literasi visual dalam kalangan kanak-kanak Iran. Amalan semasa tentang latihan guru bukan-pengkhususan seni ialah hanya menerusi program latihan dalam perkhidmatan dengan pendedahan kurang daripada empat puluh jam. Oleh kerana kekurangan pendedahan begini, guru tidak dilengkapkan dengan secukupnya; mereka kekurangan asas pengetahuan dan pemikiran kritis yang baik untuk pengajaran seni. Pengabaian jelas komponen estetik dan pemikiran kritis seperti kelihatan dalam kandungan buku panduan guru juga menyumbang kepada ketidak seimbangan intipati kandungan seni yang hanya mengakibatkan pengenepian hasrat mempelajari warisan budaya menerusi seni visual. Oleh sebab kekurangan sokongan kemudahan pendidikan seni, guru-guru berhadapan dengan isu kritikal dalam pengajaran bilik darjah. Secara mudahnya, pengetahuan seni murid-murid Iran amat mengharapkan pembaikan. Umumnya, murid menunjukkan kefahaman konsep seni dan asas pengetahuan seni yang terhad. Secara keseluruhannya, mereka tidak berjaya mencapai tahap kemahiran yang dikehendaki, memandangkan hampir tiga perempat daripada mereka tidak mempamerkan keputusan yang menggalakkan dalam catan dan kraf tangan. Namun demikian, mereka masih menunjukkan, dalam kadar yang berbeza, sikap positif terhadap seni. Kecenderungan mereka terhadap seni, kesan daripada pembelajaran mereka diukur menerusi minat, kecenderungan, pandangan terhadap faedah seni bila disuruh untuk menilai sendiri kebolehan mereka.

Dedicated to my family who was suffered for my big ambition:

❖ **My husband for all his love and kind-heartedness;**

❖ **My children who were always with me without any complaint;**

❖ **My parents who have always wanted the best for me.**

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First and foremost, thank God for all of his contribution to help me to pass another stage of my life. His voice was always in my ear:

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ان مع العسر يسرا , فان مع العسر يسرا

</div>

and

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اليس صبح به قريب

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I express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr Abu Tib Putih, who has supported me by his knowledge, patience and selflessness. I attribute my degree to his continuous support and guidance from the very early stage of my research till the completion of the thesis.

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List of Abbreviations

ACARA   Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

CDC   Curriculum Development Centre

OERP   Organization for Educational Research and Planning

SET   Student Evaluation of Teaching

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The belief that arts are essential to every child's education provides grounds for the advocacy of teaching of art as one of the core academic subjects in schools. Going along with this belief is art making and its experiences do benefit students in their intellectual (see for example, Horowitz, 2002), personal and social (see, for example, Edwards, 2006; Lowenfeld, 1952); development, and human development (see, for example, Gardner, 1994). The US Department of Education (2004), in a report, states that besides the benefits in its own right, the learning of art has shown "a strong relationship with fundamental cognitive skills, and with other capacities used to master other core subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics."

It is simplistic to say that an effective art learning experience comes from a good art education program. A good program is designed through considerations of various issues, all of which are central to its conceptualization. One of the issues relates to the changing conception of art. Over time, the term "arts education" has had various meanings following the rationale of education upon which it is based. In looking at this issue, Kaufman (1980) surveyed the philosophical orientations that have influenced art and its education since the 1940s. Meanwhile, Efland (1984) attributed this changing conception of the arts that affects the art curriculum to the development of cognitive psychology. As is often the case, when the concept of art education changes, it brings about change in the image of the arts as school subject. This image speaks for our notion as to what being educated in the arts can be referred to. In any case, both scholars have conceded that the image of the arts learner has now undergone an historical change from craftsperson to artist, to symbol user and thinker. In other words, today's image of

a student educated in the arts is much more composite and multi-dimensional. This is to say that for one to become a truly well educated individual in arts, one not only needs to learn to appreciate the arts, but must have rich opportunities to participate actively in creative work. In fact, the arts are now languages that most students speak, cutting through individual differences in culture, educational background, and ability.

Another issue in planning of an art program is scope of the field. Edmund Burke Feldman (1970), a renowned American scholar in art education, defined art education as "an enterprise that encompasses teaching and learning to make and understand art" (p. 2). This means that building a good curriculum of art requires one to view the rationale of art education in reference to five dimensions, namely: the social dimension, the economic dimension, the psychological dimension, philosophical and the cognitive/moral dimension. By referring to these dimensions, one is helped to frame the kind of content desired for the program.

While the dimensions provide the scope of learning in the arts, the objectives direct the nature of learning. Eisner, one of the prominent scholars in the field of art education in America, states that "no concept is more central to curriculum planning than the concept of objectives" (Eisner, 1991, p. 108). However, in planning an art program one must be clear that objectives of a program are collapsed under the aim. The aim, as the most general statement, holds a program's values. It is from the aim that we grasp, in Eisner's words, "a sense a direction, a point of view, a set of values, to which the community" of what the program "subscribes" (p. 134). Thus, identifying aims and objectives is paramount to one's curriculum planning effort, as this helps to define a direction into which the learning activities related the curriculum can be formulated.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The split between the theories of art education and their application to actual practices is often a major discussion in literature. While it is believed that there are reasons to embrace theories in the practice, there are also reasons for being wary of those theories. Notwithstanding the arguments, in current exercises, planning a curriculum is based on some theoretical positions, preceded first by identifying the best way of structuring art education that can synchronize, particularly with post modern times, in the way that validates a variety of approaches and positions to the practice (Giffhorn, 1978; Madeja, & Kelly, 1970).

Going by the present sentiment, a theory of art in education is sparked by intellectual and aesthetic impulses. Considering these impulses, one can be inspired to transform and enliven an art education curriculum by attempting to incorporate contemporary thinking about art and culture into the everyday life of the classroom. It is, in a way, an attempt to draw attention to important, but unnoticed aspects of the content of the curriculum in art. This is challenging us indeed to step back and move from the time-honored concept of immersion in the beauty and complexity of the visual and material world to re-thinking why we do what we are doing.

Touched by a similar concern, one Iranian professor from Tarbiat Modarres University, Mahmoud Mehrmohammadi (2008) lamented over the inadequate attention paid to the arts in education, despite a strong sentiment that art education should be part and parcel of the basic education scheme of a nation. Although his observation was to draw attention to a state of global issue in art education, it is an issue no less critical to Iran.

In particular reference to Iran, a review of art curriculum for primary schools after 1909 was done pursuant to the imposition of the law of compulsory education for the state. This review was to look at what and how art education was taught in the

schools during those early years of formal education in order that children of Iran would have a good education. However, until 1984, art education was still taught in the form of discrete topics such as painting, handicrafts and calligraphy.

Following a decision by The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) in 1999 to plan a new program for art education in primary schools, a needs-assessment study was conducted the same year, and continued the year after. Upon looking at several issues, the study revealed that although generally art was not considered as an important subject compared to other subjects in the school curriculum, there was a general feeling toward the essential need for a new curriculum in art as expressed by students, teachers, parents and all professional groups in Iranian society. However, it must be pointed out that the expression of the need varied according to regions in Iran because the students from each region are somewhat different in culture, race, languages, and religious backgrounds (Navab Safavi, 2000).

In the meantime, scholars at local universities were joining efforts to conduct additional research projects on "children's art" and its importance in the study of children's learning. Research reports gathered from universities in Tehran and other towns since winter 2000 were compiled.

The analysis of the needs assessment by the CDC and a compilation of research reports by local universities led to a formulation of a temporary plan. This plan was aimed at proposing the approaches, goals, contents and evaluation of art to be explored as a pilot project at some primary schools in five states of Iran. In the process of drawing up a strong art curriculum, the plan was used initially as a teacher-guide for classroom teaching. The plan was given a consistent weekly review to work on the teacher feedback and comments from those involved in implementation. The review was done by a board with members consisting of four school teachers, one curriculum developer, and experts, each from the departments of the coordinating group for primary

schools, child psychology, assessment and evaluation of academic progress, visual art, traditional arts, music, and theater, respectively.

While attempting to fulfil the requirements of local practical needs, curriculum review is a universal effort that happens very commonly in a society. This is because education is a dynamic entity, resulting from the changing philosophy and concept of learning and experiences of the students. Given these nuances, a curriculum needs reviewing in order to offer a good and relevant service to the society served by the education system. Often, what comes out as an outcome of such revisions and review is a proposal for a new model of educational program.

A new art curriculum, which was designed in 2000 by the Curriculum Development Centre for elementary schools in Iran has now been in implementation since then. It is good to look at the issues related to this implementation from an academic point of view. The idea supporting the academic review of a curriculum implies that, firstly, the practice of educational evaluation is part and parcel of any educational practice. Secondly, educational evaluation, if conducted properly, can offer new information to help improve educational efforts and to address accountability (Powell, Steele, & Douglah, 1996) in the teaching of art in Iranian schools.

Marsh and Willis (2007) point out that the main aim of curriculum evaluation is to identify the merit and worth of curriculum. By "merit", these authors refer "to how well something is done", while the "worth" refers "to the importance of doing something" (p. 251). It is noted that determining the merit and worth of a curriculum is a complex activity. One has to go by proper approaches and theories of planning and evaluation in order to decide the merit and worth of a curriculum.

One of the major reasons for curriculum evaluation is to align the so-called planned curriculum for the classroom with one enacted for the individual experience in the classroom. Thus, the curriculum is never a single thing and one that does not remain

static. It has essential, multiple and dynamic characters. By virtue of these characters, "gaps not only do arise but they arise in various dimensions, particularly among the planned, the enacted and the experienced curriculum" (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 5). This issue is particularly more problematic in the art education area because of the mysterious nature of art.

Another important point to note is that there has always been an uneasy relationship between art education and evaluation. On the whole, there are no large wishes among art educators to assess the outcomes, content, or activities associated with teaching of art. However, because art is a school subject, it should be able to provide indicators of students' progress and achievement in learning as do other academic disciplines. Thus, art educators should not resist the idea of reducing art to the same ordinary uniform outcomes so common to many academic subjects. As Eisner (1991) puts it: "educators need to determine, as best they can, the results of their effort, if for no other reason than to protect the young from incompetent teaching and educationally diluted curricula" (p. 3).

The other reason for the importance of evaluation is accountability. This is because society expects public institutions to be responsible for their duty and the use of funds. Evaluation makes the practice of education be seen as accountable to society at large.

As for Iranian elementary schools, a review of art curriculum and its implementation has more to do with looking at the problems as to what extent the curricular criteria and principles are taken into account in the practical approach; thus, sketching a visage of the three forms of content, teaching, and outcome, to show their importance. This follows a claim from some authorities that (for example, Boughton, Eisner, & Lighvoet, 1996) the problems of evaluating the visual arts in schools are discussed in terms of three foci: evaluating the content of art, the teaching of art, and the

outcomes. Obviously, relationships exist between them. However, with respect to the present evaluation of the Iranian art curriculum, the three forms are to be viewed from different evaluative functions.

In moving forward, the study would also involve applying the Gilbert Clark and Enid Zimmerman Curriculum Evaluation model (1983) to help determine the status of the current Iranian art curriculum and its implementation issues.

1.3 Significance of the Study

After passing a period of time in the implementation of art curriculum in Iranian schools, it is believed that an evaluation is necessary and timely to assess the status of its progress. Through the evaluation process some feedback can be gathered to offer suggestions for change to help improve the present practice of art education. The extent of this feedback may even reach the point of even proposing a new art curriculum model for the Iranian schools.

Following Boughton et al. (1996), evaluation has different functions that need to be illuminated with respect to the field of education. He identified the six important functions of evaluation as (1) a temperature-taking function, (2) gate keeping, (3) assessing the quality of educational programs, (4) a measurement of students' achievement in the program goals, (5) a teacher's diagnosis of students' academic performance, and (6) a means of teachers' getting useful feedback on the quality and character of their own work (educational medium).

The findings of this evaluation would be used to provide new information to the Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education. This information will be worked out into a model that the Centre can use to revise, upgrade, and update the present art education in Iran. The outcomes of this study would also be of great help in training art teachers in a diploma course. At the same time, it is equally beneficial to the

elementary school art teachers, and the parents, to diagnose academic benefits and discrepancies in art teaching.

Activities of this study would involve testing and analyzing the design, process, implementation and outcome of the present art education. The results of this study would help in proposing ways and means of improving the present art curriculum in Iran. Similarly, it may also aim at offering new ideas to the Centre to specify a new structure of contents and goals so that teachers can be better prepared to aid the students' individual growth in art.

Taken as a whole, the study is a genuine effort to provide a systematic, critical and comprehensive examination of art curriculum in Iran, particularly in elementary education. Despite the humble attempt, it is hoped this research would contribute to the literature of not only in the Iranian academic sphere, but also of the world.

1.4 Aim of Study

The general aim of this research is to look mainly at the practice of art education in Iranian elementary schools. This will be done by first examining the structure of art curriculum and secondly the way the curriculum is translated into the practice of teaching as it happens in the schools. Following the evaluative process, the attempt will proceed to chart out the status of the curriculum, and to offer recommendations for improving the art education curriculum for primary schools.

1.5 Objectives of Research

For purpose of clarification the present research would deal with the following major activities, namely:

1. To review the nature of current curriculum of art education in Iranian elementary schools.

2. To examine the problems and issues on the implementation of curriculum in Iranian elementary classrooms.

3. To assess the children's learning of art in Iranian elementary classrooms

4. To offer suggestions and recommendation to improve the Iranian art curriculum.

By review of the current art curriculum in Iranian elementary school, it means looking at the current content, art teaching and curricular objectives. This process of looking will be done collaboratively in which elements of contents and objectives are to be analyzed and compared with the practice of teaching in schools.

1.6 Research Questions:

To proceed, the foregoing objectives are translated into the following research questions.

1. What is the nature of art education for the Iranian elementary schools?

   a. What are the aims and objectives of art education for the elementary schools in Iran?

   b. What are the contents in art education and are these contents classified?

   c. What is the status of art education as a subject in the school curriculum?

2. How is art education being practiced in Iranian schools?

   a. What are art topics taught to Iranian children at elementary school level?

   b. What common strategies do teachers use in their teaching of art in classrooms

    c. What forms of art learning activities are children mainly involved in classroom teaching?

    d. What testing strategies do the teachers use to assess children's learning in art?

    e. How did teachers get their training in art teaching?

3. What do the students learn in art?

    a. What forms of artistic knowledge does a student acquire from an art class?

    b. What kind of skill does a student acquire from an art class?

    c. What does a student feel about art learning in the classroom?

1.7 Research Plan and Framework

The general framework of this study was based on the Gilbert Clark and Enid Zimmerman Curriculum Evaluation (1983) model. By using this framework, the study would attempt to identify and next determine the status of the current Iranian art education and its implementation issues at elementary school level. Some reference to the other models (Detmers, 1980; Domenstein, 1969; Walker, 1971) in this attempt was to identify curricular aims and objectives, implementation and outcomes of the curriculum.

To proceed, this study would involve three forms of examination, implying in each form the use of a different approach for data collection. The form of examination that aims at identifying the objectives, approaches, and content of the curriculum would look for sources of information based on documents related to the present research issue such as the National Art Curriculum for Elementary Education, the teacher's handbook, and other official sources using the content analysis approach.

As for the second examination, it was an attempt to look at the way art is taught in the classroom. For this purpose, the technique of research will involve verifying factors related to issues in the teaching process, namely; (a) the nature of teacher

training and its procedures -- covering the in-service schemes, and (b) the teachers' teaching approaches.

This form of examination was to involve research method using a survey technique. Several sets of questionnaire were prepared to be answered by respondents with respect to the issues on attitude fixation.

As for the third examination, it was to determine the extent of teachers' performance on students' learning of art; hence there would be class tests, conducted on children in fifth grade. This assessment would take form of an analysis of three major elements of learning, namely knowledge, skill, and attitude.

As a summary, it should be mentioned here that the use of three forms of examination is organized in the following conceptual framework:

The Nature of Art
Curriculum:

Aims & Objectives

Approaches

Contents

IRANIAN ART
EDUCATION
THEORY AND
PRACTICE

The Outcomes in
Students' Learning:

Knowledge

Skill

Attitude

Implementation:

Education & Training

Approaches Used in

Teaching

ACHIEVEMENT

IMPLEMENTED
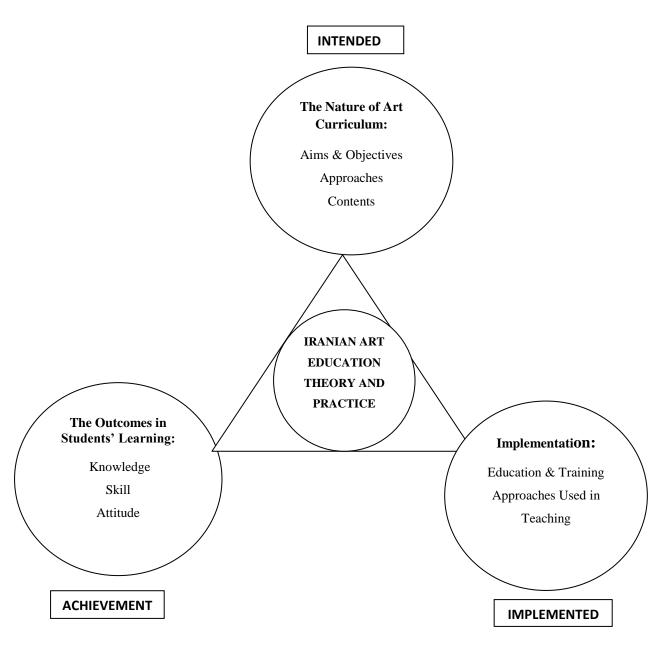
Figure 1.1. The Analysis Framework for the Iranian Elementary Art Education.

1.8 Organization of Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction to this research and describes the problem, the purpose, research questions, theoretical framework, overview of methodology and key words. Chapter Two reviews the literature related to this study. The reviews include literature on Iranian art curriculum, art curriculum model, and art evaluation. Chapter Three provides information about the

methodology used, and the research design. Information regarding the process of data collection and case selection is also to be presented in this chapter. Chapter Four will show the analysis of data collected and report of results of the analysis. And finally, chapter Five will present the discussions, suggestion for a new model for Iranian art curriculum and conclusion.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Following is a list of specific terms used in direct reference to the present study.

a. *Iranian Curriculum Approach* is here defined as a conceptual framework in which the art syllabus is translated into the practice of teaching in Iranian elementary education

b. *Curriculum Aims* are here expressed as objectives, goals and targets. They are intrinsic (e.g., to contribute to lifelong education, to develop knowledge, skills and understanding for the individual and society) or instrumental (preparing young students for work and contributing to the national economy). They focus on developing individual qualities or capacities, or on promoting citizenship and a sense of community or safeguarding a cultural heritage (or literacy).

c. *Curriculum Contents* are terms, topics and activities of art defined in the syllabus, which are sometimes translated into teacher handbooks, books and other learning materials as teachers' guides. The broader definitions include all desired art learning experiences within the school environment or outside.

d. *Curriculum Implementation* is a step of translating the curriculum contents into classroom activities, including continued monitoring, reflection, and evaluation to improve it.

e. *Curriculum Orientation* is a basic set of educational beliefs about teaching and learning that provides a framework for approaching decisions about curriculum. Curriculum orientation also helps to clarify the nature of curriculum change.

f. *Art Learning* is the students' activity to be recognized as a result of a teaching process. This includes their appreciation of arts and active participation in creative work.

g. *Philosophical content* concerns the meaning, nature and properties of the visual arts.

h. *Structured content is* concerned with the conceptual organization of facts, principles, and ideas into meaningful images in art activities

i. *Formative content is* concerned with modes of employing of physical materials and the selection of processes to give form to visual ideas.

j. *Historical content* concerns the elements of tradition and development of the visual arts.

k. *Rational content* is here defined as the interrelations of the visual arts and other discipline.

l. *Knowing* is defined in reference to three terms: the *basic knowing* (i.e., the acquisition of knowledge based on non- argumentative belief); the n*on-basic knowing* that refers to the theoretical and critical knowing; and the *procedural knowing* is about what to do, and how to do a specific thing.

m. *Curriculum* is an interrelated set of plans and experiences that a student undertakes under the guidance of school.

n. *Evaluation* is attribution of merit and worth to a curriculum and its implementation

o. *Planned curriculum* is a scheme of formal education and the type of guidance to be provided for art in elementary school.

p. *Enacted curriculum is* primarily what and how teachers execute in their teaching in art classrooms and create of a series of choices.

q. *Experienced curriculum* is primarily what students receive and undergo in art classrooms and create their own personal meanings.

r. *Coherence* is defined as the clear and logically consistent expression of concepts. In a coherent curriculum, there would be no contradictions among all the concepts in the curriculum.

s. *Completeness* is defined as the inclusion of all necessary concepts. In a complete curriculum, all necessary relations between concepts would be included internal adequacy.

t. *Appropriateness* is defined as congruence between art as a discipline of knowledge and the goals, objectives, and structuring of tasks within an art curriculum.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes my attempt to explore the nature and alternative approaches to viewing the art curriculum, and to identify the various consequences that flow from those approaches. To begin with, this literature review would first introduce a brief history of formal education and art curriculum development in Iran. Next, the literature would cover a brief description of the elements and characteristics of the Iranian art curriculum. I also review the rationale of Iranian art education before proceeding to discussing art curriculum design and development, and new approaches to curriculum evaluation in this area. After taking account of rational arguments from some selected literature, and examining the exemplary model currently adopted by most countries in the world, I would then explain the framework of my study.

2.2 Historical Background: A Review of Education in Iran

Iran, with more than 10000 years of history, is one of the four greatest ancient civilizations in the world. Its civilization has a deep root of history in education. Hosein Kazemzadeh (1884-1962), a famous writer of the Iranshah magazine, wrote a series of articles published between 1922 and 1927 that provide details on the history of education in ancient Iran (or formerly known as Persia). He noted that the ancient Iranians were a very progressive nation and had established a far refined civilization compared to neighboring nations. The Iranians had claimed several important achievements, and were especially proud of their advanced field of science of education. During the period when education "in the civilization of ancient India was still confined

to the dominance of religion, education in the ancient Iran had already moved out of this restricted state and had anchored itself in a more social and practical setting". Iranian education was considered "very advanced" because it had already ventured into tying the core to the values of "progress and civilization" (cited in Marashi, 2008, p. 90).

In his attempt to illustrate how the ancient Iranians used education as a socializing institution to foster a national character, Kazemzadeh drew on the main educational aims of training children to highlight interaction with students and society based on local morality, and to express a lofty morality that celebrated the good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. And, it must be noted here, that the "the good deeds" in last phrase was in fact made in reference to one of the basic ethical perceptions of Zoroastrianism.

Before the early 20th century, the establishment of new schools was managed mainly in the old-fashioned adult classes. Scattering throughout the country, these classes were run individually by the learned and religious *Mullah*. There was no common curriculum for all these classes, and the so-called regular educational program was not in the meaning as we understand it today. The Mullahs were the *ulema,* who owned the classes and ran the program of courses according to their own choice and decisions. The classes were thus, taught from the mullahs' own personal experiences. It was the condition prevalent in the society then (Shariati, 1971); that Mullahs took a full control of the nature of education they offered, and even on the selection of students.

The history of modern academic education began when Iran witnessed the first change in 1851 with the establishment of the western style *Darolfonoon* (literally, the house of knowledge and skills). It was a system founded on the early efforts by the royal vizier Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir*,* who wanted to provide a systematic training and teaching of Iranian experts in various fields of science and technology.

During these early modern days, the state of Iran had experienced a continuous flux of new influences into its educational system. By these influences, *Darolfonoon* in the 1890s, for example, was made to compete with other prominent institutions of modern learning. The Military College of Tehran (*Madraseh-ye Nezam*), established in 1885, was the first to become its rival; and in 1899 the College of Political Sciences (*Madraseh-ye olum-e siyasi*) was founded under the arm of the Foreign Ministry (Hosseini, 2008) to offer a keener competition.

The Ministry of Science, which was first established in 1855, too, had a role in helping to expand the educational system in Iran. When Ali Gholi Mirza I'tizad al-Saltaneh was appointed Iran's first Minister of Science by Nasereddin Shah, the third Shah of the Ghojarieh dynasty; the schools in Iran flourished tremendously (Moosa Poor, 1991).

Efforts to establish more schools were met with challenges in improving the educational system. As one of the steps to meet those challenges, a new character of schools was first drawn by the Ministry of Culture in 1909. It was designed to provide educational instructions for the 6-year-long primary schools and 3-year-long high schools. With the introduction of a new law on education, primary education was compulsory for all Iranian children and all Iranian parents were required to send their children to school at the age of seven.

Beginning in the early 1970s, efforts were made to further improve the educational system in Iran. Part of these efforts included updating and changing the school curriculum, introducing modern textbooks for schools, and training more efficient teachers. The Iranian educational system has been highly centralized and divided into two levels of education, each of which is placed under a different ministry. The school level comprising K-12 education is supervised by the Ministry of Education,

whereas higher education is placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Science and Technology. This division of the education system remains until the present.

As for the K-12 education, it comprises primary schooling which starts for children at the age of 6 for a duration of 5 years. The next level is the Middle school (also known as the guidance school), to provide education to students from the sixth grade to the eighth grade. At this level, the students are to gain the orientation to the various disciplines of studies within the Iranian school system. The High school is the final level in the school system which lasts for three mandatory years, plus one year pre-university education. At this level students are channelled into streams comprising in each channel, the theoretical, vocational/technical and manual – in a program of student's own choice of specialization.

As in most countries, there are public schools and private schools in Iran, offering education at all levels from elementary l through university levels. While the public schools provide free education to children, the private schools provide education at a chargeable cost. Students attending the public university in Iran must serve the government for a period equivalent to the number of years they spend at the university.

The 1979 revolution brought about some feature changes in the country's emphasis on education. The most important one was the process of Islamizing the educational system. In this process, the Cultural Revolution Committee was formed in 1980 to oversee the institution of Islamic values in education. Two of the committee's arms in the educational sector were the Curriculum Development Centre and the Centre for Textbooks (composed mainly of *ulema*). By 1983, the latter had produced 3,000 new college-level textbooks in various areas of study, all of which were to advocate Islamic views in education. In the meantime, the Curriculum Development Centre produced teaching materials based on Islamic perspectives to be introduced into the

primary grades for non-coeducational classes, within the period of six months after the revolution.

The role of the Curriculum Development Centre, formed as a part of the Organization for Educational Research and Planning (OERP) was to take care of K-12 schools since the time of pre-revolution remains in existence until the present. The OERP is a government affiliated scientific learning organization. It helps to develop qualitative and knowledge-based curricula consistent with the scientific and research findings, technological, national identity, Islamic and cultural values. Among the OERP's major responsibilities are:

a. To research for the contents of all school subjects,

b. To develop methods for examinations and educational assessments,

c. To prepare text-books for all subjects in schools,

d. To provide educational tools and to identify the list of standards for educational tools and equipment,

e. To run pure research on improving the quality and quantity of education,

f. To perform other responsibilities issued by the OERP Council (Iranian National Curriculum, 2009).

At present, the formal education at school level (K-12) consists of four stages; the primary school, the guidance school, the high school and pre university. Students enter primary school at the age of six for a duration of 5 years. The goals for this period of schooling are directed to cover eight dimensions of learning. They are the ideological, the ethical, the educational, the cultural, the artistic, the social, the biological, and the economic. The Planning Groups would have to compile the curriculum for primary schools in line with the above goals.

For purpose of implementation, the eight dimensions are translated into the teaching subjects at various grades according to the allocation of hours per week as shown in the following table:

Table 2.1

Subjects Taught in Iranian Elementary Classrooms

Dimensions of Learning Based on Subjects Taught	Number of Hours Taught per Week				
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Quran	1	2	2	2	2
Religious Studies	-	2	2	2	2
Persian Language	11	8	8	7	7
Social sciences	-	-	2	2/5	2/5
Mathematics	5	5	4	4	4
Natural & Health Sciences	3	3	2/5	3	3
Art	2	2	1/5	1/5	1/5
Physical Training	2	2	2	2	2

2.3 Background: Development of Art Education in Iranian Primary Schools

The teaching of art in primary schools from 1979, and even years after the law of compulsory education was approved in 1984, was very much made dependent on the use of textbooks. Unfortunately, the publication of art textbooks during those years was only targeting classroom needs for elementary students in grades 4 and 5. Major contents of the books were essentially topics on art education: painting, handicraft and calligraphy. These books were written as simple guides for children to follow in their art learning to gain information on basic methods and contents for drawings, handicrafts, and calligraphy. In the absence of books for children in grades 1, 2, and 3, teachers would have to depend on their own personal skills and experiences to aid student learning.

Conversely, art teaching for primary schools in Iran, adopted since 1937, has been approached by having children of different grades to handle different arts forms as

classroom art activity. For example, the art in the first grade was singing, whereas in the second grade it was painting. Children in the third grade did calligraphy. However, beginning from 1963 art lessons in the 6 primary years had all included painting, handicraft and singing. The total weekly time allocation for art teaching was five hours for children in grades one to four, and eight hours for children in grades five to eight. After the change of educational system in 1966, the duration of primary schools was reduced to five years. This was followed by the reduction of learning time for some subjects. As for art, the learning hours for children in fourth and fifth grades were reduced to four per week.

Eventually, since a new legislation for education was passed in 1994, the weekly teaching time for art has been reduced to two hours for grades 1 and 2, and one and a half hours for grades 3, 4, and 5. The total duration of weekly teaching for all subjects in primary schools was now 24 hours. This is to say, art was taught for only about six percent of the weekly teaching time.

The period from 1995 to sometime later showed no new books being published. Neither was the art curriculum being reviewed. This means that the change in time allocation for weekly art teaching was not followed in later reviews of the art curriculum. It has become a common practice that the teaching of art then was done by having teachers manage the sessions according to their own flair, taste and abilities. In most cases, the teachers' attitude toward art was lackadaisical in that they considered the subject as less important, even to serve as an extracurricular activity for children. Quite often, the periods for teaching art were taken up to teach other subjects (Navab Safavi, 2000).

Prior to a decision by The Curriculum Development Centre in 1999 to plan a new program for art education was a needs-assessment study conducted in the same year and continued to the following year. In the meantime, additional research on

"Children's Art" initiated by faculty members of local universities since 2000 was also eventually produced.

An analysis of the needs assessment and a compilation of research reports led to the formulation of a temporary plan. This plan was aimed at proposing the approaches, goals, contents and evaluation of art to be explored as a pilot project at some primary schools in five states of Iran. In the process of drawing up a strong art curriculum, the plan was tested and used as a teacher-guide. It was then reviewed weekly following feedback from teachers and by those involved in the implementation. These reviews were done by a board consisting of four teachers, one curriculum developer, one expert of the coordinating group for primary schools, one expert in child psychology, one specialist in educational assessment and evaluation, one expert from each of the arts: visual art, traditional arts, music, and theatre.

2.4 Elements of Art Education Curriculum in Iranian Elementary Schools

The review board was to suggest a more tenable content and approach of art learning for elementary school children. After a series of thorough reviews, the board finally came up with a proposal for a new art education curriculum for the Iranian elementary education, to suggest the following statements and recommendations:

2.4.1 The Goals and Objectives

In 2000, the High Educational Council of Iran approved the eight aims for primary school education. They were the ideological, ethical, physical, scientific, social, political, economic, and cultural and artistic aims. These aims were next adopted into the Art Curriculum Framework (2003) to become the objectives of art learning for students at elementary education, and translated as follows:

By learning art, children are able to:

    i.   Pay attention to nature and like its order.

    ii.   Pay attention to the beauty of nature and to imitate of it for artistic creativity.

iii.   Enjoy observing artistic productions.

iv.   Show artistic creativity in arts activities.

v.   Appreciate rhythmical traditions, phenomena and productions.

vi.   Understand artistic process and to make art works.

vii.   Get interested in reading national novels and poems.

viii.   Be familiar with some of the cultural and social Islamic-Iranian traditions and value them.

Perhaps, it is interesting to note that the aims of the Art Curriculum Framework (2003) for schools in Iran are bent on realizing the character of "artistic education". By this artistic education, it means a process in which individuals are helped to develop their ethical, social, affectional and cognitive traits, and also abilities through involvement in art activities. Through this process individuals would boost their talents, not only in making art but also in recognizing the meaning of beauty and its significance with respect to their own life. For simplification, this goal is further translated into objectives in reference to the three main fields of knowledge, skill, and point of view (2003, p. 5).

2.4.2 The Approach to Art Education

Teachers seem to be applying several approaches to artistic education in their teaching. Depending on situations, the teachers use the student-centered approach, the mixture of artistic courses, training the creativity and active participation in learning. This is to say, as far as teaching method is concerned, the teachers in an art class are free to use a method that they think best to make students involved -- either individually or collectively – in art learning. In the learning the students would get brief familiarity of the topic to start with, talk about it, and then get into a practice to gain experiences in producing art works. Through this experience, the students would be able to not only produce works of art but also to get insight into the process of making and evaluating.

In sum, the Iranian curriculum (Art Curriculum Framework, 2003) proposes two main approaches to art education. They are, namely: (1) teaching the different kinds of knowledge and subject separately, and (2) educating artistry. Educating artistry here means to teach art subjects based on the following five fundamental and essential elements:

i.   Appreciation of nature: Attention to nature and relate to it as creature of God and the source of the best beauty;

ii.   Aesthetics: Attention to aesthetics and training the sensations of students to pay attention to beauty and appreciate it;

iii. Art history: Attention to the history of art in Iran;

iv.   Production: To produce the artistic production, and finally;

v.   Art criticism: evaluation of student's art works.

2.4.3 The Subject Contents

The contents here refer to the components of arts learning, comprising training in activities in the areas of arts appreciation, visual art, literature, music and theater. By introducing these activities, the students gain exposure to the elements of artistic and cultural heritage, and familiarity with all artistic disciplines.

Art curriculum in primary schools starts with students observing nature and translating it into five artistic disciplines that include painting, manipulating, music (training how to listen), telling the story and theater. Beside this activity, students are to get familiar with elements of cultural inheritance. In this case, the general rule is that the learning of art for children in all 31 states in Iran is first to make them pay attention to arts of native or local cultures. It is only from here that the children would proceed to learning about the national or even the global arts. For example, in music, students in each state must be oriented to listening to their native music, and then the traditional and national Iranian music. The classical and modern music of the world, which is also very

important, is to be exposed to children in due consideration (see http//art-dept.talif.sch.ir).

Despite the common contents, children are taught artistic courses (painting and handicrafts, storytelling, theater, and so on) across Iran in certain variations, considering the limitations, conditions, and availability of resources and typicality of the states and regions. For example, teachers in one state can mix storytelling and singing with Persian or Kurdish or Turkish literature in their art classes, while teachers in other regions may use advantages of drawing and handicraft in their primary school art lessons.

The elementary school art courses are in fact so diverse and flexible so much so that students can learn different art abilities and pick up various art talents. Although teachers encourage their students to learn and experience all forms of art, it is the students themselves who have the full choice to decide the art form they are to advance in, based on their special flair and talent.

2.4.4 The Curriculum Structure

What follows is an explanation on the structure of art education in reference to the principles that guide the contents as they are taught in Iranian elementary schools. It is observed that art curriculum in Iran was designed based on 8 principles of the National Art Curriculum (2000).The principles are related to:

   i. Subject: Art is taught as a subject with specific allocation in the school time table in primary education.

  ii. Flexibility: The teaching is flexible, following the different design and strategy of teaching and learning in respect to different environments, culture, facilities, schools, students, and so on.

 iii. Student-centered approach: The student is a free and active searcher. He or she has to make use of all abilities, talents and capabilities to explore conditions of the surroundings as much as possible; is also required to think, experience, and

discuss discoveries, to be helped by the teacher who would monitor the process of learning and provide useful advice when necessary.

iv. Mixture of art courses: The experience of art can be derived from various categories of different human senses. In learning the arts, the students observe all elements in their surroundings, listen to the sounds around them, and develop an understanding of the harmony and beauty in the environment. Because these activities often happen simultaneously, the teaching of arts is done by exploiting the mixture of modality.

v. Creativity training: Art is used as a useful subject to boost children's creativity by strengthening their characters through the elements of flexibility, broadening experiences, adjustments, fantasies and imagination. They also develop perseverance through training within an atmosphere that allows active and free creativity in artistic works.

vi. Participatory learning: By taking account of students' talents, interests and needs, the teacher gets them involved in planning the art lessons. In doing so, students participate actively in executing the lessons, and work responsibly since they consider the plan as their own. Further, students participate in group activities in drawing, singing, theater, discussions, and exchanges of views.

vii. Comprehensive content: Art curriculum consists of various forms of art disciplines. Although these disciplines cover different principles, language, and functions, they offer similar aesthetic experience. Therefore, the selection and organization of artistic activities should take into consideration preparing good environment for learning from first hand resources, social and individual differences among students.

viii. Dynamism and continuity: The art curriculum and its implementation are often reviewed so that the elements of curriculum and the service are consistently updated.

2.4.5 Teaching and Learning Strategies

With regard to the different approaches to artistic education, the teacher in the class can use any suitable method to get the students to practice and produce artistic works either individually or collectively, in the classroom. The entire approach was to focus on making students experience the mixture of artistic activities, to train their creativity through active participation. In all these approaches, the students would start by first getting a brief familiarity with a topic, talk about it, and proceed to practicing some artists' works. The process and the result are both given due attention in the teaching. All students are to give their own ideas about what they are learning. In their teaching, the teachers engage students' learning strategies through organizing small group activities, group and class discussions, projects, and scientific picnics.

2.4.6 Materials and Educational Media

Teachers are encouraged to use materials, devices, and instruments appropriate as art educational media -- both conventional and non-conventional. The non-conventional materials include educational computer software, apart from different kinds of photographs and pictures, slides, films on various forms of arts, aesthetics and cultural heritage. For this purpose, teachers are sent to attend short term in-service courses, not only to update their knowledge on the use of new technology but also to familiarize themselves with the curriculum and different teaching methods in both theoretical and practical aspects.

2.4.7 Subject Evaluation

In Iranian schools, the practice of student evaluation in art learning often involves a qualitative description. This includes a descriptive statement about the students'

activities and their interest in different art disciplines. Evaluation of student's achievement is a kind of participative assessment in which teachers, individual students and student groups in the class are involved actively in this process. They participate in active discussions about the quality of art works that a student produced. At the end of each art class the students would write comments on their own work. These comments, together with the teacher's are to be kept in a portfolio. Quite obviously, the assessment exercises look at both the student's process and products. However, one important point in primary school art assessment is that the students' artwork is not to be compared with that of other students. In summary, there are three sources of evaluation used in an art classroom: the student's self assessment, the group's assessment, and the teacher's assessment.

2.5 The Concept of Art Education for Elementary Schools: A Contemporary View

Throughout most of the 20th century, educational curriculum had been heavily influenced by behavioral psychology. The effects of this influence can be seen in the approach of seeing major modes of learning largely limited to investigations of stimulus and response conditions, and the effects of reinforcement. Even the meaning of cognition and IQ was narrowly conceived, and understood only in terms of quantity elements and numeracy. The arts, a subject known famously to deal with imagination, was by default identified as non-cognitive studies, relegated to the "affective domain," and culled into the so-called "educational romanticism" (see Fauconnier & Turner, as cited by Efland, 2002). However, the stance in such a behavioristic approach has a limit to adequately explain the high cognitive processes occurring in the human mind that deals with art behavior. This is especially so as in an art practice, rigorous abstract thinking is involved; this sometimes avoids directly extrinsic or manifest expression. It is for this reason that the study of art, as far as the present research is concerned, does not rely exclusively on the theory of behaviorism.

Since the emergence of a new cognitive approach, the concept of learning in art education has since rejected the division between the cognitive domain and the affective domain. All our mental activities are considered cognitive, implying "a different view on the art abilities of children and on the goals and curriculum of art education" (Haanstra & Schönau, 2007, p. 427). The applications of advanced cognitive skills make the arts especially valuable for 21st-century education. Art education must include higher-order thinking skills as curriculum objectives. Following Bloom's (1956) widely accepted taxonomy of instructional objectives, the learning of art has reified the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

The review of the art education program involves looking at issues from several aspects. These aspects relate to questions of how the goals, contents and the learning process in the curriculum were determined, all of which should have been discussed not in isolation from the social-cultural perspectives and the ideas dominating at that time. It is for this reason that historical research on art education, as Erickson (1979) has suggested, is necessary on several grounds. Chalmers (2004) cites Erickson who defines these grounds as the field of study, knowledge, and ideas to be the guidelines for formulating the future curriculum.

The scope of art education research ranges from style of investigation, and selection to a mode of interpretation. One might seek a linear historical model by aligning events to times and places. In this way, interpretation of events can be described in terms of a "chronological and geographical map" (Lainer, 1977, p. 7). By looking at this map, one would be able to understand the process of how an idea was developed within a period of time, in different places. Similarly, some most prominent ideas in a specific time and place can be observed. This way of looking, we are informed, can be termed as examining a paradigm. By reviewing a paradigm of different societies and times, one would get a clear concept of art, art education and

artistic learning in those societies that have changed, and the dominant ideas such as self-expression or creativity as most characteristic of the time and place.

The fact is there seldom exists a totally dominant paradigm in a society. For a similar reason, an educational paradigm which is to cover all realities of schooling including students, teachers, curricula, and educational settings cannot be projected from one single idea. Nevertheless, we need a paradigm for education in order to identify "goals to pursue and values to guide the selection and organization of content and activities" (Efland, 2004, p. 692) for educational pursuits. Along with paradigms, there are entities called models.

In one article, Eisner (1991) claims that a model may consist of several conceptions of art curriculum, some of which might be conflicting with the others. To understand those conceptions, one needs to review the history of art education in a society in order to identify ideas evolving within a given educational setting. The other aspect is to understand a variety of students who believe in the ideas, exemplify and develop approaches to constitute a learning model. All this contribute reasons to the development of different kinds of art curriculum models.

Considerations about curriculum involve deciding the nature, and enactment in the classroom situations in the sense of one how might experience it. These two dimensions are interpreted as two forms of curriculum that have prevailed during the last few decades. In Irwin and Chalmers's (2007) words, the two forms are: first "curriculum-as-plan" which is often understood to mean the curriculum-as-text. The second is "curriculum-as-lived" which is often referred to as *currere*, the Latin root word for curriculum" (p. 180). The word, *currere*, owes its meaning to the Greek origin, is to run a course, emphasizing the doing, being, making, creating, and living qualities of learning experiences. Many curriculum developers recommend a synthesis of both forms.

Irwin and Chalmers (2007) believe that the creativity and self-expression paradigm emphasized the notion of curriculum-as-lived by encouraging children to be creative. This orientation was somewhat a student-centered curriculum that attended to visualizing expression. It was an orientation heavily influenced by the psychology of child development in art and the philosophy of John Dewey (1934) on art as experience.

It has been suggested that hundreds of research efforts related to creative thinking in the 1950s and 1960s both encouraged the cultivation of creativity in the education system and helped to foster individualism rather than collectivism in schools. Researchers of that time believed children had innate creative abilities that grow naturally. However, these abilities are often jeopardized at the expense of intellectualizing art making. With the possible exception of Tovey's (in Lowenfeld) acknowledgement of Maori art, children were not taught how to make connections between their art and their heritage, nor were they taught to consider questions of aesthetics. Instead an emphasis was placed on the creative and mental growth (see Lowenfeld, 1947) of children by using art as a tool to develop social skills and personal self expression. Victor Lowenfeld, a major proponent of this approach of the 1950s, brought early empirical research into the purview of art education. He advocated and emphasized uninhibited expression on creative and mental growth in art. Like Rousseau, Lowenfeld was a naturalist who believed that uncontrolled expression and freedom without any intervention by artificial adult approach to art should be encouraged or that it might "destroy the spontaneous act of creation." (1947, p. 67).

Lowenfeld claimed that the goal of art education "is not the art itself or the aesthetic product or the aesthetic experience, but rather the child who grows up more creatively and sensitively and applies his experience in the arts to whatever life situation may be applicable" (p. 163). Thus, he believed that art education is a process not a final product. It is as a means to an end, and the end is always individual and unpredictable.

Creativity is one of the main and necessary elements of art education that without it art education is meaningless. However, creativity alone is inadequate to make a complete aim for a subject. By considering art only as a creative activity, art cannot stand as a discipline of study. It is for this reason that art education should have other goals too.

The creativity paradigms are also exemplified in the work of Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Kindler (2004). Csikszentmihalyi believed that creativity is developed through in-depth knowledge and deep inquiry. His theory is expanded by Kindler (2004), and others, who believe creativity is neither biologically nor socially determined and is instead realized through a confluence of relationships among individuals, our society, and culture. Within art education, notions of creativity can be seen in the work of scholars such as Peter London (1989), whose interest in the spiritual in art and art education promotes visualizing expression not only for the self-expression of individuals, but also for communities as they work together to explore ideas of mutual interest. Even though the creativity and self-expression paradigm dominated art education for most of the twentieth century, other paradigms caused major ideological shifts in curriculum in the latter half of that century.

While educators writing within the creativity paradigm speak of inquiry during the making of art, there are art educators, like Sullivan (2005), who believed artists both pose and solve problems while making and perceiving art. Sullivan advocated inquiry in the visual arts through the premise that art practice is research. Similarly, Irwin and her Canadian colleagues (cited in Irwin & Chalmers, 2007) write about the need for art educators and students to think of inquiry through the lenses of an artist/researcher/ teacher engaged in ongoing reflective and reflexive practice-based inquiry.

The work of Howard Gardner (1999) on Multiple Intelligences formed the basis for the ARTS PROPEL research project and the subsequent inquiry based curriculum efforts at Harvard Project Zero. Using reflection as a fundamental tool for learning,

ARTS PROPEL emphasized an approach to process portfolios that allowed students to be deeply engaged in specific project-based units of interest. For each of the mentioned inquiry-based approaches, curriculum is a process rather than a single text, or said another way; the process of *currere* is the product. A project-based approach to learning was used such that students, teachers, and learners had direct involvement with the arts and artists.

Visualizing culture and the aesthetic education paradigm, one of the most dominant threads in contemporary art education is a way of understanding a variety of socio cultural interests being portrayed across art education. A comprehensive model, known popularly as DBAE (Discipline-based art education) in the area of visual art was established with defined goals for art education. The model consists of four fundamental disciplines, namely: art making, art criticism, art history, and art aesthetic. It is assumed that students undergoing learning through the four key domains of art experiences during the K-12 schooling would be helped to understand, create, and appreciate art.

In discipline-based art education or DBAE, structuring the visual becomes the emphasis and the work of art, representing the discipline of art, becomes the focus for all art learning activities. Students are taught how to view and talk about works of art as they analyze subject matter within philosophical, historical, and cultural contexts Students are also encouraged to create their own works of art; however, the difference between the creativity and DBAE/aesthetic education paradigms rests with the positioning of art production. In the former, art is an expression of self within a student-oriented curriculum. In the latter, art is derived from studying the structures inherent in visual images or objects within a subject-based curriculum. Though DBAE and aesthetic education involve both curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived, using text (documents, curriculum materials) to experience the visual is a primary mode of orientation.

This broad and rich experience, or what Dobbs (2004) referred as "multidimensional" experiences and interdisciplinary study, would help students to gain maximum learning opportunity. This opportunity is offered through a discipline that embraces "the knowledge base; characteristic tools of inquiry; and specialized vocabulary for perceiving, understanding, and making works of art. Each of the disciplines is a lens through which one might experience art from different perspectives" (2004, p. 703).

Meredith (2009) states that DBAE is an art curriculum for students to learn how to promote self-reflective participation while learning different techniques. By participating in different aspects of art, students enable themselves to be a part of the art community; DBAE is an aesthetic model for a general curriculum with the specific input of teachers. In the model, the teacher is facilitator of the learning activities, but not the focus.

Visualizing Cultures is one of the most important threads in contemporary art education. Launched in 2002 at MIT, it was a project to explore the potential of the Web for developing innovative image-driven scholarship and learning. Its more encompassing vision was to use new technology as visual materials to reconstruct the visualization of time in the past (see, Visualizing Cultures, (http://web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/185/cssa.html). Applied to the context of current art learning, it is a way of understanding a variety of socio cultural interests through images portrayed across art education.

To sum up, given the multidimensional attributes of art education, it is imperative to include in its program a process of learning that allows students to apply higher order/critical thinking in their art study. That is to say, when engaged in art learning, students should therefore be given the opportunity to deal with a subject matter that calls attention to the ways in which information can be analyzed and interpreted in

the special cultural-historical contexts. That way they will acquire a better understanding and value their own and other cultures, from past to present to affect their total understanding about art and life.

2.6 Evaluation of Art Curriculum

Exploring the meaning of evaluation and some technical complexity of assessment is part of the exercise in a curriculum research. Murphy and Espeland (2007) argue that both evaluation and assessment indicate values. The values are derived from an exercise of assigning merit to, for example, a program under observation within a specified time, before judgment can be made on the status. However, there is also a common tendency to consider assessment as a process of judgment about individual performance, and evaluation as an appraisal of programs. In other words, ascertaining the value through evaluation and assessment can relate to processes as well as final results.

The word assessment, by Eisner's (2007) observation, is both "pervasive and inherent in teaching" (p. 423). Generally, discussions on assessment and evaluation in education are strongly related to appraising the nature and merits of educational policies, goals and curriculum content. By all accounts, Higgins (2007) believed that the best model of evaluation is one that should help us to eliminate common errors and misunderstanding, and thus, to lead us toward truth in our inquiry.

One of the key functions of evaluation in education is to help in one's decision in a curriculum planning for purpose of revision, and changing the quality of contents. The decision on the best curriculum can be insignificant unless supported by good delivery of teaching packages. This makes sense as the quality of teaching is therefore equally necessary to be evaluated. To determine the quality of teaching, one has to consider the extent of learning accrued as a consequence of the teaching process, and the extent to which the objectives were met. It is an evaluation of outcomes based on the experienced curriculum, which is the third focus of educational evaluation.

The literature suggests that there are at least two kinds of curriculum development models: the prescriptive and descriptive models. The prescriptive model is exemplified in the classical model, which includes elements such as objective, learning experience and evaluation. It is a means-end model in the sense that it focuses on the suggestions of a desired end, that is, the objectives to be attained at the end of a learning experience. It is a model that will also include an evaluation process to determine whether or not the means help to achieve the end. As a classical model, objectives are crucial as they are the key to the selection and evaluation of other curricular elements.

A descriptive model, on the other hand is "temporal" and concerned with important aspects of contemporary practice in curriculum development. One example of a descriptive curriculum is the naturalistic model. A naturalistic model, according to Walker (1971), constitutes elements to suggest a "beginning (the platform), an end (the design), and a process (deliberation)" that help in keeping track of how "the beginning progresses to the end" (p. 52). In this model, objectives are not as critical as they are in the prescriptive model because they are only one among other means to provide reference and guidance. Likewise, evaluation is not a key element of the model because the design can be justified by only making reference to the platform using the empirical data to provide evidence on the effects of design decisions.

Walker uses the term "platform" to refer to a belief and values set for the curriculum by the designer. To include an idea of what is and what ought to be to "guide the curriculum developer in determining what he should do to realize his vision" (p. 56). In fact, Walker also talks about deliberation as a process of recognizing the "desiderata" and the branching pathways of consequences which may flow from all the possible alternatives. Although the idea on means and ends is not central, the process of deliberation still considers them on the basis of mutual determination. The more important issue here is not a list of objectives or the learning process but a set of design

decisions which is to be achieved through deliberation. In the deliberation, one is to formulate decision points; devise alternative choices at these decision points, consider arguments for and against suggested decision points and decision alternatives, and, finally, arrive at the most defensible alternative subject. Therefore, justification of choices is the important part of deliberation to create a curriculum platform.

Quite apart from Walker, Wilson (1968) as a traditional curriculum developer was more concerned about aims, objectives, content and the other elements and their connections in a good art curriculum. Therefore he suggested a prescriptive model of art curriculum and its evaluation.

By a prescriptive model, Wilson (1968) proposed a systematic curriculum evaluation by looking at the evaluative criteria for different aspects of art curriculum. This evaluation could be used to assess the effectiveness of an art education program with considerations of looking at, among others, goal worth, the relationships between goals, objectives and course content, objectives and examination content, and last but not least, the objective achievement. Some aspects of this curriculum evaluation may require a formal evaluation, and be determined by an empirical check. For this to happen, goals as general statements which categorize in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes should be made explicit. Thus, it is imperative that art curriculum developers should precisely define goals and evaluate them in relation to the program implementation. Hence the objectives should be behaviorally stated in order that they can be observable and measurable, although this is not usual in art. Nevertheless, a clear statement of objectives and the student's overt performance, once specified, would allow them to be made measurable.

Wilson also believed in the difference between teaching and instruction. While teaching is more "poetic", "metaphorical" and "mystical"; instruction is usually

characterized by three requirements, namely: "1) specification of the behaviour and achievement level the student is to attain at the end of a given period, 2) careful formulation of conditions which are intended to serve as means for leading the student to behave in the desired manner, and 3) means for assessment to measure whether or not the desired behaviour has been achieved." (p. 59)

To Wilson "it is particularly important to achieve some degree of behavioural specification for goals pertaining to art appreciation, creative behaviour and aesthetic perception. If such art educational goals cannot be defined in terms of observable and measurable behaviour, then it is questionable whether they have any utility for art education" (p. 60). However, two aspects of art -- the production and the perception of works of art -- are the most common goals for art education. Yet they are difficult to be assessed in student learning. This is because the expanding student's aesthetic perception, or training to really see, are first of all "highly ambiguous terms", secondly, there are no indicators for directing toward different kinds of art works like painting, and thirdly, there is no clue for assessment of "really see". For these reasons, Wilson suggests that objectives relating to aesthetic perception in art education should be specified in terms of what learners will be expected to do when demonstrating their ability to perceive aesthetically.

In sum, Wilson concluded that the objectives for art learning should indicate the characteristics of "1) the terminal behaviour is specified: the verbal explication of aspects, indicating how they function together to give the work an expressive quality; 2) the condition under which the behaviour is to occur in relation to reproduction of a specific work; and 3) the criterion is given: the student's descriptions and explanations of the painting must be considered relevant by others" (p. 61).

Given the unique functions of art in education, they are not only to allow the child to perceive and experience feeling, but also to gain knowledge about those perceptions and feeling as they are expressed through a symbolic form. At the elementary level, we are concerned with forms which include painting, sculpture, movement, and poetry, as tangible expressions of children's subjective feelings and ideas.

Dimondstein (1969) proposed a conceptual framework which provides a practical connection between knowing and doing, theory and practice, impressive and expressive experience, particularly useful in art learning. This framework underlines some assumptions on "appreciation and participation in the art process" that "depends upon the recognition and application of certain fundamental concepts inherent in the arts" (p. 6).

According to the framework, all areas of knowing and disciplines start with a description of what is and what is not. There is a unique type of involvement which differs each from other forms. In the creation process, working on art is a unique kind of involvement as it deals with particular art elements for different kinds of art expression forms. These features, as Dimondstein argues, can be treated as a conceptual model when considering the study of arts that involves: 1) definition and description, 2) distinguishing characteristics, 3) experiential approach, 4) art element (p. 7).

Detmers (1980) viewed contents as a critical aspect of an art curriculum; in fact, he is more concerned about categories of contents and their relationships with different kinds of knowledge. Identification of five kinds of contents and their scheme -- the philosophical, the structured, the formative, the historical, and the rational -- may well facilitate the learning mode in the visual arts.

The philosophical contents in Detmer's scheme refers to those stated by artists, critics, philosophers of art and aestheticians, consisting of meanings and ideas of art

work, descriptions of terms and criteria for judging conception of realism, beauty and how to explain the nature of art. Despite the different principles and critical criteria that each philosophy carries, all philosophical contents seem to project "the most general ideas underlying the making of works of art" (p. 58), even at the artist's personal level. As for the structural content, it refers more to the use of elements and principles of design, and compositional processes. This involves the artist's consideration on ways of structuring, qualities of materials to be used, and the achievement of overall qualities of the work produced, all of which can be observed from the artist's working and the final product.

Formative content is more concerned about the physical form of art work. The formative differs from the structural content in that the latter deals essentially with theoretical problems of artistic process, whereas the former is focused straightforwardly with physical handling and manipulating of art materials and tools. This content describes the technical, the instrumental and interpersonal skills. It also shows the artist's capabilities in handling the potential of a medium, and judgment on the adequacy of production.

The historical content seeks to reveal the relationship of art events of the past, the present and the future. This takes the form of identifying and determining the chronological, social, and environmental information regarding individual works of art, artists who produced them, and the period in which works of art were made through the techniques of description, analyses, and interpretation. This content also provides information on the technological, stylistic, and ideational developments of art works, and methods of doing art history by drawing from sources such as real works of art, reproductions, books, and so on.

Lastly, the rational content is one created through interactions of artist between the visual arts and the other disciplines that provide knowledge, material, and skills that contribute to the creation of art

2.6.1 Categorizing learning in visual arts

A scheme for categorizing learning in the visual arts presented by Maccia (1974, cited in Detmers, 1980) appears to be most adaptable for categorizing learning in the visual arts. This is because the categories presented seem to exhaust most of the types of learning of concern to visual art. Therefore, the adaptation of Maccia's scheme is utilized in responding to the criticisms by Detmers (1980). He lists three kinds of concepts in learning: basic knowing, non-basic, and procedural knowing.

Basic knowing is "the acquiring of tacit (intuitive) beliefs which are based on evidence via consequences, not argument". It consists of three categories: recognitive, acquisitive, and appreciative. Recognitive learning sketches out figure-ground discrimination in visual art. Acquisitive knowledge involves the first hand experience's result. In this case, someone recognizes tools and materials and distinguishes between elements and relates them to create a unique thing. Students learn acquisitively when they are put into direct content and work with tools and materials. Appreciative knowing is exhibited as judgment and a keenness of insight. In other words it is to learn how to appreciate, accept or reject something in a "part-whole relationship". Students show their discernment by choosing the particular art works in visual arts studio courses.

Non-basic knowing is the second kind of learning in visual arts. It involves two categories: theoretical knowing and critical knowing. The first kind of knowing refers to what is possible theoretically or to provide "evidence as proof of the rightness of one's ideas, actions, and decisions in creating a work of art". Theoretical knowing involves two types of knowing; one is instantive, and the other is experimentation and logical

reasoning. The first sort is derived from demonstrations and examples and proof of what should be put forth. Furthermore this type of knowing clarifies what has been or may be achieved and represent good authority. The *experimentation* and "logical" reasoning is another way to develop theoretical knowledge. It is different from instantive knowledge because it relies on evidence that has been developed by students. In art classes and courses students should solve specific problems in art theory and design. Initially the ideas in visual art are seldom clear. During the process of producing a work of art, they are altered and developed on the base of relevance.

The second kind of category in non-basic learning is critical knowing. It consists of the explanation of standards for rational and evidential arguments; the main aspect of critical knowing is its creative aspect which involves the ability to analyze and synthesize. "The art student must learn not only the conventional meaning and application of ideas such as craftsmanship and uniqueness in judging works of art in general, but how to adapt and apply these ideas with respect to his or her artistic endeavours" (p. 61).

The last category of knowing is procedural which involves knowledge about what and how to do. Learning how to do a specific thing involves two kinds of learning: Protocolic and Conventional knowing. The first one indicates how to do something which may be done in a particular one way, for example how to develop a photograph. In contrast with the protocolic knowing, conventional knowing how to do involves alternate ways of doing. "Many studio instructors present their procedural choices from among alternatives without making clear the rules of preference which led to these particular choices, without making clear the existence of other alternatives" (p. 62).

Innovative knowing and creative knowing are two subcategories of what to do. Innovative knowledge involves transferring the ways of doing from one experience and activity to another situation. This process could include new using and manipulating of

all or part of one procedure as all or part of another process. But creative knowing includes a new sort of doing. "Creative knowing what to do requires transformation, a modification of the ways of doing to produce different kinds of doing" (p. 62)

Detmers's model is developed by a matrix of the ways of learning with what might be learned which shows different possibilities for a comprehensive curriculum development and design. As the two dimensions table shows, the horizontal axis present the different kinds of content in visual arts, and vertical axis represent the ways of learning. The model considers the interaction between the ways of knowing with the identifiable content. "It is intended to generate thinking with respect to a range of possible objectives and experiences where each type of content interacts with each category and sub-category of learning" (p. 63.)

The models of evaluation by Dimondstein and Detmers, despite some structural variations, are both focusing on evaluation of content to determine the extent to which art concepts can be defined and viewed from different perspectives. While the evaluation of art programs can thus generally be described in terms of looking at the implementation and outcomes.

Borrowing Thelen's comprehensive social action model, Clark and Zimmerman (1983) proposed a model in which a student teacher enactment was considered a main important issue in art design and evaluation.   In fact, Stake (1967) and Eisner (1979) too, have emphasized the reporting of student-teacher-environment transactions as major aspects of educational evaluation appropriate for art education programs. Despite the similar concern, Stake and Eisner are geared more toward looking at the adequacy of an art curriculum prior to its implementation. Therefore, teaching methods and student learning outcomes have not been considered the main issue.

Clark and Zimmerman discuss criteria for evaluating curriculum antecedents. They propose the criteria of coherence, completeness, and appropriateness be used to

judge the adequacy of a curriculum prior to its implementation. Coherence is defined as the clear and logically consistent expression of concepts. In a coherent curriculum, there would be no contradictions among all the concepts in the curriculum. Completeness is defined as the inclusion of all necessary concepts. In a complete curriculum, all necessary relations between concepts would be included. Coherence and completeness are used to judge the internal adequacy of a curriculum. Appropriateness is defined as correspondence of a phenomenon to the rest of the world of knowledge in terms of concepts and experiences. In an appropriate curriculum, there would be correspondence between a discipline of knowledge and goals, objectives, and structuring of tasks within the curriculum. Appropriateness would be used to judge the external adequacy of a curriculum.

If several adequate curricula are available, other selection criteria can be applied such as simplicity, uniqueness, aesthetics, and elegance. A curriculum might then be chosen that has the most simple form and content, is unique because it presents familiar concepts in a new way, or is aesthetic in regard to balance of concepts. If all other factors are equal, the curriculum chosen over the others will be that which is more elegant; that is, it best combines simplicity and precision. This thesis, however, will only be concerned with judging adequacy of a curriculum prior to implementation in terms of its coherence, completeness, and appropriateness.

Clark and Zimmerman indicate that content, student, teacher, and setting are the components of an adequate art curriculum. Teacher's roles and teaching strategies related to "learning experiences in art, students' readiness for art learning and level of development, and students' art tasks" (p. 78). The educational setting is specified as "environments for art learning in the classroom, school, community, and society that include the administrative climate, support mechanisms of the environment, and the immediate physical environment. The setting is also defined by several factors, such as

"materials, equipment, other resources, and time available to the teacher, and students" (p. 79). They also believe that these components should be interrelated with orientations to an art curriculum in order to facilitate successful learning experiences about art.

Among the several different models of art evaluation examined so far to determine the nature of art curriculum from different aspects and perspectives, the one by Clark and Zimmerman seemed to be more applicable to the exercise of identifying different aims and objectives. The model sees different aspects of evaluation before implementation, and after it. This model also has a perfect and complete framework in relating between different elements of the art curriculum and its internal and external adequacy.

In summary, the literature review has discussed the historical background of Iranian education in general, its evolution and factors influencing the formulation of the current art education program for elementary education. A brief description of the elements and characteristics of the present Iranian art curriculum is also presented. The examination of the contemporary views on the concept of art is done by reviewing the 20th century art curriculum of different models of art education. The last part of this section is devoted to the presentation of my study framework, and exploration of the meaning of evaluation of visual arts education. The conceptual framework is worked out using Walker's platform, Wilson's systematic curriculum evaluation, Dimondstein's structural framework, and the Clark and Zimmerman model of student-teacher enactment. As for the examination of curriculum contents, Detmers's categories and scheme of categorization of learning were adopted.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the methodology used for this study. The description would cover mainly on giving account of the types of research strategy, particularly, with respect to the nature of the investigative tools involved to facilitate the data collection and analysis.

This would be worked out within the context of the theoretical framework of this thesis based on the Clark and Zimmerman (1983) model of curriculum analysis. The process of data collection and analysis was to be guided by the research questions mentioned in Chapter 1.

3.2 Methods of Study

This research applied several methods of investigation, following the research objectives, and as phrased by the research questions.

As for the first objective, that is, to examine the nature of current art curriculum in Iran and its translations through the practice of art teaching in schools, the method used will be document analysis. For this purpose, important documents from various sources, including the National Art Curriculum for Elementary Education, teachers' handbooks, and other official publications will be examined to determine (1) the objectives, and (2) contents of art education for the Iranian elementary schools. Using conceptual analysis (Bush, Valera, & Seidman, 2005), major concepts of art curriculum objectives will be coded in order to be identified and classified. This coding will be done in reference to 4 "platforms" (see Walker, 1971) established based on

Dimondstein's (1969) classification, comprising (a) definition and description (b) distinguishing characteristics (c) experiential approach, and (d) art elements (chapter 2).

For purpose of determining the state of adequacy according to the Clark and Zimmerman (1983) model, in reference to the three elements, namely: appropriateness, coherence and completeness of the curriculum, a plan was constructed by matching Detmers's (1980) model shown in Table 3.1 with Dimondstein's (1969) model (the combined model is shown in Chapter 4).

Table 3.1

Connecting Contents and Knowing to Art Learning

Types of Knowing	Art Learning		Contents				
			Philosophical	Structural	Formative	Historical	Rational
Basic Knowing	Recognitive						
	Acquaintive						
	Appreciative						
Non basic Knowing	Theoretical	Instantial					
		Experi-mental					
	Critical						
Procedural Knowing	Learning How to do	Protocolic					
		Conven-tional					
	Learning what to do	Innovative					
		Creative					

The second method used in this study, to examine the translation of art curriculum consisting of the objectives and contents into classroom teaching practice, was the survey. In this attempt, relational analysis was used to determine the theoretical influence of the curriculum on the implementation. This form of examination involved administering questionnaires to teachers to verify:

    a. The nature of teacher training and its modes

    b. Teachers' approach in their classroom teaching

For determining teachers' teaching approach the Clark and Zimmerman (1983) model is used to help map its orientation in reference to components as shown in the following Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

The Translation of Theoretical Orientation of Adopted by Teachers

Component			
A: Content	B: Student	C: Teacher	D: Setting
Selection of contents for: • Appreciation • Production	Participation in art activities to attain: • knowledge, • understanding • skills	Teaching strategies toward the attainment of • knowledge, • understanding • skills	Preparation of facilities to aid in developing knowledge and skills

Last but not least, an examination to determine the effects of teachers' performance on students' learning of art was done through a class test in a special session set by the investigator. The test was conducted on selected fifth-grade students to assess their achievement in three dimensions of learning, namely: knowledge, skill, and attitude.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

In order to provide a rich description of evaluation and answers to research questions, data collection was conducted in reference to the order of inquiries mentioned before. The aim of data analysis is to synthesize information and to make sense out of the data. Different techniques of analysis are appropriate for handling different types of data whether they are qualitative (narrative, natural language) or quantitative data (numerical data).

This research uses a great deal of quantitative analyses, with some support of qualitative analysis. Each type of analysis would deal with a data set appropriate to the nature of the data to offer information necessary for research findings.

Quantitative data were basically analyzed using the translation of frequencies into percentages. In cases where determinations of association between dependent variables are required, the data were worked out through cross tabulations. In some other cases for similar reasons, ANOVA was used through the execution of SPSS software. All these data were targeted at handling descriptive statistics.

As for qualitative data, they were basically used in description of categories from which ideas about components in the curriculum such as aims and objectives can be described. Similarly, decisions on curricular approach and purposes were built using qualitative means.

For purpose of illustration, the entire data collection of this research would concur with process and procedure to answer the research questions, as shown in the following Table 3.3:

Table 3.3

Organization of Data

Research Questions	Data Source/ Subjects	Techniques of Data Collection
1. What is the nature of art education for the Iranian elementary schools? a. What are the aims and objectives of art education for the elementary schools in Iran? b. What are the contents in art education and are these contents classified? c. What is the status of art education as a subject in the school curriculum?	• National Art curriculum in elementary • Teacher's hand book • Other relevant documents	Examination of documents – text/conceptual analysis (Content Analysis)
2. How is art education being practiced in Iranian schools? a. What are art topics commonly taught to Iranian children at elementary school level? b. What common strategies do teachers use in their teaching of art in classrooms c. What forms of art learning activities are children mainly involved in classroom teaching? d. What testing strategies does the teacher use to assess children's learning in art? e. How did the teachers get their training in art teaching	• Officials from Education Department • Classroom teachers • School children	• Survey • Classroom Observation
3. What do the students learn in art? a. What forms of artistic knowledge does a student acquire from an art class? b. What kind of skill does a student acquire from an art class? c. What does a student feel about art learning in the classroom?		Class test

3.4 Instrumentation

As the study involves some form of research activity on evaluation, two major instruments were constructed for this study. These instruments are essentially used to assess:

    a. Teachers' teaching strategies, and

    b. The effects on students' art learning in relevant art forms.

Specifically, the instruments consist of a set of questionnaire for teachers, and test forms for the students.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire for teachers developed in this study was designed in reference to the Clark and Zimmerman (1983) model. The model provided a structure for investigating teaching strategies, the preparation of facilities, and selection of art contents.

    The questionnaire consisted of two parts: (a) 6 questions about teachers' identity and demography, and (b) 16 questions on teachers' involvement in organizing art teaching and their considerations of curricular elements such as: approach, objectives, teaching-learning strategies, teachers' evaluation strategies, modes of assessment, allocation of time, educational facilities and desk reference and in-service training.

    In order to verify or clarify certain points in the questionnaire, one observation was conducted on teachers' teaching.

3.4.2 Tests

Tests were used to gauge students' achievement in art learning as a result of teachers' classroom teaching in art. There were three kinds of tests: knowledge test, performance test and attitude test. For all of these tests students had enough time to finish them; it means time is not an important factor in the tests.

3.4.2.1 On Knowledge

The knowledge test items consisted of 22 open-ended questions about art knowledge. Students were given enough time to finish the knowledge test. It took between 30 to 45 minutes and generally the majority of students finished the test after 30 minutes.

Knowledge objectives were criteria to prepare the questions of this test. The first question is "What are the Iranian arts that you are familiar with?" The aim of this question is to check the extent of reaching students to this knowledge sub- objective: To understand the different forms of art.

The next questions: "What are the Iranian stories and characters that you are familiar with?" and "Who are the Iranian artists that you are familiar with?" related to another sub- objective of knowledge: "To study the history of Iranian art and culture". The content of questions were about Iranian art and artists, national stories and their heroes.

Questions 4 to 10 and 18 to 22 were given to students to check to what extent they "learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity" as a third sub-objective of knowledge. These questions were about visual elements (dot, line, shapes, volume, texture and color) and recognizing them in natural and artificial phenomena, the hue of colour in different seasons, beauty, and finally the meaning of observation.

The other questions, 11 to 17 were about knowledge of materials and tools and related to knowledge sub objective of "To know the functions of artistic tools and media". These questions were about the main colors and how one can make varieties of hues by combining different colors.

3.4.2.2 Skills Test

Skill test was conducted to determine students' performance in art in two areas of study, namely painting and handicraft. These tests were conducted based on the planning that the students had completed a lesson at the end of yearly term. The time for each part of

this test (painting and handicraft) was two hours but students were given enough time to finish their art works.

The painting performance test included four parts: first students were asked to tell a local story or memory of a visiting from the nature, museum or attending regional ceremony and then painting their favorite part of it by using provided materials (including color pencil, gouges, water color, pastel, etc.). And finally students were asked to sketch a simple model.

In the handicraft performance test, students were asked to illustrate part of the story or memory that they described before by using the materials and tools provided for them (collage). The second duty was to make a cross shaped volume (symmetrical or asymmetrical) and finally to making a volume using pottery.

3.4.2.3 Attitude test

The students' attitude test consisted of 17 questions about their interests in art, preferences, views of art benefits and self-assessment. The questions were aimed at understanding to what extent students have attained the attitude objectives in the curriculum. The time for conducting this test was 30 minutes.

The aim of questions 1, 3, 5 to 9, 12, 14 and 17 is to check on students' interests as denoted by their activities that are inclined to art. While questions 2, 4, 15 and 16 are to identify students' attitudes based on their views about benefits of attending to art experiences; questions 10 and 11 are to detect the students' self-assessment of their own art activities.

3.4.3 Portfolio

Students' portfolios were also reviewed to evaluate their art skills in painting and handicraft. Students' portfolios are kept in schools for teachers' quick access and safe

keeping. The review of three portfolios from each class was done during art classes in the schools.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Construct validity uses for evaluation the validity of the instruments. Therefore all of the instruments were examined by five specialists and experts in curriculum evaluation (who were university lecturers or worked at the CDC). The reliability of the teacher questionnaire, student attitude test, performance test, were determined based on a pilot test conducted in two classes and calculated using Cronbach's alpha reliability test, as reported in the following Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Instrument Reliability

Reliability of	Reliability	
	Number of questions	Cronbach's alpha
Teacher Questionnaire	94	.620
Observation Checklist	12	.971
Portfolio Form	12	.960
Attitude Test	27	.904
Performance Test in Painting	27	.904
Performance Test in Handicrafts	11	.967

All test sets on knowledge and performance, and portfolios were examined by three qualified reseachers. One was a curriculum specialist, while the other two were art specialists. Meanwhile, a group of curriculum specialists were consulted to help determine the validity of the proposed model.

3.6   Scoring

In this section, the scoring of different kinds of tests (knowledge and performance) is described. These scores show how the students were to be measured according to different criteria as needed for data collection.

3.6.1 Knowledge test

The knowledge assessment consists of 22 open ended questions. The scoring details of items are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5

The Assignment of Scores in Knowledge Test

Questions	Maximum Score
What are the Iranian arts that you are familiar with? (Name at least 3 of them)	0.75
What are the Iranian stories and characters that you are familiar with? (Name at least 1 story and 1 character)	1
Who are the Iranian artists that you are familiar with? (Name at least 3 of them)	0.75
Name the examples of dots in the natural phenomena (Name at least 3 of them)	0.75
Name the examples of lines in the natural phenomena (Name at least 3 of them)	0.75
Name at least 3 kinds of the geometrical shapes you see in the natural phenomena or handmade things	1.5
Name at least two examples for the non-geometrical shapes you see in the natural phenomena or handmade things.	1
How many types of line do you see in the natural phenomena and handmade things? (Name three kinds of lines and three example for each of them)	1.5
Where can the natural textures be found? Name and compare their properties	2
Name the 2 ways of recognising textures?	2
Name all the primary colours?	0.75
Combination of yellow and red is ….	0.25
Combination of blue and yellow is ….	0.25
Combination of red and blue is …	0.25
Combination of every color with white is ….	0.25
Combination of every color with black is ….	0.25
Name 4 different hues of color.	1
Name 4 different hues of leaves	1
Where can you find beauty? (name at least 5 criteria for it)	1.25
How can we make our environment more beautiful? (name 5 criteria for it)	1.25
How can we make things that we use more beautiful? (name at least 4 criteria for it)	1
As an artist, what does it mean by observing a phenomenon?	0.5
Total score	20

In order to provide a general overview of students' knowledge, the scores of 0 to 20 were translated to represent four achievement levels. The detail of the classification is shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6

Translation of Scores into Level of Knowledge

Scores	Levels
> 6	Very poor
6 -10.75	Poor
11-16.75	Good
17-20	Excellent

3.6.2 Performance test

The criteria for evaluation of subjects (painting and handicraft), measured according to the levels, are shown in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7

Performance Test Measurement Descriptions

Levels	Descriptions	Score
Need for more effort	Showing a very limited skill to start the work	> 6
Near to level of expectation	Showing a minimum skill to start but not completing the work	6 -10.75
Expectation level	Showing sufficient skill to start and complete the work	11-16.75
Upper than expected level	Showing more than required skill to start and complete the work proficiently	17-20

In order to provide a general overview of students' performance tests, the scores of the quadripartite performance levels were converted to 0-20 evaluation merit. The results were next interpreted into four performance indices from very poor to excellent. The final information of the recalculation is presented in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8

Translation of Scores into Level of Knowledge

Scores	Levels
> 6	Very poor
6 -10.75	Poor
11-16.75	Good
17-20	Excellent

Performance assessment was done in visual art: drawings and handicrafts. The main objective of this evaluation was to find out how far the students would achieve the aims of the curriculum at the end of primary school level.

3.7 Sample

Purposeful sampling was used to draw on the three states, each of which was to represent respectively the regions of the east, west and center of Iran, namely: Sharestanhaye Tehran, Khorasan Razavi and Azarbayjan sharghi (East Azarbatejan). The Multistage Cluster sampling was applied to sample teachers and students of the three states, drawing from each state, and three educational districts. From each of these districts, two schools were randomly selected, making the total number of schools chosen as 18. Table 3.9 shows the information on the number of schools selected.

Table 3.9

Distribution of Selected Schools for the Study According to States

States	Educational Regions	No of Male Schools	No of Female Schools	Total
Azerbayjan sharghi	Khosro Shahr	1	1	2
	Marand	1	1	2
	Region 1 of Tabriz	1	1	2
Khorasan-e-Razavi	Gonabad	1	1	2
	Region 2 of Mashhad	1	1	2
	Sabzevar	1	1	2
Sharstanhaye Tehran	Eslam Shahr	1	1	2
	Region 2 of Shahr-e-Ray	1	1	2
	Gharchak	1	1	2
Total	9	9	9	18

3.7.1 The Teacher Sample

The selection of teachers for this study was done in reference to criteria as required for this study. Technically, there were five teachers to be selected from each of the eighteen schools. However, there were nine teachers unqualified for the selection as they have yet to go for the in-service training in art teaching. Therefore, they were excluded from the sample. This gave the final total of teachers for this study as 81. Further information on teachers is presented as follows.

3.7.1.1 Teachers' Demographic Information

The demographic background of eighty-one teachers is presented in tables according to the following classification.

a) States of Origin

The number of teachers classified according to their states and cities is shown in the following Table 3.10.

Table 3.10

Teachers' States and Cities of Origin

States	City	No of Teachers	Total (%)
Shahrestanhaye Tehran	Share Rey	6	
	Eslam Shahr	6	21(26)
	Gharchak	9	
Khorasan E-Razavi	Mashhad	10	
	Sabzevar	10	30(37)
	Gonabad	10	
Azerbayjan Sharghi	Tabriz	10	
	Khosroshahr	10	30(37)
	Marand	10	
Total (%)		81	81(100)

Some 26% (21) of the teachers representing the state of Tehran were from the cities of Share Rey (6), Eslam Shahr (6) and Gharchak (9). Meanwhile, the 37% (30) of teacher from the states Khorasan E-Razavi were selected from the cities of Mashhad (10), Sabzevar (10), and Gonabad (10). The other 37% (30) of the teachers from the state of East Azerbayjan (Sharghi) were selected for the cities of Tabriz (10), Khosroshahr (10) and Marand (10).

b) Qualification, Gender and Experience

Identification of teachers by their qualification, teaching experience and gender is presented in the following Table 3.11.

Table 3.11

Teachers' Qualification, Gender and Experience

Qualification	Field of Education	Gender	Working Experience (in years)						TOTAL (%)
			< 5	6–10	11-15	16–20	21–25	26–30	
Diploma		M	1	1	0	0	0	0	2 (2.7)
		F	4	7	6	3	4	1	25 (34.7)
Post Diploma	Primary Education	M	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (1.4)
		F	3	0	0	1	2	0	6 (8.3)
Bachelor		M	3	0	0	1	0	0	4 (5.5)
		F	11	11	2	3	1	0	28 (38.8)
	Other Subjects	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 (1.4)
		F	2	2	1	0	0	0	5 (6.9)
Total			25 (34.7)	21 (29)	10 (13.8)	8 (11)	7 (9.7)	1 (1.4)	72 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are cell percentages

As Table 3.10 shows, 38% (27/72) of teachers were diploma holders, 10% (7/72) of teachers had post diploma in primary teacher education, 44% (42/72) were bachelor degree holders in primary teacher education and finally 8% (6/72) of teachers possessed a bachelor degree in other subject areas. Some 8 out of 72 or 11% of teachers who answered the questionnaires were male and the remaining of them (i.e., 64 teachers = 89%) were female. Most of the teachers (64%) had between 5 to 10 years of teaching experience, 25% had between 11 to 20 years, while only 11% of them had between 21 to 30 years of experience.

3.7.2 Students Sample

The group of students chosen as participants in this study was from the fifth grade classes, the highest grade in elementary schools. The group was drawn from each of the eighteen schools in the selected districts, each of which was represented by between 20 to 25 students. The exact number of students participating in the study was 440, particularly in the attitude and knowledge tests.

Because the performance test required specific administration, it could only be handled in a much smaller group. Thus, another sub-sampling was done to randomly select between three to four students from each class to sit for the tests. This made the sample comprise only 57 students. However, in certain tests, the number of cases turned out to be lesser because of the absentees and failure of students to turn in their portfolios for assessment.

3.7.2.1 Students' Demographic Information

The following two tables present students' demographic background according to (1) states and cities of origin (Table 3.12), and (2) gender (Table 3.13).

Table 3.12

Students' Demography by Cities for Knowledge and Attitude Tests

States	Districts	No of students	Total
Sharstanhaye Tehran	Share Rey	40	
	Eslam shahr	39	148 (34)
	Gharchak	68	
Khorasan	Mashhad	52	
	Sabzevar	52	156(35)
	Gonabad	52	
Azarbayjan Shargh	Tabriz	46	
	Khosroshahr	45	136(31)
	Marand	45	
TOTAL			440 (100)

Note. Numbers in parenthesis are cell percentages

The 440 students participating in the knowledge test were from three selected states. Some 148 (34%) of the students were representing the state of Tehran, 156 (35%) Khorasan-e-Razavi, and 136 (31%) East Azerbayjan.

The identification of students by gender also is presented in Table 3.13.

Table 3.13

Students' Participation in Knowledge and Attitude Test by Gender

Gender	N (%)
Male	203(46.1)
Female	237(53.9)
Total (%)	440 (100)

This chapter has detailed the methodology of the study. The next chapter will present

the findings.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the analysis results of the current attempt to appraise (1) the nature of the art curriculum, and (2) the practice of art education in Iranian elementary schools. The presentation of the report is organized according to the main themes as follows.

4.2 The Nature of Iranian Art Curriculum

The results of content analysis on important documents: The Iranian Art Curriculum, Teachers' Guide Book for Teaching of Grades 1, 2 and 3 and Teachers' Guide Book for Teaching of Grades 4 and 5, were organized into a structure of analysis to help identify important contents of the Iranian art curriculum according to the following terms.

4.2.1 Curriculum Aims

The general aim of the Iranian art curriculum is to enable students to use knowledge of artistic sources – nature and cultural heritage – in their creative work and to become predisposed with the artistic way. This will focus on three areas of concentration as objectives. They are knowledge, skills and attitudes. The knowledge objective is to make students familiar with sources of artistic creation for their school art activities such as nature, cultural elements, and ways of making.

As for the skill objective, the idea is to make the students develop acumen in perceptual and expressive abilities. By this acumen students will be able to translate these abilities, through good handling techniques, to making art for personal and social communication.

The attitude objective covers the notion of building students' predisposition in art that may have influence on their feelings, interests and ways of looking at things, both artistically and non-artistically.

4.2.2 Curriculum Objectives

The set-up of curricular objectives is to comprise three important domains of learning. They are:

i. Knowledge which is represented in four sub-objectives:

- To learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity;

- To understand the different form of art;

- To know the functions of artistic tools and media;

- To study the history of Iranian art and culture

ii. Skills comprise five sub-objectives:

- To hone perceptual skills using the five senses

- To develop verbal ability in one's expression

- To manipulate artistic techniques using appropriate tools and materials

- To express one's thought and feelings through artistic activities

- To use art as a means of developing social skills

iii. Attitude/predisposition consists of six sub-objectives

- To attend to the beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling

- To tend to one's expression and own thought and feelings

- To rely on one's own abilities to gain more self-confidence

- To be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work

- To be inclined in communicating with others visually and non-visually

- To be interested in exploring and gaining experience in different artistic themes and subjects

These objectives are set as guidelines to formulate strategies for teaching art in two major areas, namely: painting and handicrafts. The elements of cultural heritage are embedded these two areas. The following Table 4.1 shows how each of the objectives is defined in terms its relationship to curricular approach.

4.2.3 Consistency of Objectives with Approaches

The analysis of the connection between curricular objectives and thematic approaches resulted in the observation as summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Mapping of Curricular Objectives with Approaches

OBJECTIVES		Appreciation of Nature	Aesthetic	Familiarizing with Cultural Heritage	Art Production	Critical Thinking	Total
				APPROACH			
KNOWLEDGE	To learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity	√	√	-	√	-	3
	To understand the different forms of art	√	√	-	√	-	3
	To know the functions of artistic tools and media	√	-	-	√	-	2
	To study the history of Iranian art and culture	-	√	√	-	-	2
	Total	3	3	1	3	0	10
SKILL	To hone perceptual skills using the five senses	√	√	√	√	-	4
	To develop verbal ability in one's expression	-	√	-	√	√	3
	To manipulate artistic techniques using appropriate tools and materials	-	√	-	√	-	2
	To express one's thought and feelings through artistic activities	-	√	-	√	-	2
	To use art as a means of developing social skills	√	√	√	√	√	5
	Total	2	5	2	5	2	16
ATTITUDE/ PREDISPOSITIONS	To attend to the beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling	√	√	√	√	√	5
	To tend to one's expression and own thought and feelings	√	√	√	√	√	5
	To rely on one's own abilities to gain more self-confidence	√	√	√	√	√	5
	To be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work	√	√	√	√	√	5
	To develop a tendency to communicate with others visually and non-visually.	√	√	√	√	√	5
	To be interested in exploring and gaining experience in different artistic themes and subjects	√	√	√	√	√	5
	Total	6	6	6	6	6	30
	Main Total	11	14	9	14	8	56

As Table 4.1 shows, the Attitude objective has the highest relationship with the approach, where all the six sub-objectives in the attitude are mapped with all five concentrations in the approach (30/30 = 100%). The skill objective, however, has 64% (16/25) relationship with the approach. To be sure, the concentrations of Aesthetics and Art Production in the Approach have (5/5= 100%) complete coincidence with all the five sub-objectives. On the other hand, two sub-objectives have (5/5 = 100%) coincidence with all the five concentrations in the Approach. The concentrations that have only (2/5) = 33% coincidence with sub-objectives are Appreciation of Nature, Familiarity with Cultural Heritage and Critical Thinking. Whereas the knowledge objective has only (10/20 = 50%) coincidence with the approach. This is to say, there are three concentrations in the Approach, namely: Appreciation of Nature, Aesthetics and Art Production that have (3/4= 75%) coincidence with the sub-objectives. The Familiarity with Cultural Heritage in the Approach has only (1/4 =25%) coincidence with the sub-objectives, whilst the Critical Thinking does not show any coincidence with the sub-objectives.

4.2.4 Mapping of Objectives with Contents According to Specific Areas

The next analysis was to examine the connection between curricular objectives and contents according to areas, namely, painting and handicrafts based on the mapping. Table 4.2 gives the Mapping of Objectives with Contents in Teaching of Painting.

4.2.4.1 Painting

As shown in Table 4.2, the skill objective has the highest reflection in the contents of the painting. This is to say, all subtopics have coincided totally with all sub-objectives in skill (45/45 = 100%).

Table 4.2

Mapping of Objectives with Contents in Teaching of Painting

| Objectives | Sub-objectives | TOPICS | | | | | | | | | |
		Free Topics	Specific Objects	Narratives-Based	Visual Training	Collaborative Painting	Finger Printing	Printing With Tools	Designing by Shapes	Observation Drawing	**Total**
KNOWLEDGE	Learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity	√	√	-	-	-	-	√	-	-	3
	Understand the different forms of art	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Know the functions of artistic tools and media	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Study the history of Iranian art and culture	√	√	√	-	-	--	-	-	-	3
	Total	4	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	24
SKILL	Hone perceptual skills using the five senses	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Develop verbal ability in one's expression	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Manipulate artistic techniques using appropriate tools and materials	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Express one's thought and feelings through artistic activities	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Use art as a means of developing social skills	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Total	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45
ATTITUDE/ PREDISPOSITION	Attend to the beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Tend to one's expression and own thought and feelings	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Rely on one's own abilities to gain more self-confidence	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work	√	√	√	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
	Develop a tendency to communicate with others visually and non-visually.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Be interested in exploring and gaining experience in different artistic themes and subjects	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Total	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	48
	Main Total	15	15	14	12	12	12	12	13	12	107

This is followed by the attitude/predisposition objective, Table showing (48/64 = 75%) relationship with the contents. There are five sub-objectives being reflected in all the nine sub-topics. The remaining one sub-objective – to be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work – is only related to sub-topics of free topic, specific objectives and narrative based themes (3/9 = .33%).

Comparing all the three major objectives with topics, it is apparent that the knowledge objective is least reflected in the topics of painting (24/36 = 66.6%). There are only two sub-objectives, namely: "To understand different forms of art" and "To know the functions of art tools and media" – reflected in all the nine sub-topics. The remaining two sub-objectives are only reflected in the sub-topics of "Free Topics" and "Special Topics".

4.2.4.2 Handicrafts

Table 4.3 displays the correspondence between the three curricular main objectives with contents in the area of handicrafts. The content is represented by "The Techniques of Making" to comprise nine sub-techniques. These nine sub-techniques are to reflect four, five and six sub-objectives in the three main objectives of knowledge, skill and attitude/predisposition, respectively.

As Table 4.3 shows, the general pattern has been that it is almost similar to that of painting. Within the highest overall 73% (46/63) coincidence of Attitude/Predisposition objective with contents, five sub-objectives are mapped fully with all the nine sub-techniques. The sub-objective "To be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work" is only reflected in "Book Making".

Table 4.3

Mapping of Objectives with Content in the Teaching of Handicrafts

OBJECTIVES		TECHNIQUES OF MAKING									
		FOLDING Paper	Working with Natural Objects	Working with Clay	Using Waste Materials	Exploring Techniques	WORKING WITH SHAPES	MAKING COLLAGE	BOOK MAKING	MAKING VOLUME	TOTAL
KNOWLEDGE	To learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	6
	To understand the different forms of art	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To know the functions of artistic tools and media	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To study the history of Iranian art and culture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	√	-	1
	Total	**2**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**25**
SKILL	To hone perceptual skills using the five senses	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To develop verbal ability in one's expression	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To manipulate artistic techniques using appropriate tools and materials	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To express one's thought and feelings through artistic activities	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To use art as a means of developing social skills	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Total	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45
ATTITUDE/PREDISPOSITION	To attend to the beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To tend to one's expression and own thought and feelings	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To rely on one's own abilities to gain more self-confidence	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	√	-	1
	To develop tendency to communicate with others visually and non-visually.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	To be interested in exploring and gaining experience in different artistic themes	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
	Total	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**6**	**5**	**46**
	Main Total	12	13	13	13	13	13	13	14	12	116

Again, the skill objective is 100% (45/45) reflected in all the nine sub-techniques of content. It is also worth noting that the two sub-objectives in Knowledge objective appear to be reflected in all the nine sub-topics in Painting are also appearing to in the nine sub-techniques of Handicrafts.

To sum up, it seems that the three curricular objectives are not uniformly reflected in the contents of teaching in the Iranian art curriculum. However, these objectives were given equal emphasis across the areas of painting and handicrafts. The most prominent emphasis was given to skill objective, with 100% coincidence of all six-objects with all the nine sub-contents. Next was the attitude objective, showing 73% coincidence with the contents in Painting and Handicrafts. It is obvious that the knowledge objective was least emphasized given its least coincidence with the contents in all these two areas.

4.2.5 Curriculum Approach

The examination of curriculum approach was conducted using Dimondstein's (1969) classification, the results of which are presented in the following:

4.2.5.1 Definition and Description

Basically, art in the Iranian curriculum is defined by two major forms. They are Painting and Handicrafts. There is a slight variation in the teaching contents of these two forms. While in the teaching of painting, the content comprises nine sub-topics for exploration, in the Handicrafts, the contents are nine sub-techniques of making. Nevertheless, these contents are to reflect three major objectives, namely: the knowledge, skill and attitude/predisposition.

It is important to note, however, that the general aim of the curriculum is to enable students to use knowledge of artistic sources – nature and cultural heritage – in their creative work and to become predisposed with the artistic way in their art learning..

Therefore the underlying idea of the curriculum involves an approach that concentrates very highly on the attitude/predisposition objective, involving the activities of appreciating nature, aesthetics, familiarizing with cultural heritage, critical thinking, besides art production.

4.2.5. 2 Distinguishing Characteristics

One of the peculiar characteristics of the Iranian art curriculum is its major content comprising Painting and Handicrafts. Painting is recognized by its activities based on topics and exploration of techniques. There are nine topics to be covered: free topics, specific objects, narrative based, visual training, collaborative painting, finger printing, printing with tools, working with shapes, and observation drawing. In free topics, students paint by imagination and observation of objects. This applies to students of all grades. Painting of specific topics is done by students studying an object to understand its visual characteristics before making it into a realistic or imaginative drawing. This is also an activity for students of all grades. By imaginative drawing, students express their feelings and emotion using colours and invented shapes of their own making. Another activity for students of all grades is the Narrative-based Painting. In this activity students either paint individually or in a group a scenery-based theme to depict a national story or poem.

The Visual Training taught especially to students of grades one to three relates to an activity of searching images in between the mass of lines. Once the images are discovered the students will then paint and color them. This activity helps young students to become visually sensitive in their perceptual ability.

Collaborative Painting taught to students of grades one to three is aimed at making them learn about participation in a social activity through art projects. One student will complete the painting started by his or her partner in the way they desire.

Designing by shapes is an art activity that allows students of grade one to use geometrical shape such as circles, triangles, rectangles, and so forth, to create a configuration depicting a simple picture of man or any recognizable objects.

The activity of Finger Printing is to involve students of grade one using their fingers as stamp to create a picture or a design on a piece of paper. It is a preliminary activity to Printing with Tools which is to done by students in grades two and three. The tools involve natural objects such as potatoes, carrots, on any kind of fruits or vegetables that have textures with sufficient effects for printing. Artificial objects are man-made such as coins or other objects possible of similar effects in printmaking.

Observation Drawing is set on students of grades four and five to prepare them with basic design ability using sketching, drawing and designing based on real models. This is part of the major exercise in visual training.

In the area of Handicrafts, the activities are basically focused on the techniques involving nine ways of making: Folding the Paper, Working with Natural Object, Working with Clay, Using Waste Materials, Exploring Techniques, Working with Shapes, Making Collage, Book Making, and Making Volumes.

Exploring Techniques is an activity that allows all students to get oriented with the techniques in making handicrafts. Students use certain techniques and advance them either by experimenting with those techniques alone or combining them with other techniques in producing a work of handicraft. Another activity for students of all grades is "Working with Clay". By this activity students design and color a clay ware either a Ming plate, dishes and others using basically geometric shapes. It is in fact an activity that goes along with the activity of Volume Making.

In the activity of Using Waste Materials, students of all grades apply the basic design principles to create two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms. The creation of two-dimensional forms such as collage is done by students in grades one to three. Whereas the three-dimensional forms such as paper and plastic sculptures are created by students of all grades. In an almost similar activity students of all grades participate in Working with Natural Objects such as stones, woods, seashells, and so forth, and turn them into art objects.

Another activity for students of all grades is Folding Paper. This activity consists of folding, crumpling, and cutting papers into various geometric and non-geometric shapes to create objects of their interest such as cards, envelopes, crowns and national flags. Creating two-dimensional or three dimensional objects with geometric and non-geometric shapes is also an activity of Working with Shapes. This activity is aimed at familiarizing students with different kinds of shapes in exercises integrated with other activities similar to the activities of Exploring Technique and Using Waste Material.`

Book Making is a group project of four or five students in grades four and five to make illustrations of a national story or a poem. These illustrations are then compiled with the text of the story, turning them into a book.

Last but not least is the activity of Making Volume. It is an activity involving creations of symmetrical and non-symmetrical forms using paper and cardboard. Students of grades four and five learn about the concept of volume as a preliminary exercise to their full-fledged project of making pottery and some musical instruments such as drums.

The teaching of Cultural Heritage is done in integration with the contents of other areas, that is, painting and handicrafts. The basic contents of this component are subjects to help students gain familiarity with artistic conventions, procedures and order

of local handicrafts. Students also learn to become familiar with folk stories and poems. In order for all students to gain some first-hand knowledge of cultural heritage, they are taken on site visits to historical places and museums.

4.2.5.3 Experiential Approach

The concept of experiential approach is defined by students engaging themselves mostly in practical activities to understand forms and techniques of making. The activities include finger printing, printing with tools, working with shapes, paper folding, working with clay, using waste material, exploring new techniques, and collage -making.

Students also learn to experience art by learning to observe nature, artworks and other cultural artefacts. Apart from that, they get to visit places of interest related to national arts and culture. On several occasions, students study history and work to integrate art learning with the learning of other subjects to enhance their sense of appreciation.

4.2.5.4 Art Elements

Students learn all art elements, including dots, line, colors, and textures first by grasping them through nature and the environment. Next, the students work on these elements in their art making to understand the nature and functions in art making. The elements are organized through some form of design principles to produce an aesthetic object as their work of art. These principles include symmetry, balance, order, rhythm, and others to help create and to appreciate their own, others' and more importantly the harmony of nature as God's creation.

The following Table 4.4 illustrates the translation of general experiential approach as it is planned in the Iranian curriculum.

Table 4.4

Connections Between Types of Knowing and Learning Content in Experiential Approach

FORMS OF LEARNING			CONTENTS				
			Philosophical	Structural	Formative	Historical	Rational
BASIC KNOWING		Recognitive					
		Acquaintive			Free topics specific topic Working with natural object exploring technique uses, Making Collage		Narrative based, Book Making,
		Appreciative					
NON BASIC KNOWING	Theoretical	Instantial				Familiarity with conventions, customs & handicraft Familiarity with folk stories and poems Visiting historical places and Visiting museums	
		Experimental					
	Critical						
PROCEDURAL KNOWING	Learning how to do	Protocolic			Observation drawing. Folding the paper, Making Volumes,		
		Conventional			Designing by Shapes, Working with Clay, working with shapes, Using waste materials.		
	Learning what to do	Innovative					
		Creative			Visual training, collaborative painting, finger printing, printing with tools		

Referring to Table 4.4, the main concept of experiential approach is centered on three types of knowing: basic knowing, non-basic knowing, and procedural knowing. It is apparent that basic knowing is geared more toward acquainting students with knowledge through formative and rational kinds of learning. In the formative learning, students get mainly into the activities by working on free and specific topics, natural objects to explore basic techniques of art making such as collage. Students integrate art activities with other disciples in rational learning (Detmers, 1980) by working on narrative-based paintings to make illustration in books on poems, national stories.

In non-basic knowing, students learn instantially to know art through some theoretical verification of facts in subjects such as art history and cultural heritage. They gain familiarity with national conventions, customs and handicraft products by way of teachers' demonstrations and illustrations, apart from site visits to relevant places.

As for the procedural knowing, students are to engage mainly in formative learning to heighten protocolic, conventional and creative potentials. This is practiced through activities of making, designing and visual training in painting and handicrafts.

4.3 The Practice of Art Education

The practice of art education in Iranian schools was viewed mainly in respect to three teachers' traits. The traits are preparation of teachers for classroom teaching, the nature of training, and its impacts on students' learning.

4.3.1 Preparation of Art Teachers

Basically, teachers who teach art education are not art specialists in the sense that they did not major in art during their basic teacher training. This is to say, they are non-specialists as their knowledge in art teaching was only obtained from the support

program in the in-service course. A somewhat detailed information about teachers' training in the in-service program is presented in the following:

4.3.1.1 Teachers' In-Service Course

Teachers teaching art in primary schools obtained their art training by only attending the in-service course program. This course is offered in various durations. The statistics of teachers attending the course is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Teacher's In-Service Program

Duration (in Hours)	N (%)
Less than 30	5 (10.9)
31- 40	32 (69.6)
41-80	3 (6.6)
More than 80	6 (13)
No Response	35
Total	81 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are column percentages

From Table 4.5, it is revealed that out of 46 teachers who responded, 32 (70%) had attended the course for a 30- 40 hours duration; 6 (13%) had attended the course for more than 80 hours, 5 (11%) had attended the course for less than 30 hours and 3 (7%) had attended between 41-80 hours.

4.3.1.2 Benefits of In-Service Training

When teachers were asked to comment on art contents as a benefit from the course, they provided responses as shown in Table 4.6. As the table shows, the teachers' belief on the benefit of the training seemed to vary. More than half (43/81=57%) of them claimed that they have benefited most from the course in the area of handicrafts, whereas 53% (40/81) of them thought that they have benefited in the area of

communication with nature. It was only 50% (38/81) of the teachers who thought that

this was only true for painting.

Table 4.6

Teachers' Benefit In-Service Training

Art content	Not much	Somewhat	Much	Very much	No answer	Total (%)
Appreciation nature	12 (15.8)	24 (31.6)	21 (27.6)	19 (25)	5	
Painting	8 (10.5)	30 (39.5)	22 (28.9)	16 (21.1)	5	81 (100)
Handicraft and sculpture	10 (13.2)	23 (30.3)	24 (31.6)	19 (25)	5	
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage	16 (21.6)	24 (32.4)	17 (23)	17 (23)	7	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

It seems fairly obvious that the in-service course did not benefit the teachers as

much in familiarizing them with cultural heritage, as only 46% of teachers found it

useful.

4.3.1.3 The Benefit of Training in Student Evaluation

Teachers' opinions were also surveyed on the extent of what they gained from the

methods of student evaluation in art during the in-service program. The results of the

survey are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Teachers' Benefit from In-Service Training in Methods of Assessment

Method of Assessment	Not Sufficient	Just Sufficient	Sufficient	Very Sufficient	No answer	Total (%)
Student Self-assessment	16 (21.9)	35 (47.9)	14 (19.2)	8 (11)	8	
Student group assessment	12 (16.4)	33 (45.2)	18 (24.7)	10 (13.7)	8	81 (100)
Teacher's standard assessment	11 (14.9)	31 (41.9)	16 (21.6)	16 (21.6)	7	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.7 shows, most teachers believed that they have gained sufficient and more benefits from the training in evaluation sessions; some 85% of teachers believed in-service training was good in showing the teacher's standard assessment. Also 84% indicated the in-service training was good to educate them for students' group assessment. And 78% said the in-service training had prepared them for student self-assessment.

4.3.1.4 Need for Further Training

Teachers were sought for their opinion as to whether they needed any further training in art education. The response was, as shown in Table 4.8, that 87% (67/77) of teachers indicated their need for extra training.

Table 4.8

Teachers' Need for Further Training

	Yes	No	No answer	Total (%)
N (%)	67	10	4	81
	(87)	(13)		(100)

Only 13% (10/77) of them mentioned otherwise. As to what field was needed for the training, they believed it to be in the following fields, as shown in the following Table 4.9.

4.3.1.5 Training in Subject Areas

Table 4.9 illustrates the teachers' need of training in subject areas.

Table 4.9

Teachers' Need of Training in Subject Areas

	Appreciation Nature	Painting	Handicraft and sculpture	Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage	Art Curriculum Knowledge
Yes	25 (32.5)	27 (35.1)	35 (45.5)	21 (27.3)	43 (55.8)
No	52 (67.5)	50 (64.9)	42 (54.5)	56 (72.7)	34 (44.2)
No answer	4	4	4	4	4
Total			81 (100)		

Note. Numbers in parentheses are column percentages

It is apparent from Table 4.9 that specifically, teachers believed that extra training is needed by more than half of the teachers (56% = 43/81) in the art curriculum knowledge. Some of the teachers maintained to need extra training in handicrafts 46% (35/81), in painting 35% (27/81); in appreciation the nature 33% (25/81) and familiarizing with history and culture-artistic heritage27% (21/81).

4.3.1.6 Components and Approach of Art Education

Teachers' views on the important components of art education as practiced in Iranian elementary schools were tabulated in the following Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Teachers' Opinion About Components and Approach of Art Education

		Have the art curriculum writers provided sufficient approaches?				Total
		Not sufficient	Somewhat sufficient	Sufficient	Very Sufficient	
Which one component do you think is most important for art education?	Aesthetic	0	2 (20.0)	8 (80.0)	0	10 (100)
	Appreciation of Nature	2 (9.5)	14 (66.7)	4 (19.0)	1 (4.8)	21 (100)
	Art skills	2 (4.9)	13 (31.7)	23 (56.1)	3 (7.3)	41 (100)
	Art history	0	1 (100)	0	0	1 (100)
Total		4 (5.5)	30 (41.1)	35 (47.9)	4 (5.5)	73 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

Teachers' views on the important components of art education as practiced in Iranian elementary schools are tabulated in Table 4.12. More than 50% (41/73) of teachers considered an Art Skill as the most important component in art education. Of this total, more than half (23/41) thought that the approach to this teaching is well covered in the writing of the teachers' handbook.

Appreciation of Nature was considered the second important component, as admitted by only 29% (21/73) of teachers. Even so, an explanation of its teaching approach was not sufficiently provided in the teachers' handbook. Quite surprisingly, Art History was considered insignificant as a component of Art Education. Thus, it is practically not covered at all in the writing of the teachers' handbook. This shows as if the teaching of Cultural Heritage was incorporated more in other components than Art History.

4.3.1.7 Teachers' Views on Students' Attainability of Objectives in Art Learning

Teachers were also sought of their personal assessment of students' attainment of three main objectives.

 Knowledge Objective

Table 4.11 presents the teachers' assessment of students' achievement in knowledge learning objectives.

Table 4.11

Students' Achievement in Knowledge Learning Objectives

Knowledge Learning Objectives	Not achievable	Slightly achievable	Achievable	Easily Achievable	No answer	Total
To learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity	6 (7.5)	24 (30)	42 (52.5)	8 (10)	1	
To understand the different forms of art	11 (13.8)	47 (58.8)	20 (25)	2 (2.5)	1	81(100)
To know the functions of artistic tools and media	12 (15.6)	37 (48.1)	24 (31.2)	4 (5.2)	4	
To study the history of Iranian art and culture	21 (26.6)	40 (50.6)	17 (21.5)	1 (1.3)	2	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.11 shows, teachers were of the opinion that three out of four objectives are less achievable by students in their teaching of art. The only one quite achievable is "To learn from nature as a source of reference for creativity (62.5% = 50/80).

Skill Objective

Teachers' assessment of students' attainability in the skill objective is presented in Table 4.12. As the table shows, the teachers believed that almost all skill objectives are achievable by students' learning of art. However, they considered least achievable in "To hone perceptual skill using five senses".

Table 4.12

Students' Achievement in Skill Objectives

Skill Objectives	Not achievable	Somewhat achievable	Achievable	Easily Achievable	No answer	Total
To hone perceptual skills using the five senses	2 (26.6)	17 (50.6)	48 (21.5)	7 (13)	6	
To develop verbal ability in one's expression	1 (1.3)	13 (17.3)	54 (72)	7 (8.3)	6	
To manipulate artistic techniques using appropriate tools and materials	8 (10.8)	16 (21.6)	42 (56.8)	8 (10.8)	7	81 (100)
To express one's thought and feelings through artistic activities	1 (1.3)	24 (31.2)	40 (51.9)	12 (16.6)	4	
To use art as a means of developing social skills	-	20 (26.7)	43 (57.3)	12 (16)	6	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

Attitude Objective

The record of teachers' personal assessment of students' attainability in the skill objective is presented in Table 4.13. As the table shows, the majority of teachers believed that all attitude objectives, like the skill objectives, are achievable by students.

However, it is "to tend to one's expression and own thought and feelings" that they considered most achievable as indicated by 81% (63/81) of teachers. This is followed by "to rely on one's own abilities to gain more-self confidence" as agreed by 80% of the teachers. The objective "to develop tendency to communicate with others visually and non-visually" was deemed by only 54% teachers as achievable.

Table 4.13

Students' Achievement in Attitude Objectives

Attitude objectives	Not achievable	Slightly achievable	Achievable	Highly Achievable	No answer	Total
To attend to the beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling	2 (2.5)	15 (18.8)	45 (56.3)	18 (22.5)	1	
To attend to one's expression and own thought and feelings	2 (2.5)	14 (17.7)	51 (64.6)	12 (16.2)	2	
To rely on one's own abilities to gain more self-confidence	-	16 (20)	49 (61.3)	15 (18.8)	1	
To be aware of the importance of cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work	8 (10.1)	19 (24.1)	38 (48.1)	14 (17.7)	2	81 (100)
To develop tendency to communicate with others visually and non-visually.	11 (13.8)	26 (32.5)	40 (50)	3 (3.8)	1	
To be interested in exploring and gaining experience in different artistic themes and subjects	2 (2.5)	15 (18.8)	44 (55)	19 (23)	1	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

4.3.1.8 Teaching of Contents

Since the contents were taught differently for each level in the Iranian elementary classrooms, the data were observed according to the areas taught in respective grades.

Table 4.14

Contents of Art Areas for Elementary Grades

Area	Contents	Never Teach	Seldom Teach	Quite often teach	Very often teach	No answer	Total (%)
Painting	Free Topics	1 (2.2)	5 (10.9)	23 (50)	17 (37)	2	48* (100)
	Specific Objects	1 (1.4)	9 (12.7)	40 (56)	21 (29.6)	10	81 (100)
	Narrative Based	2 (2.5)	15 (18.8)	38 (47.5)	25 (31.3)	1	81 (100)
	Visual Training	5 (10.6)	13 (27.7)	21 (44.7)	8 (17)	1	48* 100)
	Collaborative Painting	9 (19)	13 (27.7)	18 (38.3)	7 (15)	1	48* (100)
	Printing With Tools	6 (14.3)	5 (12)	23 (54.8)	8 (19)	6	48* (100)
	Designing by Shapes	-	2 (14.3)	10 (71.4)	2 (14.3)	1	15*& (100)
	Observation Drawing	3 (9.4)	12 (37.5)	8(25)	9 (28.1)	1	33** (100)
Handicraft	Folding Paper	6 (14.6)	11 (26.8)	12 (29.3)	12 (29.3)	7	48* (100)
	Working with Natural Objects	5 (14.7)	5 (13.5)	13 (35.1)	10 (27)	14	48* (100)
	Working with Clay	13 (18)	18 (25)	25 (34.7)	16 (22.2)	9	81 (100)
	Using Waste Materials	=	=	=	=	=	=
	Exploring Techniques	=	=	=	=	=	=
	Working with Shapes	=	=	=	=	=	=
	Making collage	-	5 (16.1)	16 (51.6)	10 (32.3)	2	33** (100)
	Book Making	2 (6.9)	7 (24.1)	10 (34.5)	10 (34.5)	4	33** (100)
	Making volume	4 (13.8)	4 (13.8)	16 (51.6)	7 (24.1)	2	33** (100)

Notes

*Taught only to grades 1, 2 & 3
** taught only to grades 4 & 5
*#taught to only grades 2 & 3
*&taught to only grade 1
= these sub contents are taught in integration with other sub-contents of handicrafts.

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.14 shows, most teachers taught all contents in Painting except the one related to Observation Drawing, which was taught by only 53.5% (17/29) of teachers. In the teaching of handicrafts, more than two-thirds of teachers covered all contents,

except for Working with Clay, which was taught by only 57% (41/72) of teachers. In fact, the three contents, namely: "Using Waste Materials, Exploring Techniques, and Working with Shapes" were taught in integration with other subjects.

4.3.1.9 Considerations of Art Components based on DBAE Model in Teaching

Table 4.15 presents a list of four art components in the DBAE model. Teachers' responses to these components were recorded based on extent of their considerations to each of the components when teaching art.

Table 4.15

Teaching of Art Components

Art components	Never	Seldom	Often	Always	No answer	N (%)
Art production	6	11	36	20	8	
	(8.2)	(15.1)	(49.3)	(27.4)		
Aesthetics	1	11	33	29	7	81 (100)
	(1.4)	(14.9)	(44.6)	(39.2)		
Art history	4	25	31	14	7	
	(5.4)	(33.8)	(41.9)	(18.9)		
Art criticism	9	23	24	17	8	
	(12.3)	(31.5)	(32.9)	(23.3)		

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.15 shows, 84% (62/74) of the teachers seemed to have considered Aesthetics in their teaching. Art Production was considered by 77% (56/73) of teachers, Art History was considered by 60%, (44/74), and Criticism by only 56% (41/73).

4.3.1.10 Teaching and Learning Techniques during Art Sessions

Teachers' techniques in art classroom teaching were examined and resulted in the following observations. Table 4.16 shows a list of teacher- learning strategy which teachers used in their class.

Table 4.16

Teachers' Techniques in Art Teaching

Teaching-Learning Strategies	Never	Seldom	Often	Always	No answer	Total (%)
Class discussion	3 (3.8)	9 (11.4)	33 (41.8)	34 (43)	2	
Group discussion	-	12 (15.4)	26 (33.3)	40 (51.3)	3	
Explanatory methods	1 (1.3)	9 (11.5)	25 (32.1)	43 (55.1)	3	81 (100)
Demonstration	-	16 (20.3)	33 (41.8)	30 (38)	2	
Role playing methods	1 (1.3)	20 (25.5)	32 (41)	25 (32.1)	3	
Project Work	8 (11.8)	12 (17.6)	36 (52.9)	12 (17.6)	13	
Site Visits	14 (20.9)	26 (38.8)	15 (22.4)	12 (17.9)	14	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As shown in Table 4.16, almost all teachers (87% = 68/78) applied explanatory methods as their method of teaching. Also, 85% (67/79) of the teachers used class and group discussion. Demonstration methods were used by 80% (63/79) of teachers; 73% (57/78) used role playing methods, and 71% (48/68) used Project work in their art classes. However, only 40% (27/67) of teachers took their students for site-visits.

4.3.1.11 Teachers' Evaluation Strategies

The next examination of curricular practice was on the teachers' evaluation strategies that they applied in classroom art teaching. Referring to Table 4.17, the results suggest that more than 90% of teachers evaluated student artwork individually.

Table 4.17

Teachers' Evaluation Strategies

Evaluation Strategies	Never	Seldom	Often	Always	No answer	Total (%)
Choosing the best students' works in the class	5 (7)	9 (12.7)	30 (42.3)	27 (38)	10	
Compare the merit of a student's work with other's	16 (23.2)	12 (17.4)	17 (24.6)	24 (34.8)	12	81 (100)
Consider the individual merit in students' works	1 (1.4)	6 (8.1)	12 (16.2)	55 (74.3)	7	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

Slightly more than half of the teachers (59% = 41/69) evaluated students' work by comparing the student individual works with those of their colleagues. Quite unconventionally, more than 80% (57/71) of teachers chose only the best of students' work in evaluation. The best strategy, the individual merit in students' works, was considered by 91% (67/74) of teachers.

4.3.1.12 Modes of Assessment

Teachers' modes of assessment methods in art classroom were examined and resulted in the following observations. The following Table 4.18 shows three kinds of methods of assessment which teachers used in their classroom teaching.

Table 4.18

Teachers' Methods of Assessment

Methods of Assessment	Never	Seldom	Often	Always	No answer	Total (%)
Student Self-assessment	5 (6.7)	19 (25.3)	28 (37.3)	23 (30.7)	6	
Student group assessment	4 (5.3)	13 (17.1)	37 (48.7)	22 (28.9)	5	81 (100)
Teacher's standard assessment	-	10 (13.3)	27 (36)	38 (50.7)	6	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

There were three major modes of assessment methods being practiced in the Iranian art classrooms. As seen from Table 4.18, the most popular mode is teachers' standard assessment as it was practiced by 87% (65/75) of teachers; 78% (59/76) of teachers used students' group assessment as the mode. Some 68% (51/76) of teachers encouraged students to do self - assessment of their own works.

4.3.1.13 Allocation of time for Students' Art Activities

Teachers were also asked about their judgement on the allocation time for art activities in their classroom teaching. The responses were shown in the following table.

Table 4.19

Teachers' Views on Time Allocated for Activities in Art Classroom

Art Activity	Is Time Allocated Sufficient?					
	Not sufficient	Less sufficient	Sufficient	Very sufficient	No response	Total
Appreciating Nature	29 (44.6)	19 (29.2)	12 (18.5)	5 (7.7)	16	
Painting	17 (26.6)	14(21.9)	30 (46.9)	3 (4.7)	17	81 (100)
Handicraft	26 (41.9)	18 (29)	15 (24.2)	3 (4.8)	19	
Familiarizing with Cultural Heritage	34 (53.1)	15 (23.4)	12 (18.8)	3 (4.7)	17	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

With reference to Table 4.19, out of four activities, only Painting was considered to have sufficient time allocation in students' art classroom learning. However, it was admitted by only 51% (33/64) teachers. The most insufficient allocation was in the activity of "Familiarizing with the artistic and cultural heritage", as claimed by more than three-quarters (76% = 49/64) of the teachers. "Appreciating Nature" was considered insufficient by 74% (48/65), and "Handicraft" by 71% (44/52) of the teachers.

4.3.1.14 Educational facilities

The survey on educational facilities done in reference to the teaching contents resulted in the observations as tabulated in Table 4.20. The table shows coincidence between educational facilities and contents.

Table 4.20

Teachers' Observation on Educational Facilities

Content	Educational facilities					Total (%)
	Not sufficient	Less sufficient	Sufficient	Very sufficient	No response	
Appreciation of nature	30 (45.5)	20 (30.3)	14 (21.2)	2 (3)	15	
Painting	17 (26.6)	18 (28.1)	26 (40.6)	3 (4.7)	17	81 (100)
Handicraft	22 (39.3)	13 (23.2)	18 (32.1)	3 (5.4)	25	
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage	31 (50.8)	17 (27.9)	9 (14.8)	4 (6.6)	20	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

Most teachers believed that the provision of facilities was considerably insufficient to teach all of the art contents. Some 79% (48/61) of teachers said they did not have sufficient facilities to familiarize students with the artistic and cultural heritage and 76% (50/66) indicated the insufficient facility for appreciation of nature. Handicraft and sculpture did not have good facilities, according to 63% (35/56) of teachers. However the percentage of insufficient educational facilities for painting compared with other subjects is less (55% = 35/64) but still more than half of teachers believed they lacked enough facilities for painting.

4.3.1.15 Access to Desk Reference

Art teacher access to the teacher's handbook was examined and it resulted in the following table. Table 4.21 shows the extent of teachers having access to desk references. It is obvious that more than half of teachers (53% = 39/81) taught art without the aid of the teacher's handbook for reference.

Table 4.21

Teachers' Access to Desk Reference

Do you have access to Teacher's Handbook?	Yes	No	No answers	Total
	34 (46.6)	39 (53.4)	8	81 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

4.3.2 Class observation

The class observation was conducted to check on the incidence of two main objectives: teachers' performance and teacher preparation. The following Table 4.22 shows the points of observation on teachers' preparation and performance during the classroom teachings.

Table 4.22

Teachers' Preparation and Performance in the Classroom

Observation Points on Teachers' Preparation	Response		
	Yes	No	Total
Keeping notes on students' requests on new activities	36 (44.4)	45 (55.6)	
Ensuring students keep their activity sheets in their portfolio	47 (58)	34 (42)	81 (100)
Keeping students' self-assessment sheets in the portfolio	32 (39.5)	49 (60.5)	
Keeping students' performance records for future reference	33 (40.7)	48 (59.3)	
Having an annual teaching plan	29 (35.8)	52 (64.2)	
Having a daily teaching plan	26 (32.1)	55 (67.9)	
Suitability of the daily teaching plan	11 (42.3)	15 (57.7)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.22 shows, more than half of teachers did not have an annual teaching plan (52/81 = 64%) and daily plan (55/81 = 68%). From a total of 26 teachers who had daily teaching plans, 58% of them (15/26) did not have suitable plan. This is to say only 42% (11/26) of the teachers taught their lessons according to suitable plans.

The teachers' assessment procedure on the use of students' art portfolio was also inspected. It was discovered that 60% of teachers did not record students' performance for future reference and did not keep students' self assessment sheets in the portfolios. The failure of more than half of the teachers in updating the students' portfolios, however, did reflect their belief on their importance, as 58% (47/81) still ensured their students keep activity sheets in their portfolios.

4.3.2.1 Teachers' Management of Art Classes

Teachers were also observed on the way they conducted art classes. The results of the observation are presented in the following Table 4.23.

Table 4.23

Teachers' Management of Art Classes

Points of Observation on Teachers' Conduct of Art Classes	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Total (%)
Lesson Management					
Motivating students at the beginning of a lesson	7 (8.6)	48 (59.3)	17 (21)	9 (11.1)	
Giving choice to students in selecting the topic, material and method of working	6 (7.4)	9 (11.1)	18 (22.2)	48 (59.2)	
Encouraging students to think and innovate during art activities	7 (8.6)	44 (54.3)	21 (26)	9 (11.1)	
Allowing students to use senses in experiencing art	4 (4.9)	40 (49.4)	32 (39.5)	5 (6.2)	
Making learning process in practicing feelings, emotions and thoughts expression in the form of an artwork	4 (4.9)	41 (50.6)	27 (33.3)	9 (11.1)	81
Providing opportunity for students to develop creativity	4 (4.9)	44 (54.3)	21 (25.9)	12 (14.8)	
Making students enjoy their art activities	3 (3.7)	14 (17.3)	49 (60.5)	15 (18.5)	
Teaching that covered the learning objectives in each session	6 (7.4)	41 (50.6)	24 (29.6)	10 (14.5)	
Student Management					
Considering students' interests in the teaching process	3 (3.7)	51 (63)	17 (21)	10 (12.3)	
Showing student's interest in doing activities during teaching	1 (1.2)	4 (4.9)	17 (21)	59 (72.8)	
Providing opportunity for students to share lessons	16 (19.7)	40 (49.4)	17 (21)	8 (9.8)	
Using students' peer feedback to help them develop self-steam	9 (11.1)	41 (50.6)	25 (30.9)	6 7.4)	
Providing opportunity for students to express new ideas and take part in combining the ideas in group works	5 (6.2)	43 (53.1)	21 (25.9)	12 (14.8)	
Providing environment atmosphere for students' interaction and involvement	3 (3.7)	47 (58)	23 (28.4)	8 (9.9)	
Evaluation					
Allowing sufficient opportunity to students to self-evaluate their own performance	19 (23.7)	38 (46.9)	19 (23.7)	5 (6.1)	
Making students think and evaluate based on the teacher's feedback	7 (8.6)	39 (48)	25 (31)	10 (12.3)	
Using evaluations as feedbacks to help students generate new ideas	10 (12.3)	40 (49.4)	22 (27.2)	9 (11.1)	

Table 4.23 Continued

Points of Observation on Teachers' Conduct of Art Classes	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Facilitation of Student Learning				
Giving clear explanations to students on each art activity	9 (11.1)	52 (64.2)	16 (19.8)	4 (4.9)
Providing sufficient materials and equipment to students to work with	2 (2.5)	3 (3.7)	31 (38.3)	45 (55.5)
Working each activity within suitable timing	6 (7.4)	36 (44.4)	28 (34.6)	11 (13.6)
Adjusting the teaching approach according to class condition	16 (19.8)	38 (47)	21 (26)	6 (7.4)
Observing the safety rules and regulations during students' handling of tools and equipment	4 (4.9)	54 (66.6)	18 (22.2)	5 (6.1)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

The teachers' conduct of art classes was examined from four aspects: Class management, student management, evaluation and learning environment. As Table 4.23 illustrates, in the aspect of class management, teachers were most fond of allowing freedom to their students to choose topics and materials to work on, showing 59% (48 out of 81) practised it most often, while 22% (18 out of 81) did it often. Perhaps, because of this freedom, 80% (64 out of 81) of these teachers felt that their students enjoyed their art lessons, with 61% (49 out of 81) believing this happened often and 19% (15 out of 81) very often. Other areas of class management did not quite occur because more than half of the teachers claimed these were practised less often.

As for the aspect of student management, it is interesting to note that 94% (76 out of 81) of the teachers were engaged in showing interest in their students' work, showing 73% (59 out of 81) did it very often and 21% (17 out of 81) often. However, such kind of engagement did not occur as much in the other five areas as more than half of the teachers claimed to have practiced them less often.

In matters related to evaluation on students' work, the teachers' involvement fared reasonably low as none of the areas of evaluation have involved participation of

more than half of them. Specifically, only 43% (35 out of 81) of teachers considered making their students think and work based on their feedback, with 31% (25 out of 81) claiming to have done it often and 12% (10 out 81) very often.

The final aspect of teacher observation zoomed into matters dealing with facilitation of student learning. As Table 4.23 shows, the most noticeable area in this aspect is in the teachers' effort to provide sufficient materials and equipment for students to work on during art class. This is evidenced by the fact that 94% (76 out of 81) of teachers practised it, with 56% (45 out of 81) had it very often, while the other 38% (28 out of 81) selected often.

To summarize, the teachers' performance varied in their involvement according to aspects. Comparing the three aspects of involvement, these teachers were relatively more concerned in the area of student learning process than the outcomes.

4.3.2.2 Teachers' General Art Traits

For purpose of elaboration, art teachers' general traits on art were viewed from three criteria − knowledge, skill and attitude. The idea of this viewing was not to determine the merit of their performance but rather to compare if the proficiency level of teachers could have been affected by their qualification and their states of residence.

Knowledge in Art

The result of univariate analysis on teachers' general knowledge in art is shown in the following Table 4. 24.

Table 4.24

Teachers' General Knowledge in Art

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	8538.785	1	8538.785	175.745	.005
	Error	97.883	2.015	48.586^a		
CERTIFICATE	Hypothesis	10.364	1	10.364	2.732	.229
	Error	8.346	2.200	3.794^b		
State	Hypothesis	99.961	2	49.980	13.384	.070
	Error	7.469	2	3.734^c		
CERTIFICATE * State	Hypothesis	7.469	2	3.734	.665	.518
	Error	354.048	63	5.620^d		

a. .969 MS(State) + .031 MS(Error)

b. .969 MS(CERTIFICATE * State) + .031 MS(Error)

c. MS(CERTIFICATE * State)

d. MS(Error)

It is evident that teachers, despite holding different academic qualification, displayed an almost similar level of art knowledge (F (1, 63) = .2.73, p > .05 (NS). Similarly, there appears to be no evidence to support the fact on the difference in teachers' level of knowledge on the basis of their teaching in schools of different states in the country [F (2, 63) = 13.38; p > .05) (NS)]

Basic Skill in Art

Apart from knowledge, the teachers were examined in terms of their basic skill in art. The result of univariate analysis on teachers' skill is presented in Table 25. As the table shows, the result did not support the hypothesis that there was a difference in teachers' skill according to their academic qualification [F (1, 62) = .41; p > .05 (NS)]. Likewise, neither does the result support the hypothesis on teachers' skill to go by state [F (2. 63) = 1.67; p > .05 (NS)].

Table 4.25
Teachers' Basic Skill in Art

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	17520.132	1	17520.132	940.695	.001
	Error	37.535	2.015	18.625[a]		
CERTIFICATE	Hypothesis	4.570	1	4.570	.409	.587
	Error	22.645	2.026	11.179[b]		
State	Hypothesis	37.440	2	18.720	1.670	.374
	Error	22.416	2	11.208[c]		
CERTIFICATE * State	Hypothesis	22.416	2	11.208	1.405	.253
	Error	494.675	62	7.979[d]		

a. .991 MS(State) + .009 MS(Error)

b. .991 MS(CERTIFICATE * State) + .009 MS(Error)

c. MS(CERTIFICATE * State)

d. MS(Error)

Attitude Toward Art

Another examined aspect in teachers' traits was their general attitude toward art (Table

4.26).

Table 4.26

Teachers' Attitude toward Art

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	19613.857	1	19613.857	400.837	.002
	Error	98.709	2.017	48.932[a]		
CERTIFICATE	Hypothesis	16.459	1	16.459	9.472	.066
	Error	4.492	2.585	1.738[b]		
State	Hypothesis	99.532	2	49.766	31.888	.030
	Error	3.121	2	1.561[c]		
CERTIFICATE * State	Hypothesis	3.121	2	1.561	.156	.856
	Error	700.090	70	10.001[d]		

a. .979 MS(State) + .021 MS(Error)

b. .979 MS(CERTIFICATE * State) + .021 MS(Error)

c. MS(CERTIFICATE * State)

d. MS(Error)

As shown in Table 4.26, the result of univariate analysis has it that, again,

teachers were not evidently different in their attitude toward art on the basis of their

qualification [F (1, 70) = 9.72; $p > .05$ (NS)]. However, there is evidence that the attitude did vary according to states in which they taught [F (2, 70) = 31.89; $p < .05$].

Figure 4.1 illustrates the Teachers' General Attitude toward Art in relation to qualification.

Upon close checking Figure 4.1, it has been revealed that in all states, teachers with Certificate and Diploma in teaching (M = 17.35, SD = 3.51) were relatively better off in displaying favorable attitude toward art than those with a Bachelor's degree (M = 17.03, SD = 3.11). It is also disclosed that teachers in the state of Khorasan (M = 18.43, SD = 3.20) were ahead in the score of attitude, compared to their counterparts in the states of Azarbayejane Shargh (M = 16.85; SD = 4.07) and Sharestanhaye Tehran (M = 15.57; SD = 2.66).
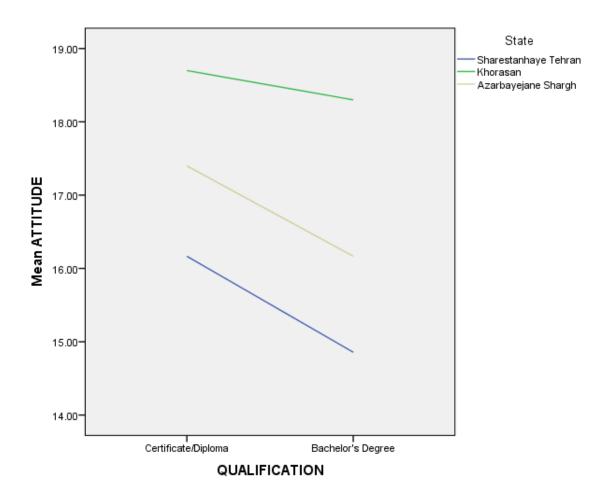
Figure 4.1. Teachers' general attitude toward Art.

To sum up, the teachers' traits in terms of general knowledge in art, basic skill and attitude were basically of similar level in proficiency. Academic qualification did have little bearing on the traits. However, location seemed to have influence on teachers' art attitude. Those in Khorasan seemed to have adopted a better attitude, surpassing their counterparts in Azarbayjane Shargh and Sharestanhaye Tehran.

4.4 The Curriculum Effects

In order to see the effects of curriculum practice in the Iranian elementary schools, the study next focused on examining the implemented curriculum by looking at students' knowledge, performance and attitude.

4.4.1 Students' Art Knowledge

The effect on students' knowledge in art after classroom teaching was examined through a test conducted for selected children in fifth grade. The result of the examination is shown in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27

Students' Knowledge in Art

Remarks	N (%)	Accumulated frequency (%)
Very poor	190 (44)	190 (43.9)
Poor	102 (25.8)	302 (69.7)
Good	131(30.3)	433 (100)
Excellent	-	-
Total	**433 (100)**	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

The results show that out of 433 students participating in this study, none obtained excellence to score marks 17 out of 20 and above. Some 30% (131/433) of students were able to score 11 to 17 out of 20 marks, showing a good acquisition of knowledge. The other 26% (102/433) of students scored marks ranging from 6 to 11, showing that their acquisition of art knowledge was reasonably poor. Quite expectedly,

44% (190/433) of them obtained marks below 6 out of 20. This shows that almost half of the students displayed a very poor acquisition of art knowledge.

Despite the poor overall performance, it was revealed students were knowledgeable in the different kinds of art forms in Iranian art. Out of 44 terms of art forms mentioned by the students, 27 were terms related to Iranian traditional arts. By way of scrutiny, it was observed that carpet was the most familiar form of Iranian traditional arts as it was known by 48% (208/433) of the students. Next was poetry as it was referred by 43% (188/433). This was followed by traditional painting 29% (102/433), calligraphy 15% (67/433), miniature 12% (52/433) and architecture 8% (35/433) in that order.

Students have also shown an acceptably good knowledge of Iranian epics. The most popular epic known to students was Shahnameh as it was known by 57% (246/433) of them, who have even mentioned the important characters in the story, such as Rostam, Sohrab, Zal, and Afrasiyab. There were 35 different national stories or poems also familiar to students. These included Shahrzad (Thousand and One Nights) as known to 16% (68/433); Golestan va Boonstane Sadi 7.4% (32/433), Ghoran 7% (30/433), Arash Kamgir (National Hero) with 6% (27%), Masnavi Manavi (collections of poems by Molana Jalaledineh Parsi) with 5% (21/433), and Shangool-o-Mangool: and Kelileh va Demneh.

Students' familiarity with national artists was not limited only to visual artists. They seemed to have known more artists from other fields especially literature and science such as Ferdosi, Khayam, Saadi and Hafez. In the field of visual arts, 36% (157/433) of students knew about Hosien Behzad, a classical miniaturist, 24% (105/433) Mahmoud Farshchyan, the most important contemporary miniaturist, and

21% (92/433) knew Kamalolmolk, a national artist who brought new forms of painting from the West to Iran and lived 100 years ago.

Students were asked about their knowledge of six visual elements of art and the way these were used in their work, namely: dot, line, shapes, volume, texture and color. They have named 41 examples of objects from nature that carry dots, 18% (76/433) of students mentioned seeing dot in stars, 16% (71/433) in the sun, 13% (55/433) in leaves, 11.5% (50/433) flowers, 10% (45/433) distant trees, 9.6% (42/433) petals, and 9% (38/433) in some fruits.

Students used 59 examples of natural or artificial objects that they considered to have lines. Of those objects, trees were considered by 38% (163/433) of the students, plant stems 20% (87/433), mountains 11% (47/433), leaf 9.5% (41/433), branch 9% (39/433), grass, car and flowers 6% (26/433). Although a number of students basically understood the meaning of lines, only 13% (58/433) were able to identify three different kinds of lines - zigzag, straight and curvy lines, 11% (46/433) identified only straight lines and 9.5% (41/433) knew only curvy lines, while 2% (19/433) recognized only zigzag lines.

Students' knowledge of shape as a visual element was tested based on their ability to provide examples of natural and artificial objects carrying geometrical and non-geometrical shapes. From the test, it was revealed that 77% (332/433) of the students were able to recall circles in objects, such as sun 39% (132/332), moon 14% (45/332), clock 11% (38/332), ball 10.5% (35/332), and tire 5% (18/332). Some 50% (218/433) of the students were able to recall rectangles and squares as shapes found in objects such as table 21% (45/218). Then they named book 9% (19/218), door and cupboard 8% (17/218) and television 7% (16/218).

Some 24% of students (105/433) could recall triangle as a shape found in objects such as mountain 79% (83/105), after that pyramid was named by students 13% (14/105). And then they named house 5% (5/105), and beaks 3% (3/105). A number of students listed many examples without categorizing them into any kind of geometrical shape.

As for non-geometrical shapes, 13% (56/433) of the students were able to recall cloth, clouds 12% (53/433), trees and leaves 8% (36/433), sea and car 7% (29/433), chair 6%, (25/433), and river 5% (22/433).

Students were also tested on their knowledge of texture as a visual element. They were asked about the type of textures and ways of identifying them. The texture could be recognized by looking and touching, but only 37 out of 433 students or 8.5% named both of them. However, 7% (30/433) of students believed they could recognize texture by looking and 2% (9/433) by touching. Students also named 18 examples of textures in which the most frequencies belonged to: trees 13% (56/433), stones 11% (47/433), deserts and Spider web 8% (36/433), and animal skins 7.6% (33/433).

Besides that, students were asked about the hues of colors in the leaves. Out of 433 students only 47 or 11% named four different hues of color in leaves in different seasons (yellow, red, green, brown).

As for the question on where they can find beauty, out of 30 terms mentioned by the students, only two terms were related to painting or human crafts and two terms to God, the rest were directly or indirectly related to nature. Some 47% (202/433) of students directly pointed to nature, while 16% (69/433) of students saw beauty in the flowers; 15% (65/433) saw beauty in God's creation and 3% (14/433) said beauty is in the power of God. Some 7% (32/433) pointed to the sky and 6% (26/433) related beauty to the forest.

On how to make the environment or thing beautiful, all the students only pointed to one aspect; 36% (155/433) maintained by tidying up and being organized, 30% (131/433) said by gardening and 11% (47/433) explained by painting the walls and the environment.

The other basic knowledge is to understand the primary colors which all of the students should know about but only 49% (212/433) of students named them; it means more than half of students could not name red, yellow and blue as the main colors. Naming the components of primary colours also is difficult for the majority of students; 83% (361/433) of students knew the result of combining yellow and green (orange), 85% (367/433) named the combination blue and yellow (green) and 74% (321/433) knew the combination of red and blue (purple). More than half of students can explain the combination of each color with white makes it lighter (58% 253/433) and with black makes it a darker color (53% = 230/433).

Naming the different hues of colors is another part of knowledge which students should know. Students could only name the hues of three colours: green (light green, dark green, olive drab, pistachio green) 30% (130/433), blue (navy blue, sky blue, dark blue, turquoise) 16% (68/433), and red (orange, pink, scarlet, maroon) 7% (30/433).

Students' senses are the main important instrument for art creation; therefore at the end of primary level they should know about the meaning of observation. The majority of students did not answer this question and the others' answers also are incorrect. Only 12% (52/433) recalled observation means "seeing" and only 5.5% (24/433) of students believed it mean "using different senses".

4.4.2 Art Skill

The effect on students' skills in art was examined through their production of a portfolio and a performance test conducted for selected children in fifth grade.

4.4.2.1 Portfolio

The Portfolio was used to assess students' skill in producing examples of work in an organized manner. The portfolio assessment was based on the following components: the cover, list of contents, students' self-evaluation, the folders to contain art works, and contents including painting and handicraft. The evaluation of the student's portfolio presentation is illustrated in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28

Portfolio Presentation

	Questions	Complete	Incomplete	Total
Appearance of the portfolio	Students identity information, grade and name of the school are written on the cover	32 (57.1)	25 (43.9)	
	There are folders to contain the artwork	36 (63.2)	21 (36.8)	
	There is an attached list of contents at the beginning of the folder	36 (63.2)	21 (36.8)	57 (100)
The list of content sheet is filled with the information regarding dates, number, topic, short description about the work and the feelings and thoughts of the students.		28 (50.9)	28 (49.1)	
The artworks are identifying information, including number, date, topic, student's name and grade.		17 (29.8)	40 (70.2)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.28 shows, barely two-thirds of students came up with a complete appearance of their portfolios. This was particularly true as only 63% (36/57) of students completed both tasks of preparing "folders to contain artwork" and "attaching a list of contents." However, the identification information of the portfolios was complete for only 57% (32/57) of the students. Another way of looking at it is that 70% (40/57) of art works inside the portfolios lacked tags of number, dates, topics, and student's name.

The portfolio contents were examined in both areas of art making – handicrafts and painting (Table 4.29).

Table 4.29

Portfolio Contents

Subjects	Criteria	Need for more effort	Close to Expectation level	Expectation level	Above expectation level	No identifiable subject	Total (%)
Handicrafts	Having skills to make forms	25 (44.6)	14 (25)	18 (28.6)	1 (1.8)	1	57 (100)
	Showing creative designs	27 (48.2)	15 (26.8)	13 (23.2)	1 (1.8)	1	57 (100)
	Paying attention to diverse sources of ideas	33 (57.9)	14 (25)	9 (18.1)	-	1	57 (100)
	Working with geometrical forms	33 (58.9)	11 (19.6)	12 (21.4)	-	1	57 (100)
	Having skills in using art instruments and materials	27 (48.2)	16 (28.6)	13 (23.2)	-	1	57 (100)
	Producing attractive works	28 (50)	15 (26.8)	12 (21.4)	1 (1.8)	1	57 (100)
Painting	Having the skills to draw forms	18 (32.7)	16 (29.1)	20 (36.4)	1 (1.8)	2	57 (100)
	Showing creative designs	25 (58.9)	15 (27.3)	14 (25.5)	1 (1.8)	2	57 (100)
	Paying attention to diverse sources of ideas	29 (52.7)	11 (20)	14 (25.5)	1 (1.8)	2	57 (100)
	Working with geometrical forms	30 (54.5)	8 (14.5)	16 (29.1)	1 (1.8)	2	57 (100)
	Having skills in using art instruments	23 (41.8)	26 (47.3)	6 (10.9)	-	2	57 (100)
	Producing attractive works	23 (41.8)	16 (29.1)	15 (27.3)	1 (1.8)	2	57 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

In handicrafts the specific activity involved was clay work, whereas in painting it was the production of illustrations of a theme from a national epic. The scope of examination was an assessment encompassing basically the development of ideas and practice of productive skills in both areas. Referring to Table 4.29 the results of the assessment according to the criteria index of students' visual art works show that 70% (39/57) of students lacked skills (below expectation level) to make forms in handicrafts, with 25% (14/57) being near to the expectation level and the remaining 45% (14/57) needing more effort to acquire it. Perhaps, this lack of skill could be explained by the fact that 77% (43/57) could not handle art instruments and materials. Thus, it is reasonable to see 79% (44/57) were unable to work with geometric forms. It is also interesting to note that 83% (47/57) of students did not pay attention to diverse source of ideas and this could perhaps be related to the 76% (42/57) failure in producing creative design and 77% (43/57) failure in showing attractive product in clay work.

As for painting, 62% (34/57) of students failed to meet the expectation level in drawing forms. As in handicrafts, this failure could, perhaps, again be related to the high 89% lack of skills in handling art tools and materials. The students' 70% (38/57) failure in working with geometric shapes could be assumed as related to the failure of the foregoing skills. In any case, the 73% (40/57) of students failing to pay attention to diverse sources of ideas did certainly raise a question as to its connection with the 86% (42/57) failure to produce creative design and 71% (39/57) failure to come up with attractive paintings.

In order to provide a general overview of students' performance of their portfolios, the scores of the quadripartite performance levels in Table 4.29 were converted to 0-20 evaluation merit. The results were next interpreted into four performance indices from very poor to excellent. The final information of the recalculation is presented in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30

Students' Portfolio, Overall Scores

Performance Index	N (%)	Accumulated Frequency & Percentages
Very poor	26 (45.4)	26 (45.4)
Poor	14 (28.5)	40 (69.1)
Good	16 (28.1)	56 (98)
Excellent	1 (1.7)	57 (100)
Total (%)	57 (100%)	-

Note. Numbers in parentheses are percentages

Out of 57 students' portfolios reviewed in this study, only one student scored marks of an excellent result, that is scoring marks 17 out of 20 and above. Some 28% (16/57) of students were able to score 11 to 17 out of 20 marks, showing a good acquisition of skills in visual art. The other 29% (14/57) scored marks ranging from 6 to 11, reflecting reasonably poor acquisition of visual art skill. Quite expectedly, 45% (36/57) of them obtained marks below 6 out 20. This was to show that almost the majority of students displayed a very poor acquisition of skill in art. On the other hand 70% had poor acquisition of skill in art.

4.4.2.2 Art Production

Apart from assessing the portfolios, students' works on handicrafts and painting were also assessed. The main objective of this assessment was to find out how far the students would achieve the aims of the curriculum at the end of primary school level.

a) Handicrafts

Table 4.31 shows the results of assessment on 51 students' performance in making handicrafts based on eight criteria. The exemplary form of the handicrafts was clay work.

Table 4.31

Students' Work on Handicraft

Criteria	Need for more effort	Near to level of expectation	Expectation level	Higher than expected level	Total (%)
Having skills in using the instruments	14 (27.5)	24 (47.1)	11 (21.6)	2 (3.9)	
Having skills in using the materials	24 (47.1)	16 (31.4)	9 (17.6)	2 (3.9)	
Showing creative designs	25 (49)	13 (25.5)	11 (21.6)	2 (3.9)	
Handicraft related to memorized story	18 (36.3)	23 (45.1)	8 (15.7)	2 (3.9)	
Applying a variety of visual elements	29 (56.9)	13 (25.5)	7 (13.7)	2 (3.9)	51 (100)
Neatness	28 (54.9)	14 (27.5)	8 (15.7)	1 (2)	
Perfection of Forms	33 (64.7)	8 (15.7)	8 (15.7)	2 (3.9)	
Functionality of Forms	34 (66.7)	10 (19.6)	5 (9.8)	2 (3.9)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As Table 4.31 shows, all 51 works fell below expectation level in all criteria. The students' weakest point was in the criterion of "Functionality of form", showing 87% (44/51) failure. Similarly, they were weak in "Applying variety of visual elements" and showing "Neatness" in their work, with 83% (43/51) of them not reaching the expectation level. Not far apart was their weakness in handling "Handicraft related to memorized story" and "Perfection of forms", with 80% (41/51) failure. The students' 78% (40/51) failure in "Having skills in using the materials" was somewhat offset by their slightly lesser 74% (38/51) failure in "Having skills in using the instruments" and "Showing creative designs."

The students' production of handicrafts based on the quadripartite performance levels in Table 4.32 were next converted into 0-20 evaluation merit. The results were interpreted into four performance descriptions from very poor to excellent, as shown in the following Table 4.32.

Table 4.32

Students' Performance in Handicraft by Overall Score

Numbers	N (%)	Accumulated frequency (%)
Very poor	25 (49)	25 (49)
Poor	13 (24)	37 (73)
Good	7 (14)	44 (87)
Excellent	7 (14)	51 (101)
Total (%)	51 (101)	-

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

As illustrated in Table 4.32 acquisition of skill in handicraft, from 51 students who participate in performance handicraft test in this study, only 7 students or 14% score excellent marks, that is scoring marks 17 out of 20 and above. Only 14% (7/51) of students were able to score 11 to 17 out of 20 marks, showing a good acquisition of skills in handicraft. The other 24% (13/51) were reasonably poor in their skill as they only scored marks from 6 to 11. And finally, 49% (25/51) of them obtained marks below 6 out 20, to show that their display of skill was very poor.

Performance in Handicraft

Students' performance in art was next examined to determine if there was any reason to believe that it could be affected by their own attitude towards the art form (handicraft) they were working on and the state they lived. For this reason, the performance in handicraft was to be analyzed in terms of students' general art skill, knowledge and attitude in respect to states.

Art Skill in the Production of Handicraft

The univariate analysis of students' general art skill is presented in Table 4.33. The table revealed that their attitude toward handicraft had made no difference to their general art skill [$F_{(4, 202)}$ = .139; $p > .05$ (NS)]. This is to say, it did not quite matter whether the students have adopted a high or low positive attitude toward handicraft, they would display a basically similar result in art skill. By the same token, the students' display of skill level was not affected by the state the students were living in [$F_{(92, 202)}$ = 1.94; $p > .05$ (NS)].

Table 4.33

Students' Art Skill in Production of Handicraft

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	17678.101	1	17678.101	194.630	.000
	Error	924.732	10.181	90.829[a]		
Handicraft	Hypothesis	30.329	4	7.582	.139	.967
	Error	3480.021	63.600	54.717[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	196.931	2	98.466	1.938	.155
	Error	2366.938	46.582	50.812[c]		
Handicraft * STATE	Hypothesis	98.622	4	24.655	.290	.884
	Error	17157.290	202	84.937[d]		

a. .406 MS(STATE) - .007 MS(Handicraft * STATE) + .601 MS(Error)

b. .501 MS(Handicraft * STATE) + .499 MS(Error)

c. .566 MS(Handicraft * STATE) + .434 MS(Error)

d. MS(Error)

Art Knowledge

When students' art knowledge was examined on the basis of their attitude toward handicraft and their state of residence, the results of univariate analysis, as shown in Table 4.34 indicate that attitude toward handicraft did not have any effect on their art knowledge [$F_{(2, 415)}$ = .276; p > .05 (NS)]. This is to say, the students' display of

general art knowledge was rather consistent irrespective of whether they had a low or a high regard for handicrafts.

However, the result has also shown that students' states did affect their acquisition of general art knowledge [F (3, 397) = 27.51; p > .01]. This can be verified by checking the graph in Figure 4.2. The graph shows that students living in the state of Khorasan had the overall highest score in general art knowledge (M =10.52, SD = 2.7) compared to their counterparts in the states of Azerbayjane (M = 8.08; SD = 3.7), and Sharestanhaye (M = 6.33; SD = 3.11).

Table 4.34

Students' Art Knowledge of Handicraft

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	10283.678	1	10283.678	47.743	.020
	Error	431.628	2.004	215.396[a]		
HANDICRAFT	Hypothesis	7.944	3	2.648	.276	.841
	Error	58.437	6.100	9.580[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	439.278	2	219.639	22.176	.000
	Error	210.052	21.208	9.904[c]		
HANDICRAFT * STATE	Hypothesis	57.448	6	9.575	.929	.474
	Error	4275.670	415	10.303[d]		

a. .980 MS(STATE) + .020 MS(Error)

b. .992 MS(HANDICRAFT * STATE) + .008 MS(Error)

c. .547 MS(HANDICRAFT * STATE) + .453 MS(Error)

d. MS(Error)

Attitude to Art

The results of univariate analysis of students' general attitude to art on the basis of their specific attitude towards handicraft and their state of residence is presented in Table 4. 35. The results show that students' states did not have any influence on their general art attitude [F (2, 397) = 1.14; p > .05 (NS)]. Students' general attitude towards art basically remained the same whether they lived in Khorasan, Azerbayejane or Sharestanhaye. However, a different result was observed for students' specific interest

in handicraft, showing $F (3, 397) = 27.51$; $p < .01$. This indicates that students' interest

in handicraft may have affected their overall attitude in art.

Table 4.35

Students' Attitude Toward Handicraft

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	407422.256	1	407422.256	4112.424	.000
	Error	201.217	2.031	99.071[a]		
HANDICRAFT	Hypothesis	5044.318	3	1681.439	27.541	.001
	Error	370.196	6.064	61.052[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	200.238	2	100.119	1.896	.186
	Error	747.144	14.152	52.795[c]		
HANDICRAFT * STATE	Hypothesis	367.188	6	61.198	1.454	.193
	Error	16705.042	397	42.078[d]		

a. .982 MS(STATE) + .018 MS(Error)

b. .992 MS(HANDICRAFT * STATE) + .008 MS(Error)

c. .560 MS(HANDICRAFT * STATE) + .440 MS(Error)

d. MS(Error)

A close look at the chart in the following Figure 4.2 could reveal that students'

right attitude in handicraft would result in their good score in general art attitude. This

is true for all the three states.
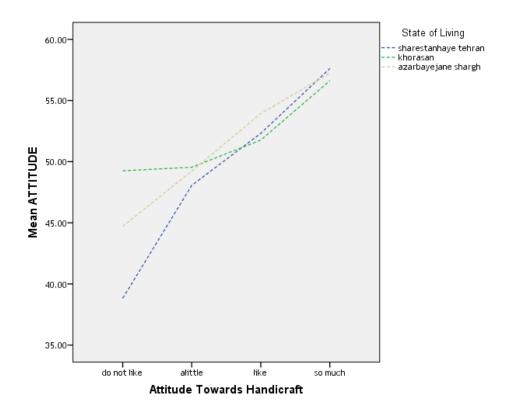
Figure 4.2. Students' general attitude toward handicraft.

b) Painting

Table 4.36 presents the assessment results of students' production in painting based on six criteria. The exemplary work of students' painting was illustration.

Table 4.36

Students' Work in Painting

Criteria	Need for more effort	Near to level of expectation	Expectation level	Higher than expected level	Total (%)
Having skills in using art instruments and materials	11 (21.6)	27 (52,9)	12 (23.5)	1 (2)	
Showing creative designs	22 (43.1)	18 (36.3)	9 (17.6)	2 (3.9)	
Producing attractive works	22 (43.1)	20 (39.2)	8 (16.7)	1 (2)	51 (100)
Applying a variety of visual elements	25 (48)	15 (29.4)	9 (17.6)	2 (3.9)	
Proper use of color scheme	28 (54.9)	14 (27.5)	8 (15.7)	1 (2)	
Neatness	2 (3.9)	33 (64.7)	15 (29.4)	1 (2)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

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From Table 4.36 it can be gleaned that the students' performance in painting, as in handicrafts, all fell below expectation. This was true for all the six criteria. Going by individual criterion, one can observe that 83% (42/51) of the students failed in their "Proper use of color scheme", 51% (28/51) were in "need for more effort", and 28% (14/51) were "near to level of expectation." In the 82% (41/51) of students' failing in "producing attractive works", 43% (22/51) were in "need for more effort", and 39% (20/51) were "near to level of expectation." A similar 43% (22/51) of students were in "need for more effort" in "showing creative designs", although only 36% (18/51) were "near to level of expectation." Curiously, despite the lesser 77% (40/51) of students failing in "Applying a variety of visual elements", the 48% (25/51) is second highest "in need for more effort", and only 29% (15/51) were "near to expectation level." Perhaps, it could be surmized that the 80% (38/51) of students failing in "having skills in using art instruments and materials" be possibly the root cause for the general failing in all criteria, although only 69% (36/51) did make it in "Neatness."

Table 4.37

Students' Overall Score on Painting Skill

Numbers	N (%)	Accumulated frequency (%)
Very poor	15 (29)	15 (29)
Poor	23 (45)	38 (74)
Good	9 (18)	47 (92)
Excellent	4 (8)	51 (100)
Total (%)	51 (100)	-

Note. Numbers in parentheses are column percentages

As illustrated in Table 4.37, for overall score in acquisition of skill in painting, it is apparent that the general score in students' performance was not encouraging. This

was evident by the fact that out of 51 students who participated in the performance test, only 4 or 8% scored excellent results, that is obtaining marks 17 out of 20 and above. Some 18% (9/51) scored marks between 11 and 17, showing a good acquisition of skill in painting. The remaining 74% (38/51) did poorly, as 45% (23/51) scored marks between 6 and 11, and 29% (15/51) obtained marks below 6 out 20.

Students' Performance in Painting

An examination was also done on the students' performance in Painting on the basis of general art skill, art knowledge and attitude to painting to determine whether or not these were affected by students' specific attitude in painting and their home state. A complete result of univariate analyses is presented as follows.

Art Skill in the Production of Painting

The result of univariate analysis of students' general art skill with respect to their own specific attitude toward painting by state is shown in Table 4.38.

Table 4.38

Students' Art Skill in the Production of Painting

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	15588.766	1	15588.766	228.445	.000
	Error	3945.519	57.819	68.239[a]		
Painting	Hypothesis	104.205	4	26.051	.402	.806
	Error	3739.000	57.759	64.734[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	71.136	2	35.568	.605	.553
	Error	1827.942	31.080	58.815[c]		
Painting * STATE	Hypothesis	199.907	5	39.981	.476	.794
	Error	16896.636	201	84.063[d]		

a. .320 MS(STATE) + .007 MS(Painting * STATE) + .673 MS(Error)

b. .438 MS(Painting * STATE) + .562 MS(Error)

c. .573 MS(Painting * STATE) + .427 MS(Error)

d. MS(Error)

Table 4.38 shows that neither the students' specific attitude toward painting [F (4, 201) = .40; p >.05 (NS)] and the states [F (2, 201) = .61; p > .05 (NS)] had any influence on their display of general art skill. This is to say, it makes no difference whether the students adopted a high or a low regard toward painting, they were likely to show a similar level of art skill. Similarly, the score of students in general skill was about the same across the states they live in.

Art Knowledge in the Production of Painting

Table 4.39 shows the result of the univariate analysis of students' knowledge as a factor of their specific attitude and state of residence.

Table 4.39

Students' Art Knowledge in the Production of Painting

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	10576.536	1	10576.536	37.522	.025
	Error	565.104	2.005	281.872[a]		
PAINTING	Hypothesis	37.004	3	12.335	2.077	.188
	Error	43.552	7.335	5.937[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	582.133	2	291.067	37.809	.000
	Error	255.003	33.124	7.698[c]		
PAINTING * STATE	Hypothesis	34.085	6	5.681	.548	.771
	Error	4299.978	415	10.361[d]		

a. .967 MS(STATE) + .033 MS(Error)

b. .945 MS(PAINTING * STATE) + .055 MS(Error)

c. .569 MS(PAINTING * STATE) + .431 MS(Error)

d. MS(Error)

As Table 4.39 shows, specific attitude toward painting did not affect their general art knowledge [F (3, 415) = .00; p > .05 (NS). However, the state in which the students live might have some influence on their knowledge [F (2, 415) = 37.81; p < .001].
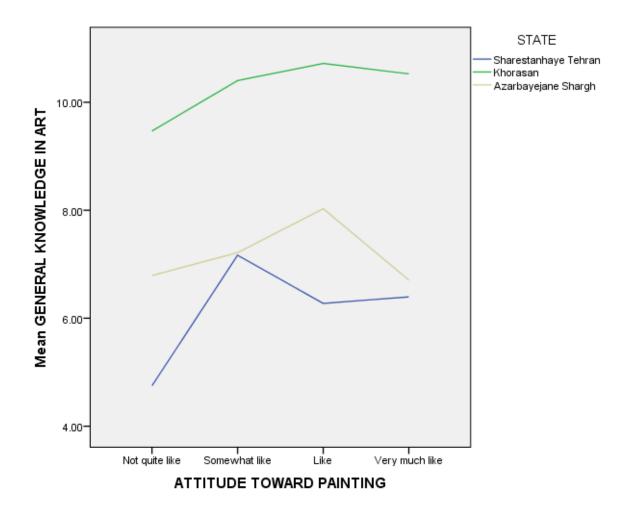
Figure 4.3. Students' general knowledge of painting.

To be sure, as in skill, the students' performance in painting by their execution of art knowledge was not so much attributed to varied levels of specific attitude toward painting, but more by the state in which they live. As shown in Figure 4.3, students living in Khorasan ($M = 10.51$; $SD = 2.69$) seemed to have surpassed those in Azarbayjane Shargh ($M = 7.03$; $SD = 3.79$) and in Sharestanhaye Tehran ($M = 6.33$; $SD = 3.11$) in art knowledge.

Art Attitude in the Production of Painting

The production of painting was also examined on the basis of students' art attitude being affected by their students' specific attitude toward painting and state.

Table 4.40

Students' Art Attitude in the Production of Painting

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Hypothesis	428821.720	1	428821.720	5929.502	.000
	Error	149.705	2.070	72.320[a]		
PAINTING	Hypothesis	4416.689	3	1472.230	18.603	.002
	Error	503.651	6.364	79.141[b]		
STATE	Hypothesis	146.421	2	73.211	1.137	.353
	Error	759.437	11.798	64.371[c]		
PAINTING * STATE	Hypothesis	487.392	6	81.232	1.910	.078
	Error	16881.507	397	42.523[d]		

a. .971 MS(STATE) + .029 MS(Error)

b. .946 MS(PAINTING * STATE) + .054 MS(Error)

c. .564 MS(PAINTING * STATE) + .436 MS(Error)
d. MS(Error)

As evident in Table 4.40, students' general art attitude could have been attributed more to their specific attitude toward painting [F (3, 397) = 18.60; $p < .01$] than that of their state of residence [F (2, 397) = 1.14; $p > .05$ (NS)]. As Figure 4.3 shows, those with higher score in general attitude toward art would seem to be of those with higher inclination to making painting. This was true for all the states.

Figure 4. 4. Students' general attitude toward painting.

4.4.3 Attitude

Students' attitude as a result of their learning of art was measured in terms of their interests and preference in art, views of art benefits and self-assessment of their own ability through a paper test. The test results are presented in Table 4.41 and Table 4.42.

4.4.3.1 Students' Interests and Preference in Art

Table 4.41 and 4.42 show the students' interest in art activities.

Table 4.41

Students' Interests in Art Activities

Statement of Interest	Don't Quite Like	Somewhat Like	Like	Like Very Much	No Response	Total (%)
Going to nature to watch the beauty	4 (0.9)	6 (1.4)	122 (27.7)	308 (70)	-	
Observing art works	5 (1.6)	44 (3.9)	120 (36.6)	270 (57.9)	1	
Handicraft	17 (3.9)	45 (10.3)	95 (21.7)	281 (64.2)	2	440 (100)
Painting	22 (5)	50 (11.4)	110 (25.1)	256 (58.4)	2	
Telling story	21 (4.8)	52 (11.9)	97 (22.2)	267 (61.1)	3	
Visiting the historical places, museums and listening to history	11 (2.5)	19 (4.3)	82 (18.7)	327 (74.5)	1	
Discussion about art activities or production	32 (7.3)	86 (19.6)	171 (39)	149 (34)	2	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

From Table 4.41, it can be observed that more than 73% of the students are interested in all of the activities. Their interest in these activities is as follows: going to nature and watching its beauty 98% (430/440), observing artworks 95% (390/439), visiting historical buildings, museums 93% (409/439), telling stories 83% (364/437), painting 84% (366/438), and finally, discussing a creative activity or an artwork 73% (320/438).

The following Table 4.42 shows students' response when asked if they would continue to work as artists in future. From the table, it can be gleaned that more than 80% (383/437) claimed that they would like to remain with art activity, and 80% (372/376) of them would like to be artists.

Table 4.42

Students' Interests in Art in Future

	Not likely	Quite likely	Likely	Very likely	No response	Total (%)
Continue the art activities next year	24 (5.1)	31 (6.5)	119 (25.2)	263 (60.2)	3	
Being an artist in the future	22 (5)	42 (9.6)	118 (27.1)	254 (58.3)	4	440 (100)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

4.4.3.2 Benefits of Art Experience

The following Table 4.43 presents information on students' views regarding the benefits of art experiences they obtained from activities in art learning.

Table 4.43

Benefits of Art Experience from Art Activities

	Not useful	Less useful	Useful	Much useful	No response	Total
Attention to beauty in nature for understanding God	3 (0.7)	5 (1.1)	68 (15.5)	363 (84.5)	1	
Attention to beauty in the nature and our environment for artistic creation.	7 (1.6)	17 (3.9)	160 (36.6)	253 (57.9)	3	440 (100)
Having experience in different art fields	3 (0.7)	23 (5.3)	137 (31.5)	272 (62.5)	5	
Keeping the cultural heritage and art works	4 (0.9)	10 (2.3)	72 (16.6)	349 (80.2)	5	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

Almost all students considered activities in art learning as "very beneficial", and this was true for all the four activities. By way of comparison, the most beneficial activity was "Attending to beauty in nature for understanding God", as it was considered by 99% (431/439); 83% of them said this was "Very useful". The next most beneficial was "Keeping the cultural heritage and art works" as approved by 97%

(421/435). "Having experience in different art fields" was rated beneficial by 95% (409/435), 63% of whom considered it as "very useful." Although "Attention to beauty in the nature and our environment for artistic creation" also received the same response, it was considered "very useful" only by 58% of the students.

4.4.3.3 Students' Self-Assessment

Students were asked to self evaluate their learning in six areas of art. The results of the assessment are presented in Table 4.44.

Table 4.44

Students' Self-Assessment on Areas in Art Learning

Area of Art Learning	Not Easy	Quite Easy	Easy	Very Easy	No response	Total
Painting	18 (4.1)	61 (14)	175 (40)	183 (41.9)	3	
Handicraft and sculpture	14 (3.2)	50 (11.4)	137 (31.4)	236 (54.0)	3	
Familiarity with cultural heritage	16 (3.7)	50 (11.5)	118 (27.1)	252 (57.8)	4	440 (100)
Appreciation of nature	6 (1.4)	30 (6.9)	103 (23.6)	297 (68.1)	4	
Using art to Learn other subjects	15 (3.5)	75 (17.4)	167 (40.5)	174 (42.1)	9	

Note. Numbers in parentheses are row percentages

From Table 4.44 again most students regarded art learning in all five areas of art as manageable, with 91% (412/436) of them considering learning "Appreciation of nature" with ease, with 68% claiming it to be "very easy". Learning of "Handicraft and sculpture" and "Familiarity with cultural heritage" was easy to 85% (373/437), "Using art to learn other subjects" was easy or very easy to 83% (241/431), and "Painting" was easy or very easy to 82% (358/393) of them.

4.5 Summary

The review of the Iranian art curriculum involved an analysis of two essential dimensions -- the nature of its contents and the effects of its implementation. While the contents speak for what it should provide to student learning of art, it is most critical that the delivery system is well in place. As far as the findings of this research are concerned, several issues have been identified and they need to be addressed. The rational statements, despite obvious availability of aims and objectives, are not rationally congruent to the list of subject contents that teachers can easily translate for purpose of their teaching preparation. A rather pitiful scenario was observed in the training of art teachers. Gauged against the world standard of quality art teachers, a mere training through in-service course with limited exposure to the nitty-gritty art teaching is far from sufficient qualification.

It is interesting to note that general art traits of teachers based on skill knowledge and attitude did not vary according to qualification. However, there was an indication that teachers' attitude toward art may vary according to locality. By the same token, there was not much variation in the students' art performance by skill and knowledge. However, there is a reason to believe that students' art attitude might have been affected by their specific inclination toward the form they were making.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the summing up of research findings and interpretations of those findings. The concluding part of the chapter includes suggestions as to what the nature of Iranian art curriculum should be, based on the findings of this research. Also included in this chapter are the limitations of the study and some recommendations for future research on issues related to this study.

5.2 The Summary of Findings

To recall, the general aims of this study are (1) to review the curriculum, and (2) to look at the practices of art education in Iranian elementary schools. In proceeding, the realization of these aims was done; firstly, by examining the structure of the curriculum, and secondly by appraising the way the curriculum contents are translated into teaching practice and the students' learning strategies. From these examinations and appraisal, a profile of the curriculum was charted to determine its status in the Iranian general system of education. In extension, some recommendations are offered to help improve the art education curriculum for Iranian elementary schools.

5.2.1 The Nature of Art Curriculum in Iranian Elementary Schools

The examination of curriculum using content analysis was to identify the objectives, approaches, and content of the curriculum. The outcome of the analysis has revealed that the Iranian art education tends to concentrate quite heavily on the practice of art making, and less on its theoretical appreciation. The approach to this art making involves two basic aspects of learning, the activity of art production and training in visually aesthetic perception. Although the emphasis on art making is common in almost all countries in the world, enhancing theoretical appreciative skills in the

curriculum should not be neglected if it is to recognize our urgent need for more genuine aesthetic experiences in preparing Iranian children with a rounded art knowledge. This is critical because Schellekens and Goldie (2011), rephrasing Ramsey, stated that in an increasingly ordered and technologically managed world, with ever increasing requirements for disciplined thinking and performance, we require more aesthetic experience "... to enable us to maintain some balance, sanity, mental health, in coping with our life experience and for functional efficiency and sensibilities" (p. 172).

Going with Ramsey's notion is Wilson's (2003) indication that one of the most common goals for art education in the world today is to concentrate on expanding students' aesthetic perception. In other words, in art education, we need to get students to really see rather than to just look. The unfortunate lack of aesthetic perceptions components in the Iranian curriculum is perhaps understandable considering that the training of perception, following Wilson, is difficult in education for several reasons, especially with respect to assessment of students' achievements. While the terms used for "aesthetic perception" and "really seeing" may be ambiguous and open to subjective interpretations, there is no indication as to whether the goals of these two terms in art assessment are exactly directed toward appreciating buildings, paintings, pretty girls, or junk piles (p. 220). Therefore, in reference to the Iranian art education, the evaluation on perception and appreciation, which only asks the student to describe his or her own art works and others' may not have enough reliably referenced criteria.

Wilson also referred to Bacon's aesthetics to highlight four major aspects of aesthetic perceptions, namely: formal, literal, symbolic, and sensory criteria. Should this be taken as a model of reference, it is recommended that the Iranian curriculum which now has objectives to develop cultural awareness among students include art history and cultural heritage components written to reflect more complex forms of art historical knowledge and aesthetic appreciation.

Indeed the skill objectives based on studio work in the Iranian curriculum are rather quite simply stated and applied in the assessment. However, if the Iranians are to break away from the traditional pattern and to aim at making students see and perceive the world through art, they must be ready to conceive of a curriculum heeding Frank's reminder of the important task confronting the creative mind by creating new symbols and new patterns of perception. That being said, the nature of Iranian art which is currently focusing heavily on mere production should now veer toward developing creativity evoked through enhancing aesthetic experience. That way students will gain a more creative effort in utilizing concepts, images and designs in art learning.

Looking from another perspective, Perkins (1980) seems to view artistic activities as profoundly cognitive in character involving knowledge and know-how in some obvious and some subtle senses. If the Iranians are to also consider these cognitive elements in art education, it is crucial that the curriculum include in the student's activity the elements of knowing and art knowledge that would help to hone skills and techniques. Thus, what one can now hope is that art learning is not only to help boost children's competence in producing artworks but also to help improve their perceptual and aesthetic intelligence.

Unfortunately, in the current art teaching in Iran, like those practiced in many in Middle Eastern states such as Saudi Arabia (Alheezan, 2009) and Pakistan (Peshkin, 1964), the subject is taught as with specific allocation in the school time table in Iranian primary education. As Alheezan (2009) puts it: "On paper, the art curriculum in Saudi Arabia follows the DBAE model. However, in truth the majority of art classes consist of mere drawing and craft- making. Connections are not made between art courses and the other curriculum. The majority of schools in Saudi Arabia do not have the adequate facilities and supplies to do anything beyond drawing and simple crafts. Moreover, the general population considers art to be relatively unimportant." (p. 78).

Similarly, in Pakistan students must understand "how art and craft contribute to everyday life" (Peshkin, 1964, p. 14). In teaching, however, such contribution of art is only limited to making art without considering mixing aesthetic with practical motives in students' learning experience. For example, students were only asked to paint in water color and pastel "illustrations connected with stories, famous poems and songs." This situation, as far as this research has discovered, is very similar to that in Iran.

The current art activities as listed in the syllabus for each primary class are basically artistic expression, in the sense that children are free to paint by exploring their own techniques using themes of their own choice or of those based on narratives to produce works in a traditionally creative sense. Quite apart from these commonly practised habits of teaching, students should be taught to improve their skills by understanding the integral techniques of making such as structuring of volumes in objects particularly in handicrafts.

Components of art appreciation in the current syllabus are designed merely to help students gain a source for inspiration and spirituality for their creative acts in art making. This is taught integrally in reference to subjects related to cultural heritage and acquaintance with nature in their process of making.

Apart from training students to develop perceptual keenness by using their five senses by observing the elements of nature as a part of God's creation, they are also to adopt the moral values by remembering God through His creation of beauty and power (see, for example, Surah Qaf, verses 6-7). This would make students learn art not only to know art, but also to apply this knowledge in their daily lives.

The concern for cultural heritage in art teaching is to make students aware of the Iranian cultural richness and diversity. Given that Iran is a big and old country, it has legends coming from various races, languages, religions and customs. Added by its

position, stretching a large area to enjoy different kind of climates with four seasons, it offers majestically charming scenery, the best resource for infusion and the intuition of artistic creativity.

Again, the multiple perspectives of Iranian cultures offer valuable and necessary elements for Iranian art. However, as Wright (2003) has believed, art operates on some important rules of not only "recording and decoding culture, but also in shaping it" (cited in Shillito, Beswick, & Baguley 2008, p. 2). In other words, art learning serves as a means for understanding the rules it has on our life in the past and to treat them as experience in shaping our present and future life. It is for this aim that students should be made to intelligibly understand their culture and society through art learning. As this research would like to propose, the teaching of art in Iranian schools must be made to dispense a clear content of cultural input to fashion children's art making knowledge and skills. Art teachers should therefore include a thorough dissemination on the appreciative aspects of Iranian cultures in their classroom teaching, not merely to observe and reproduce shapes of the existing motifs.

Observation of environment as a topic in art in the Iranian curriculum is to enable students to understand phenomena based on what they see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. By refining their senses, as Eisner (2002) puts it, children learn to understand the world by focusing on the forms of meaning that only the arts can convey and gradually develop their visual perception.

Going further into Eisner's proposition, one is to understand that noticing or seeing requires greater attention which can be developed through artistic representation. This is because in a visual representation of art, one is to pay attention to its visual qualities or the visual symbols of its qualities. In the children's activity which involve "aspects of the environment" to be attended to with direct purposes and the materials

they employ to represent those aspects may directly "influence the kind of cognitive abilities the child is likely to develop" (2002, p. 22).

Iranian art education seems as if to train all kinds of intelligences by making children pay attention to different forms of art, namely: visual art, music (listening training) story-telling and theater. Basically, what the curriculum seems to target is a proposition relating to Gardner's (1993) theory of Multiple Intelligences. According to this theory, there are particular and different forms of thinking. By using different kinds of symbols of its qualities one is able to express unique forms of meaning following the various disciplines such as History, Mathematics, Literature, and Social Science and so on. It is unfortunate, as far as this research can discover, that a clear direction is lacking in the practice of art education in Iranian schools; this direction is needed to actualize the objectives in developing potentials among students to exercise multiple intelligences in art classes.

The main concept of experiential approach in Detmers's model (Detmers, 1980) is centered on three types of knowing: basic knowing, non-basic knowing, and procedural knowing. It is apparent that Iranian art basic knowing is geared more toward acquainting students with knowledge through formative and rational kinds of learning. In formative learning, students get mainly into the activities by working on free and specific topics, natural objects to explore basic techniques of art making such as collage. Students integrate art activities with other disciples in rational learning, by working on narrative-based paintings to make illustrations in books on poems and national stories. In non-basic knowing, students learn instantially to know art through some theoretical verification of facts in subjects such as art history and cultural heritage. They gain familiarity with national conventions, customs and handicraft products by way of teachers' demonstrations and illustrations, apart from occasional site visits to relevant places.

As for procedural knowing, students are engaged mainly in formative learning to heighten protocolic, conventional and creative potentials. This is practiced through activities of making, designing and visual training in painting and handicrafts. In short, we can say the Iranian art curriculum provides formative contents in basic and procedural knowing but lacks appreciative, experimental, critical and innovative knowledge and any philosophical and rational contents.

Iran, like many other countries, is inclined to adopt the DBAE model (Discipline Based Arts Education) but with modifications. In the DBAE model, there are four categories of emphasis: Production, Aesthetics, Criticism, and Art History. However, the Iranian model, as implemented contains elements of Aesthetics, Familiarization with Cultural Heritage, Art Production, and Critical Thinking, and the Appreciation of Nature. Like a few countries in the Middle East, it is a practice of, in Hickman's words (2004), "a dislocated approach in which the discipline of aesthetics, art history and art criticism were segregated from the studio" (cited in Alheezan, 2009, p. 33).

One important dimension in DBAE, as Smith (2000) has proposed, is the acquisition of rudimentary capacities to create works of art, a general knowledge of art history, and a grasp of some of the basic principles of aesthetic judgment. This must be garnered in the ability to reflect thoughtfully about the values and uses of arts, all of which is grounded in the interrelationship of art disciplines. Although this dimension is a concern in the Iranian curriculum, it is not constructed through an explicit term that provides sufficient guides for teachers and students in approaching art in learning. Similarly, the practice of art evaluation which is mostly done by some holistic means by which students' feelings toward their own works and teachers' interpretations of them are not concurring with what Duke (1990) terms as "facts of the cognitive revolution in

thinking about the character of mind and human development--the substantive and procedural faces." (p. 93)

It is also suggested that (see Rush, 1989, for example) the DBAE approach recommends broadening the scope of art instruction to include concepts and skills. Students "...need to practice manipulating formal elements and principles, or… what Broudy calls sensory and formal aesthetic properties" (p. 78). This includes a formal analysis, a kind of pedagogical formalism which constitutes the descriptive, analytic, and critical language with which one speaks about the conceptual skeleton within a work of art.

5.2.2 The Curriculum Implementation

As for the second examination, it was an attempt to look at the way art is taught and implemented in the classroom. For this purpose, the technique of research will involve verifying factors related to issues in the teaching process, namely: (a) the nature of teacher training and its procedures -- covering the in-service schemes; (b) their teaching approaches.

5.2.2.1 Teacher Preparation

The teacher training program is one of the important aspects in preparing teachers to teach the subject in question. In Iran, the current practice did not provide enough exposure to teachers to adequately prepare them with well-grounded knowledge and skills in art teaching. Most of art training the teachers obtained was only through in-service programs with less than forty hours of instruction. In fact, some teachers teach art only by referring to teacher desk copies. To be an art teacher, according to Kaprow (cited in Lanier, 1977), one has to develop the value of imagination, something that cannot be taught to those who are not imaginative themselves. He therefore proposed an approach to art education to those teachers who are well aware of the basics and the

mystery of art, apart from a belief that artistic students are best suited for this job to teach the youngsters. In short, all art teachers may eventually be working artists. Going by Kaprow's suggestion, it is imperative that the Iranian art teachers are well trained as artists before they can be allowed to teach the subject in schools.

Although there are beliefs that teachers need not necessarily be artists in the sense that they may not be able to draw (see, for example, Wilson, MacDonald, Byrne, Ewing, & Sheridan, 2008), these teachers must still be knowledgeable or skilful, and show great interest in the subject. As in the case of the Scottish schools, "teaching in the expressive arts was best delivered by someone interested in the arts, knowledgeable or skilful in the subject, and confident..." (p. 41). Perhaps, scholars of this persuasion are subscribing to Eisner's (2002) notion in that teaching is an artefact, created through a performance shaped merely by the sensitivity, imagination, and the intentions of the teacher.

It has been discovered that the in-service training provided was not successful in equipping Iranian teachers with the nitty-gritty of cultural heritage, and language of visual arts. This results in a situation where teachers are feebly prepared to teach art as they cannot converse well in art curriculum issues including the subject matter, approach and strategies. Although the negative attitude of the teachers responding to this program is quite universal, the Scottish primary teachers (see Wilson et al., 2008) are somewhat better trained in the arts, as they consider it a critical necessity.

5.2.2.2 Teachers' Resources

The majority of teachers tend to rely on the teacher's handbook for guidance. However, many did not believe the handbook content has sufficient coverage on topics needed for each approach. As could be expected, most of the components covered only the technical aspects, providing guides on developing art skills but not on appreciation. This leads to an obvious neglect in the components of aesthetics and critical thinking in the

study of cultural heritage through art. This state of affairs has been cautioned by David Manzella (cited in Lanier, 1977) who claimed that:

> The teacher of art generally knows as little about the history of art and is as indifferent to practice of art as possible. They have accomplished this, most usually, by designing curricula for prospective teachers that assure no more than a superficial acquaintance with the history and practice of art while demanding a great portion of time in education course. (p. 15)

5.2.2.3 Teachers' Facilities

Recent research on the impact of school facilities on students and teachers (see, for example, Schneider, 2009) pointed to the positive relationship between school facilities with good academic outcomes. Preparation of facilities helps teachers to develop students' knowledge and skills.

As in the case of Iranian schools, most of the teachers believed that they did not have proper educational facilities for their classroom teaching. Their access to sufficient materials and equipment in art teaching, let alone new technology in art education is evidently limited. The fact that four-fifths of teachers claimed they did not have proper facilities when teaching especially the theoretical aspects of art education, such as cultural heritage and appreciation of nature, did not portray a good picture of proper educational support provided by the schools. This resulted in teachers resorting to a traditional form of "chalk and talk" teaching supplemented with general instructions of asking students to create art without providing adequate and professional guidance. An almost similar situation was found in the teaching of handicrafts and painting as there were 63% and 55% of teachers, respectively who claimed a lack of educational facilities.

5.2.2.4 Allocation of Teaching Time

According to the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), school managers and teachers have always been concerned about allocation of teaching time appropriate to students' educational level and the nature of subject taught (ACARA, 2011). In Iran, such concern is more critical in view of numerous factors. A two-hour session for classroom teaching per week in art is common to almost all schools in Iran. However, in various situations, such an allocation has been thwarted by several malpractices on the part of the teachers involved. For one thing, primary school teachers who are essentially generic by specialization are not highly inclined to teach art. At every opportunity they had, they would just avoid teaching art and replace it with more "honorable" subjects such as language or mathematics. Thus, it was not surprising to see that in a school session of 56 to 60 weeks, Art was taught in only 46 to 50 hours (ACARA, 2011).

Certainly, those teachers who believe strongly in art education for children expressed their unhappiness with the present 2-hour per week time allocation. Although teachers of painting are more contented than those of handicrafts, all are feeling constraints of covering the full-fledged art contents as the nature of its practice demands more time than what it is allocated for the present.

5.2.2.5 Teaching Effectiveness

The majority of teachers believed students can achieve all of the skills and attitude objectives, but only two out four in knowledge objectives. In other words, although students were able to produce art objects of considerable standard and adopted a somewhat right attitude toward arts, they were less informative about its academic aspects. As in many Middle Eastern countries, students are skilful in making art works, but are less able to talk about their own works, and what more to relate their works to cultural significance.

The present finding of art teaching in Iran parallels in many respects that of Nur Bakir's (2009) study in Turkey. Of interest, perhaps, Iran can well consider her suggestion regarding the practice of art teaching that should focus on producing visually literate students. Using an approach that would expose them to a variety of sources of embedded social and environmental constructs, students get to be inspired and intellectually stimulated; thus, develop their critical eyes. As an example, when students are invited to reflect on their daily lives during learning in an art class by being asked questions proactively, they would chance into thinking critically and search for connections and relevance on their own.

5.2.2.6 Delivery of Contents

The present research findings have it that the teaching of art in Iranian elementary schools seemed to be highly biased toward developing students' skill than their appreciative ability. Nevertheless, even within the skill components themselves, there are aspects that demand better expertise on the part of the teachers. This is to say mere generic teachers are considered less effective in handling good art lessons to young students because certain technicalities in art require specific knowledge of its imperatives. On the other hand, it must also be pointed out that art learning covers a good mastery of art appreciative ability on the part of the learners. As Lanier (1977) has pointed out, if art education is to be taught to the young or adults, it must to allow them to enjoy a multitude of visual aesthetic transactions of nature, folk arts, popular arts and the variety of the arts and art education world. Unfortunately, Iranian teachers have admitted that they did not have enough knowledge and experience for all this to happen in their art classes.

5.2.2.7 Teachers' Delivery Techniques

The claim by some teachers that they are familiar with art teaching strategies is not altogether comprehensive. What seems to be clear is that teachers are not encouraging

enough to help students develop artistic creativities. Of course, real development in art is greatly dependent on the teachers, who should encourage and guide students in the right way without causing children to lose their own personality and style. "In the other words, the crux of the point lies in the capacity of the art teacher to develop the child's creativity. This implies the utmost flexibility on the part of the teacher, who needs to be able to adjust to each unique situation" (El-Bassiouny, 1964, p. 23).

5.2.2.8 Teacher Classroom Evaluation

Three sources of evaluation are used in Iranian art classes: the student's self assessment, the group's assessment, and the teacher's assessment. Observation of art classes shows that the evaluation of student's achievement is a kind of participative assessment in which teachers, individual students and student groups in the class are involved actively in this process. They participate in active discussions about the quality of art works that a student produced. At the end of each art class the students would write comments on their own work. These comments, together with the teachers' are to be kept in a portfolio. Quite obviously, the nature of assessment looks at both student's process and products. However, one important point in the art assessments in primary schools is that the students' art work is not to be compared with that of other students, but teachers usually compare students with each other and at the end of class ask students "let us choose the best art work today". Since most Iranian elementary teachers are not artists and do not have any criteria for evaluation, they are unable to evaluate the student's art works. Wilson et al. (2008) suggest that "primary teachers without an interest in the arts themselves would have no clue how to evaluate work in the arts" (p. 43).

Indeed, at the end of using different kinds of evaluation there are not any new ideas or creativity from students. It could be that the process of giving feedback is not correct or maybe the duration of art class is insufficient for doing all of the process of creating an artwork and its evaluation. As other research shows, generally teachers want

to use SET (student evaluation of teaching) for personal decisions, as well as to demonstrate the quality of education at institutions, although they make little use of SET in order to improve their teaching. This is because SET should be embedded within a more holistic approach to the evaluation of teaching, where teachers make a serious effort to reflect upon the improvement of their teaching in a course (Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013).

5.2.3 Student Learning

The extent of teachers' performance on students' learning of art was examined through a class test, conducted on children in fifth grade. This examination was focused on three major elements of learning, namely: knowledge, skill, and attitude.

5.2.3.1 Acquisition of Knowledge

This study has shown that Iranian students' art knowledge is not quite up to the mark. The findings suggest that students only have access to one knowledge objective, that is, identifying the different art forms in Iran. However, they were poor or very poor in understanding art concepts and the fundamentals of art knowledge. Although the majority of them did show some basics of artistic knowledge, they were unable to relate their appreciation to nature or cultural heritage. This seems to be quite different from what Eisner (2002) is suggesting about art education for students in terms of focusing on development of skills and imagination for high quality performance. That way students are not only able to see aesthetic qualities in art works but also develop understanding of cultural and historical significance of art as well as the value of art in society.

Although Iranian students have undoubtedly shown an acceptably good knowledge of Iranian epics, they are less knowledgeable in contemporary modern art. Being well-versed with Iranian folklore, they are able to mention the important characters in the story but are unable in naming the contemporary artists.

With regard to students' learning from nature as a source of reference for creativity, most students failed to relate visual elements with examples of forms in nature. More significantly this failure is attributed to their lack of understanding the functions and characteristics of major art elements beyond mere recognition.

As for knowledge regarding functions of artistic tools and media, the present research maintains that the students are quite familiar with techniques in making various forms. They are well-versed in several methods to execute painting. Similarly, the students have displayed a reasonably good basic technical know-how in handling various art tools to make handicrafts, although they are less informative on issues of the language of art itself such as the composition of colors and application of art principles in art craft productions.

5.2.3.2 Students' Performance

Going by Hoepfner's (1998) proposition, students' performance in art learning should be focused on areas where students have problems in displaying their production skills. By the time students have entered school and received instruction in art, their natural artistic talents and creativity will exert considerable influence on their productions. It is inevitable that those characteristic will have a large influence on test performance, so the problem is to minimize that influence, and maximize the influence directly traceable to instruction.

Overall, Iranian students have not quite succeeded in achieving the desired skills, given that almost three quarters of them did not show encouraging results in both painting and handicrafts. Although they were taught with a strong concentration on art making, they were inconsistent in conceptualizing ideas. Even their production of portfolio was not up to the mark in terms of its organization and content presentation. This finding is consistent with that of Ahmadi (2009), which has indicated that the fifth

graders' artistic performance was indeed weak, particularly in their display of creativity, flexibility, and cultural heritage in the visual arts.

5.2.3.3 Students' Attitudes

Fortunately, students have, in various degrees, shown positive attitude toward art. Their predisposition to art as a result of their learning was measured in terms of their interests, preference, and views of art benefits when asked to self-evaluate their own ability. Almost three quarters of the students have expressed their interest in all of the art class activities. But what is more refreshing to see is that almost all of them perceived doing art activities as "very beneficial" to different aspects of involvement.

The important role of the arts for the school environment, developing aesthetic life skills, improving student performance in other areas, and exposing students to a range of cultural perspectives was described by Parr, Radford, and Snyder (1998) as so hard to teach.

5.2.4 Limitations

Despite the prevalent results as findings of the present research, there are several constraints as to its on several dimensions of research issues. Among the constraints are:

1. Purposeful sampling is one of our limitations because unfortunately art education is not very serious at the elementary level and in some schools in which art is to be taught, teachers use their own curriculum planning, not official art curriculum planning. Thus there are no ways to indicate the situation of all the students in private schools and other educational districts which use their own art curriculum.

2. Access to the educational districts was very difficult because Iran is so big and its West to East distance is more than 2000 km.

3. Variety of languages in Iran was another problem. Although the official language is Persian, in East Azabayezjan students speak Turkish and in this area also teachers speak Persian; still Persian is the second language and in primary schools student are not

skilful in using this language. Therefore, sometimes we have problems talking and testing especially in using some vocabulary.

4. Although in Iran the art education curriculum consists of visual art, telling story, theater, listening training, appreciation of nature and familiarity with history and cultural heritage; in this research, visual arts are reviewed as painting and handicraft.

5.2.5 Conclusion

The Iranian elementary art curriculum is characteristically traditional by virtue of its major contents that focus heavily on making activities based on two main areas of painting and handicrafts. Given such a nature, children assume art learning mostly by doing and producing works but with less emphasis on building their intelligent ability to appreciate works of art. Despite some indications in the Art Curriculum Framework to simulate the discipline-based art education model, there are no expressed philosophical and instructional contents appearing in major statements of the curriculum. This means making the meaning of visual art as a learning subject in schools, in line with up-to-date global objectives to supposedly develop visual literacy among children, is rendered less achievable.

Going by Detmers's (1980) experiential approach to art curriculum, which is centered on three types of knowing, it is apparent that art basic knowing in Iranian elementary schools is geared more toward acquainting students with knowledge through formative and rational learning. The formative learning is organized mainly through activities by making children work on free and specific topics through observing natural objects to explore basic techniques of art making such as collage, drawing, and so forth. Students would also integrate art activities with other subject disciplines through rational learning. The example of children working on illustrations in books on poems and national stories to produce narrative-based paintings is a case in point. In non-basic knowing, students would learn instantly through some theoretical verification of facts

in subjects such as art history and cultural heritage. In this case, they gain familiarity with national conventions, customs and handicraft products by way of teachers' demonstrations and illustrations, apart from occasional site visits to relevant places.

As for the procedural knowing, students are engaged mainly in formative learning to heighten protocolic, conventional and creative potentials. This is practiced through activities of making, designing and visual training in painting and handicrafts. In short, we can say the Iranian curriculum of art provides formative contents in basic and procedural knowing but lacks appreciative, experimental, critical and innovative knowledge and any philosophical and rational contents.

In sum, Iran, like many other countries, is inclined to adopting the DBAE model but with modifications. While in the DBAE model, there are four distinguishing emphases: Production, Aesthetics, Criticism, and Art History in art learning, in the Iranian model the elements of Aesthetics, Familiarization with Cultural Heritage, Art Production, Critical Thinking, and the Appreciation of Nature are embedded integrally as one singular approach.

Good curriculum implementation relies on teacher proficiency in the subject. This connects to the issue of teacher training programs in preparing teachers to teach the subject in question. In Iran, the current practice of art training for teachers is done only through in-service program with less than forty hours of instruction. Because of this limited exposure, teachers are inadequately prepared with well-grounded knowledge and skills in art teaching. In a more serious situation, some art teachers who lack training teach only by referring to desk copies to complete the job.

It is obvious that the in-service training provided so far has not been successful in producing art teachers of desirable quality. They are generally ill-equipped to handle effective lessons that demand the nitty-gritty of cultural heritage, and language of visual

arts. These feebly prepared teachers are certainly incompetent in conversing well in art curriculum issues including the subject matter, approach and strategies.

Hence, it goes without saying how the teachers who lack training in art would fare when teaching only by relying on the teacher's handbook for guidance. The reality of the scenario is that teachers are themselves not believing that the handbook contains sufficient coverage on topics needed for various approaches in art teaching. Most of the components, the teachers hold, cover materials only on the technical aspects, providing guides on developing art skills but not the appreciative dispositions of the students. This obvious neglect in the components of aesthetics and critical thinking from the handbooks leads to imbalance in art teaching, sidelining the study of cultural heritage through art.

Having inadequate educational facilities for their classroom teaching is another critical issue facing the teachers. Their access to sufficient materials and equipment in art teaching, let alone new technology in art education, is evidently limited. The fact that four-fifths of teachers claimed not to have proper teaching facilities reflects inadequate educational support provided by the schools for art teaching. The teachers are therefore resorting to a traditional form of "chalk and talk" teaching and general instructions of asking students to create art without providing adequate and professional guidance.

A two-hour session for classroom teaching per week in art is common to almost all schools in Iran. However, in various situations, such an allocation has been thwarted by several malpractices on the part of the teachers involved. For one thing, primary school teachers who are essentially generic by specialization are not highly inclined to teach art. At every available opportunity, they would conveniently replace art with more "honorable" subjects such as language or mathematics.

Within the skill components of art, there are aspects that demand better expertise on the part of the teachers. Mere generic teachers are certainly less effective in handling a good art lesson for young students. This is because certain technicalities in arts require specific knowledge. On the other hand, it must also be pointed out that art learning covers a good mastery of art appreciative ability on the part of the learners. Open admissions of teachers of their lack of such skills have directly indicated their improper conduct of art teaching in Iranian art classrooms.

Evaluations on students' art learning in Iranian classrooms involve three major modes: the student's self assessment, the group's assessment, and the teacher's assessment. Through these modes, students are allowed to participate actively in determining their own achievements. Quite obviously, the nature of assessments looks at both student's process and products. However, one important point to note is that there is a common practice in which students' works are placed in competition with each other. When the class has selected the best work, it was done in a very casual manner. Students chose the best work based merely on their personal preference, bereft of proper merit as the teachers themselves have failed to provide the criteria for the so-called art professional merit.

In fact, at the end of each evaluation exercise there is no positive generation of new ideas or creativity taking place. For some reasons, the active participation of students in the exercise has only brought them to mundane expressions of opinions; they are stifled with inopportunity to develop new vistas of ideas and creativity. The lack of teachers' commitment in providing desirable conditions for students' creative expression may be the result of their own incompetence and lack of interest.

For the foregoing reasons, the standard of Iranian students' art knowledge is not quite up to the mark. In this study, students have only proven their art knowledge by identifying the different art forms in Iran. They have, however, shown very limited

understanding of art concepts and the fundamentals of art knowledge. Their somewhat unsatisfactory acquisition of basics of artistic knowledge; even this limited knowledge could not support their ability to appreciate nature and their cultural heritage.

Ironically, the Iranian students have shown an acceptably good knowledge of characters in Iranian epics but not personalities in contemporary modern art. In short, the well-versed reference to Iranian folklore by the Iranian children has exceeded their common knowledge on development of contemporary modern art.

Overall, Iranian students have not quite succeeded in achieving the desired skills, given that almost three quarters of them did not show encouraging results in both painting and handicrafts. Although they were taught with a strong concentration on art making, they were inconsistent in their conceptualization of ideas. Even their production of portfolio was not up to the mark in terms of organization and presentation of contents.

Fortunately, students have, in various degrees, shown positive attitude toward art. Their predisposition to art as a result of their learning was measured in terms of their interests, preferences, views of art benefits when asked to self-evaluate their own ability. Almost three quarters of the students have expressed their interests in all of the art class activities. But what is more refreshing to see is that almost all of them regarded doing art activities as "very beneficial."

5.2.6 Implication of Findings

The results of this study will help art curriculum developers to improve the present art curriculum in Iran. Similarly, the findings offer new ideas to the Curriculum Development Centre to specify a new structure of contents and goals so that teachers can be better prepared to aid the student's individual growth in art.

The study provides a systematic, critical and comprehensive examination of art curriculum in Iran, particularly at the elementary education level. Therefore it is hoped this research will contribute to the literature of not only the Iranian academic sphere, but also of the world.

One important aspect of curriculum development is adoption of an appropriate model. Although the Iranian curriculum bears some similarity to the DBAE (Discipline Based Arts Education), it requires more specific approaches to relate the aims and objectives to the notions of creativity, sensibility, and appreciation in students' learning.

In fact nature and cultural heritage are a source for inspiration and spirituality, thus developing sensibility in the students can help them to better observe their environment, nature and society to enhance their art creativity and also to develop social experiences through art which will help in fostering human relations. Developing a sense of appreciation for all artistic values of the present and the past is also very important. For this reason the student's knowledge of art history and cultural heritage should be broadened through art activities. Iran as a big old country with different races, languages, religions and customs has a variety of culture and arts. The student should understand the diversity of the past and present culture of Iran and the essential rule of art in shaping culture. Therefore development of the cultural capacities helps the students to develop the Persian cultural and artistic future.

Through art activities the students develop their imagination, creativity, critical thinking, communication, adaptability and demonstrate their integrated personalities. The personal capacities are another important aspect in art education. Therefore the elements of Iranian art curriculum encapsulate spiritual, emotional, cognitive, expressive and cultural elements and help students link between art, culture and life. To relate to this issue the development of cognitive skills and life skills is very important. Art is one of the best instruments for enhancing multiple intelligences. Instead of

concentrating on clarity, techniques and content, the Iranian art curriculum developer should focus on how to improve visual thinking in students by developing what Gardner labelled as "Visual-Spatial" intelligence (Gardner, 1999). The life skills of concentration, self- motivation, self-confidence, decision-making, self-awareness and empathy can be developed through art. Such characteristics were described as contributing to EQ or emotional intelligence by Goleman (1995) who described it as including social or emotional skills.

Hence integration of the art contents in elementary schools is the best way to increase students' personal and cultural capacity. Developing and interweaving central themes for constructing art contents is one of the best types of curriculum development. The main issue in art education is to help the students express and create what they know, not what they see. Being able to express themselves freely is more important than anything else. Furthermore, focusing on central problems on the project-based art is the best approach for art education in Iran. With concentration on themes students should be able to recognize problems and develop problem solving skills.

The domain project encourages students to tackle open-ended problems similar to those undertaken by practicing artists. This cognitive-rich creativity Gardner believes is learned in the domain of each art form**.** If we leave fostering of students' creativity and critical thinking in the hands of teachers in primary schools where the majority of them are not artists, and also do not have good in-service teacher training, then this open ended aim will never come true.

Creativity and aesthetics are necessary criteria for problem solving. Creativity is neither an ideal nor an accident; we do not know what it is exactly. Art creativity is solving problems through imaginative thinking. Creative problem-solving can also focus on the design aspects of the arts as demonstrated in the Arts PROPEL model where artistic knowing is focused on Production, Perception, and Reflection.

As the students focus on the process, they are introduced to various sources of tradition which play a great role in solving their artistic problems. They relate their knowledge and experience about the works of art of the past to the immediate problems which they are tackling. This gives meaning to the works of art and develops their sensitivity at same time. This process is important in higher level of primary school because this is the stage in which children seem to appreciate art at the logical level.

Appreciation and history of Iranian art need to be taught through practice. In order to teach appreciation and art history through practice, teachers should think of some aesthetic objectives. In short, real child development in art greatly depends on the attitude of the teacher, who should encourage without interference and guide the students in the right direction without causing them to lose their own personality and style. The crux of the matter lies in the capacity of the art teacher to develop the student's creativity which would require utmost flexibility in each situation.

Iranian elementary school teachers have limited skills in artistry and few opportunities for in-service training. To address the unique classroom situation the teacher has to be trained in art education; to be able to practice the new program and prepare for it. It is better to use artistic teachers to teach art to bring out the creativity and artistic skills of students.

One of the main needs of teachers is visual art criteria. The teachers need books that explain the developmental cognitive and artistic stages of children in detail so that they can have a better perception of their students' abilities and needs. Thereby, they can articulate visual art criteria.

In the current traditional mode of teaching, by concentrating mostly on the practice of art making, students are only able to make art objects but are bereft of comprehensive artistic knowledge as proposed by, for example, Eisner (2004) and Wilson (2003). At the elementary level, the development of creativity and self-

expression – bedrock to art activities – is to allow children to develop their own techniques by which ideas and methods of expression of teachers should not be imposed upon them. On the contrary, students should be given the choices of materials with which they can freely express and create. Developing creativity in the students help them in their expression in all aspects of life.

5.2.7 Recommendations for Future Research

Curriculum is ever evolving. This research only considered elementary level art education in a study on limited number of classroom observations from the selected areas of three states. Given the limitations of this research, future research can delve into secondary and tertiary art education. Since this study only involved three states within Iran, future research should encompass more states.

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Appendix 1

Content Analysis

Platform / content	definition	distinguishing characteristics	Experiential approach	art elements
Painting				
Handicraft				
Sculpture				
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage				
Communication with nature:				

Appendix 2

A Comparison of Art Education Contents

CONTENTS	THE IRANIAN MODEL
Philosophical **a.** definition and description **b.** distinguishing characteristics **c.** experiential approach **d.** art elements	Approach of Iranian art education involve the activities of appreciating nature, aesthetics, familiarising with cultural heritage, critical thinking, besides art production. The general aim of the curriculum is to enable students to use knowledge of artistic sources – nature and cultural heritage - in their creative work and to become predisposed with artistic way in their learning of art. These contents are to reflect three major objectives, namely: the knowledge, skill and attitude/predisposition. Therefore the general of the curriculum involves an approach that concentrates very highly on attitude/predisposition objective.
Structural **a.** definition and description **b.** distinguishing characteristics **c.** experiential approach **d.** art elements	
Formative **a.** definition and description **b.** distinguishing characteristics **c.** experiential approach **d.** art elements	Two major forms: Painting and Handicrafts. it comprise nine sub-topics in Painting and nine sub-techniques in Handicrafts. Painting has two kinds of content: painting by topics and painting by techniques. The first one has four subjects: free topics, specific objects, narrative based and visual training. Paining by technique has five subjects: collaborative painting, finger printing, printing with tools, Designing by Shapes, and observation drawing. Handicrafts are more in techniques has nine subjects: Folding the paper, Working with natural object, Working with Clay, Using waste materials, exploring technique uses, working with shapes, Making Collage, Book Making, and Making Volumes
Historical **a.** definition and description **b.** distinguishing characteristics **c.** experiential approach, **d.** art elements	Cultural heritages consist of Familiarity with conventions, manners& handicraft, Familiarity with folk stories and poems, Visiting historical places and Visiting museums.
Rational **a.** definition and description **b.** distinguishing characteristics **c.** experiential approach **d.** art elements	Cultural heritages and Appreciation of nature are more integrated with other subjects

Appendix 3

Matching Contents with Types of Knowing

TYPES OF KNOW-ING CONTENTS	IRANIAN MODEL		
	BASIC KNOWING	NON BASIC KNOWING	PROCEDURAL
Philosophical			
Structural			
Formative			
Historical			
Rational			

Appendix 4

CONNECTING CONTENTS AND KNOWING TO ART LEARNING

TYPES OF KNOWING	ART LEARNING		CONTENTS				
			Philoso-phical	Structural	Formative	Historical	Rational
Basic Knowing	Recognitive						
	Acquaintive						
	Appreciative						
Non basic Knowing	Theoretical	Instantial					
		Experimental					
	Critical						
Procedural Knowing	Learning How to do	Protocolic					
		Conventional					
	Learning what to do	Innovative					
		Creative					

Teacher Questionnaire

State:	City:	Village:	Educational State:	School Name:
Girls/Boys				
Certificate:	Subject:		How many hours passed pre service?	
How many years have you taught?				
Do you have the art teacher book?				

1.   To what extent are you familiar with the Iranian art curriculum approach?

a)   Only heard its name
b)   Pass pre service training and I am a little familiar
c)   Study them and familiar to acceptable level
d)   Familiar completely and teach according to them

2.   To what extent is this approach proper for art education in elementary schools?
a.   Very little
b.   Little
c.   Much
d.   Very much

3.   Which of the following elements is most important for art education?
a)   Aesthetic
b)   Appreciation of Nature Production
c)   Art History
d)   Art Criticism

4.   Did the authors of teacher's books write the contents according to the Iranian Art approach?
a.   Very little
b.   Little
c.   Much
d.   Very much

5.   To what extend do you familiar with art goals (knowledge, skills and attitudes)?
a)   Only heard its name
b)   Pass pre service training and familiar little
c)   Study them and familiar acceptable
d)   Familiar completely and teach according to them

6.   To what extent are the following art objectives achievable for student learning?

Please tick   (/) in the appropriate box corresponding to each of the items below.

1= Not achievable; 2= less achievable;
3= Achievable; 4= Very achievable.

7.   To what extent are you in teaching the following subject content for art education?

Please tick   (/) in the appropriate box corresponding to each of the items below.

Objectives		1	2	3	4
Knowledge	Familiarity with nature				
	Familiarity with artistic courses				
	Preliminary familiarity with the instruments and materials				
	Familiarity with artistic &cultural heritage				
Skills	Development of ability to make use of five senses				
	Development of ability to use speech				
	Development of ability to do the movements appropriately to use the instruments, materials &simple techniques				
	Development of ability to express one's thought, feelings in artistic activities				
	Development of thinking skills				
	Development of ability to make social communication				
View and interest	Attention to beauty and treating of aesthetic feeling				
	Tendency to express one's own thought and feelings				
	Paying attention to one's own abilities and how to gain more self-confidence				
	Paying attention to preserving cultural heritage and respect for artists and artistic work				
	Tendency to communicate with others				
	Interest in exploration and gain experience in different artistic themes and subjects				

1= not teaching; 2 = seldom teaching; 3= teaching; 4 = often teaching

Content	1	2	3	4
Painting from specific topic				
Painting for story or poem				
Drawing (Designing from model)				
Mix with other artistic course				
Making shapes with papers and cardboard — Making volumes in shape of a cross — Symmetrical shapes				
Asymmetrical shapes				
Making simple geometrical shapes — Cubic				
Pyramid				
Making book				
Making Collage				
Making drum				
Making Volume — Making clay volume				
Painting clay volume				
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage — Customs and ceremony				
Native stories and poems				
Going to Historical places				
Going to Museums				

8.   To what extent do you pay attention to these elements in your teaching process of

art courses?

Educational elements	Never	Seldom	often	Always
Production				
Aesthetic (in nature and art production)				
Art history				
Art criticism				

9. Do you use these teaching – learning methods in your art class?

Educational elements	Never	Seldom	often	always
Class discussion				
Group discussion				
Explanatory methods				
Demonstration				
Role playing methods				
Project Work				

10. How often do you use the following assessment approach to evaluate student's

work in the classroom?

Assessment approach	Never	Seldom	often	always
Choosing the best student's work in the class				
Compare the merit of a student's work with other's				
Consider the individual merit in a student's work				

11. How often do you use the following assessment strategies in classroom?

Assessment strategy	never	Seldom	often	lways
Student Self assessment				
Student group assessment				
Teachers standard assessment				

12. . How do you find students' interest in the following art courses?

Art courses	not interest	Less interest	interest	very interest
Communication with nature				
Painting				
handicraft and sculpture				

Story and theatre				
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage				

13. How much was in service training succeed in the following courses?

Art courses	less	somewhat	Much	Very much
Communication with nature				
Painting				
handicraft and sculpture				
Story and theatre				
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage				

14. How much did you learn about specific evaluation method to evaluate classroom students' art learning from in- service training programme?

evaluation method	Not Much	Just Sufficient	Much	Very much
Student Self assessment				
Student group assessment				
Teachers standard assessment				

15. Do you need more art in-service classes in the following courses?

yes ☐   ☐

If yes, in which courses?

Communication with nature ☐   Painting ☐ handicraft and sculpture ☐

Audio training (music) ☐   Story and theater ☐

Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage ☐

General information about art curriculum ☐

16.   To what extent are the following resources - the educational materials, equipments and facilities sufficient for the present teaching of art according to the contents below? Please tick (√) in the appropriate box corresponding to each of the items given.

1.   Not sufficient; 2. Less sufficient; 3. Sufficient; 4. Very sufficient

Content	Teacher's knowledge & skills				Educational facilities & environment				Time				in-service trainings				Clear explanation in teacher book			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Communication with nature																				
Painting																				
handicraft and sculpture g																				
Story and theater																				
Familiarity with artistic and cultural heritage																				

Appendix 6

Student Attitude Test (Fifth Grade)

State: City: School: Gender:

Please respond to the following questions/statements by marking (/) in the appropriate box.

1.   Do you like going to the nature and watch its beauty?
      Not at all   Yes, somewhat   Yes   Yes, very much
2.   What do you think about paying attention to the beauty of nature to recognize God
      Useless   Somewhat useful   Useful   Very useful
3.   Do you like seeing art work
      Not at all   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much
4.   I think paying attention to the beauty of nature and our environments to create art works is:
      Useless   Somewhat useful   Useful   Very useful
5.   Do you like painting?
      Do not Quite Like   like somewhat   Like   Like very much

6.   Do you like Handicraft and clay works?
      Don't Quite Like   Somewhat Like   like   like very much
7.   Do like Iranian stories?
      Don't Quite Like   Somewhat Like   like   like very much
8.   Do you like visiting of historical places, museum and hearing about history?
      Don't Quite Like   Somewhat Like   like   like very much
9.   Do you like having discussions about art activities and the subject?
      Don't Quite Like   Somewhat Like   like   like very much
10.   Do you do the following art activities with ease?
      Painting: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much
      Handicraft: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much
      Making clay: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much
      Story: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much

Familiarizing with cultural heritage: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much
Yes, very much

Communicating with nature: Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes,
very much

11. Are you able to apply what you learnt from art class to the other subjects and
     areas in your personal life?

     Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much

12. Do you like to continue art activities next year?

     Not much   Yes, somewhat   Yes much   Yes, very much

13. How do you like the following art subjects?

Painting: not much   some how   much   very much

Handicraft: not much   some how   much   very much

Clay work: not much   some how   much   very much

Story: not much   some how   much   very much

Familiarity with cultural heritage: not much   some how   much   very much

Communication with nature not much   some how   much   very much

14. Do you like to work like an artist in one specific art subject?

     not much   some how   much   very much

15. What do you think about getting experiences in learning different art subjects as a
     discipline in life?

     Not Useful   Somewhat useful   useful   very useful

16. What you think about maintaining and conserving art works and the cultural
     heritage of our country?

     Not Useful   Somewhat useful   useful   very useful

17. Do you like doing art activities in a group with your class mates?

     Not Useful   Somewhat useful   useful   very useful

Appendix 7

The Evaluation form for Portfolio

Grade: state: city: boy: girl:

Portfolio Presentation

Items		Complete	Incomplete	Total
Appearance of the portfolio	Students identity information, grade and name of the school are written on the cover			
	There are folders to contain the artwork			
	There is an attached list of contexts at the beginning of the folder			
The list if context sheet is filled with the information regarding dates, number, topic, short description about the work and the feelings and thoughts of the students.				
The artworks have identifying information, including number, date, topic, students name and grade.				

Portfolio Contents

Subjects	Criteria	Need for more effort	Near to level of expectation	Expectation level	Higher than expected level	Do not have a subject	Total (%)
Handicraft	Having skills to make forms						
	Showing creative designs						
	Paying attention to diverse sources of ideas						
	Working with geometrical forms						
	Having skills in using art instruments and materials						
	Producing attractive works						
Painting	Having the skills to draw forms						
	Showing creative designs						
	Paying attention to diverse sources of ideas						
	Working with geometrical forms						
	Having skills in using art instruments						
	Producing attractive works						

Appendix 8

Performance test

State:	City:	School : Boys/ Girl
Name		

1.   Painting: Students are first asked to recall from memory and tell a story. They would then proceed to depict one scene from the story in a painting.

Students' performance in painting

Criteria	Need for more effort	Near to level of expectation	Expectation level	Higher than expected level	Total (%)
Having skills in using art instruments and materials					
Showing creative designs					
Producing attractive works					
Applying a variety of visual elements					
Using proper color scheme					
Neatness					
Sketches of real models					

2. Handicraft:

- Students are first asked to recall from memory and tell a story before being asked to choose one scene from the story. They would then proceed to depict the scene through making handicraft by:

- Making volume

Students' performance in handicraft

Criteria	Need for more effort	Near to level of expectation	Expectation level	Higher than expected level	Total (%)
Having skills in using the instruments					
Having skills in using the materials					
Showing creative designs					
Handicraft related to memorized story					
Producing attractive works					
Appropriate use of various materials in illustrations					
Applying a variety of visual elements					
Neatness					
Construction of Forms					
Functions of Forms					
Having skills in working with clay					

Appendix 9

Assessment of Students' Art Knowledge in Primary School

1.   What are the Iranian arts that you are familiar with?

1.   Carpet weaving: 208 students

2.   Pottery: 188 students

3.   Painting: 102 students

4.   Calligraphy: 67 students

5.   Miniature: 52 students

6.   Architecture: 35 students

7.   Stone carving: 32 students

8.   Kilim weaving: 31 students

9.   Pateh-Douzi: 21 students

10.   Wood mosaic: 18 students

11.   Mirror mosaic: 18 students

12.   Sewing: 17 students

13.   Theatre (Acting): 17 students

14.   Sketching: 16 students

15.   Knitting: 15 students

16.   Carving: 13 students

17.   Inlay: 12 students

18.   Sculpture: 11 students

19.   Threading: 9 students

20.   Pearl embroidery: 8 students

21.   Tile mosaic: 6 students

22. Artificial flower making: 5 students

23. Weaving: 8 students

24. Story telling: 4 students

25. Jajim weaving: 5 students

26. Masonry: 2 students

27. Tapestry: 3 students

28. Embroidery: 2 students

29. Cooking: 2 students

30. Panel making: 2 students

31. Quilting: 2 students

32. Gold gilding: 2 students

33. Termeh embroidering

34. Playing instruments

35. Make-up art

36. Marquetry (khatam)

37. Mat weaving

38. Basket weaving

39. Illuminated manuscript

40. Cooper gilding

41. Bead embroidery

42. Namad weaving

43. Sequin embroidery

44. Candle making

2. What are the Iranian stories and characters that you are familiar with?

1. Shahnameh (Rostam & Sohrab, Zaal, Siavash, Afrasiab): 246 students

2. Hezar-o-Yek Shab (One Thousand and One Night)- (Shahrzad): 69 students

3. Goolestan va Boostane Sadi: 32 students

4. Dastan- e-Rastan: 30 students

5. Arash- e- Kamaangir: 27 students

6. Masnavy-e- Manavi: 21 students

7. Shangool-o-Mangool: 18 students

8. Kelileh va Demneh: 18 students

9. Ariobarzan: 17 students

10. Divaan-e- Hafez: 9 students

11. Shirin va Farhad: 6 students

12. The story of Solomon: 5 students

13. Hatam-e-Tayi: 5 students

14. Stories of Majid: 5 students

15. Kadou-Ghelghelehzan: 4 students

16. Bozboz-e-Ghandi: 4 students

17. Kolah-Ghermezi: 3 students

18. Zaal va Simorgh: 3 students

19. Stories of Prophets: 3 students

20. Leyli va Majnoon: 3 students

21. Takhti: 2 students

22. Ebn-e- Sina: 2 students

23. Ali baba and Forty Thieves: 2 students

24. Aladin and Forty Thieves

25. Anooshiravan

26. Fereydoon

27. Tarikh-e-Bal'ami

28. Gulliver's Travels

29. Pouriya-e-Vali

30. Goshtasb

31. Choopan-e-Doroughgoo

32. Jane-o-Tavarikh

33. Amirarsalan-e-Namdar

34. Eskandar

35. Khaleh- Souskeh

3. Who are the Iranian artists that you are familiar with?

1. Hossein Behzad: **157 students**

2. Mahmoud Farshchian: 105 students

3. Kamal-ol-Molk: 92 students

4. Actors (such as Jamshid Mashayekhi, Mohammadreza Golzar, Amin Hayayi,

Javad Razavian, Javad Hashemi, Ali Sadeghi, Entezami): 92 students

5. Ferdowsi: 79 students

6. Saadi: 67 students

7. Hafez: 56 students

8. Shahryaar: 50 students

9. Parvin Etesami: 37 students

10. Molavi: 30 students

11. Dr. Hesabi: 11 students

12. Shajarian: 9 students

13. Khajeh Nezam-ol-Molk: 8 students

14.   Abou-Ali-Sina: 8 students

15.   Asghar Farhadi: 7 students

16.   Ayatollah Marandi: 7 students

17.   Mostafa Rahmandoust: 5 students

18.   Dr. Moein: 5 students

19.   Abounasr Farabi: 5 students

20.   Zakaria Razi: 4 students

21.   Malek-o-Sho'ara Bahar: 3 students

22.   Sohrab Sepehri: 2 students

23.   Gheysar Aminpour: 2 students

24.   Nohammad Esfehani: 2 students

25.   Mohammad Javad Behjat: 2 students

26.   Dehkhoda

27.   Bayat

28.   Khayyam

29.   Dr. Ali Shariati

30.   Alireza Eftekhari

31.   Iraj Bastami

32.   Mohammad Tajvidi

33.   Nezami

34.   Mohaghegh

4.   **Name some of the dots in the natural phenomena.**

1.   Stars: 76 students

2.   The sun: 71 students

3.   Flower: 50 students

4. Leaf: 55 students

5. Trees from far away: 45 students

6. Petal: 42 students

7. Some of the fruits: 38 students

8. Birds in the sky: 27 students

9. Rain: 26 students

10. Water drop: 25 students

11. Stone: 19 students

12. Berries: 19 students

13. The moon: 17 students

14. Pupil: 14 students

15. Dots on the ladybirds: 14 students

16. Pollen: 11 students

17. Sand: 10 students

18. Eyes of the flies: 10 students

19. Apple: 9 students

20. Orange: 8 students

21. Pebble: 8 students

22. Sunflower: 7 students

23. Dots on the Azarin stone: 7 students

24. Olive: 5 students

25. Butterfly wing pattern: 4 students

26. Leopard: 4 students

27. Clock: 4 students

28. Grapes: 3 students

29. The sea: 4 students

30. The mountains: 4 students

31. Ants: 3 students

32. Insects: 2 students

33. Flower buds: 3 students

34. Dew: 2 students

35. Mung beans: 2 students

36. Tiger

37. Light bulbs

38. Wheat

39. Oat

40. Holes on the wall

41. Eyes of snails

5. **Name some of the lines in the natural phenomena**

1. Trees: 163 students

2. Plant stems: 87 students

3. The mountains: 47 students

4. Leaf: 41 students

5. Branch: 39 students

6. Grass: 26 students

7. Flowers: 26 students

8. Car: 26 students

9. Buildings: 23 students

10. Wall: 21 students

11. Window: 18 students

12. Comet: 15 students

13. Door and windows: 15 students

14. Snakes: 14 students

15. Rivers: 13 students

16. Roots of tree: 11 students

17. Firelight: 10 students

18. Spider web: 8 students

19. Flower vessels: 7 students

20. Lines on the bees: 6 students

21. Carpets: 6 students

22. Streets: 5 students

23. Fruiting body: 5 students

24. Clouds: 5 students

25. Bricks: 5 students

26. Train tracks: 4 students

27. Reed: 3 students

28. Lines on the seashells: 3 students

29. Lines on the stones: 3 students

30. Zebra patterns: 3 students

31. Rope: 3 students

32. Cucumber: 3 students

33. Fractures on the stones: 3 students

34. Sea waves: 2 students

35. Wooden cottage: 2 students

36. Rain: 2 students

37. Animal whiskers: 2 students

38. Elephant trunk : 2 students

39. Banana

40. Layers of sedimentation

41. Tiger

42. Chair

43. Heater

44. Refrigerator

45. Lines of the cloths

46. Eyebrow

47. Eyelashes

48. Hodges of hedgehogs

49. Leg skeleton

50. Pencil

51. Worms

52. Carrot patterns

53. Swordfish

54. Birds wing patterns

55. Basketball patterns

56. Firelights

57. Hand palm patterns

58. Lizards

59. Forests

6. **Name some of the geometrical shapes you see in the natural phenomena or**

handmade things

+ Circles:

- The sun: 132 students

- The moon: 45 students

- Clock: 38 students

- Ball: 35 students

- Tyre: 18 students

- Flowers: 15 students

- The earth: 12 students

- Pupil: 12 students

- Stones: 9 students

- Apples and peaches: 4 students

- Carousel: 4 students

- Pool : 4 students

- Oranges: 2 students

- Plates: 2 students

- Cherries

- Human head

- Rectangles and squares:

- Table: 45 students

- Book: 19 students

- Door: 17 students

- Cupboard:17 students

- Television: 16 students

- Board: 12 students

- Wall: 12 students

- Ceiling: 12 students

- Photo frame: 12 students

- Radio: 11 students

- Window: 11 students

- Bench: 10 students

- Tile: 6 students

- Glass: 6 students

- Bricks: 4 students

- Ruler: 2 students

- Bus: 2 students

- Carpet: 2 students

- Panel

- Box

- Eraser

- Flag

- Triangle:

- Mountains: 83 students

- The pyramids: 14 students

- Roof of House: 5 students

- Birds' beaks: 3 students

- Buildings: 60 students

- Tree barks: 49 students

- Car: 35 students

- Phone: 21 students

- Leaf: 25 students

- Bee hive: 14 students

- Birds' eggs: 9 students

- Bridge: 8 students

- Branch: 5 students

- Light bulbs: 3 students

- Stars: 3 students

- Horns: 2 students

- Pencils: 2 students

- Dinosaur tail

- River

7.   **Name some of the non-geometrical shapes you see in the natural phenomena or handmade things.**

1.   Cloths: 56 students

2.   Clouds: 53 students

3.   Trees: 36 students

4.   Leaf: 36 students

5.   Airplane: 31 students

6.   The sea: 29 students

7.   Car: 29 students

8.   Chair: 25 students

9.   River: 22 students

10.   Food containers: 22 students

11.   Stones: 19 students

12.   Buildings: 18 students

13.   Grass: 19 students

14.   Valley: 17 students

15.   Decoration material: 16 students

16.   Shoes: 16 students

17.   Animals (such as: lions, tigers, birds, etc.): 14 students

18.   Knives: 13 students

19.   Desert: 13 students

20.   Waterfall: 12 students

21.   Butterfly: 11 students

22.   Wire: 11 students

23.   Flowers: 10 students

24.   Light bulb: 10 students

25.   Socks: 10 students

26.   Road: 9 students

27.   Spoon: 9 students

28.   Slide: 9 students

29.   Field: 9 students

30.   Lips: 8 students

31.   Poles: 7 students

32.   Bridge: 7 students

33.   The mountains: 6 students

34.   Shapes of the countries: 6 students

35.   Ears: 5 students

36.   Pen: 5 students

37.   Bottles: 4 students

38.   Hat: 4 students

39.   Sculpture:4 students

40.   Streets: 4 students

41. Eraser: 4 students

42. Mosque dome: 3 students

43. Pencil case: 3 students

44. Grass: 3 students

45. Book:2 students

46. Bag: 3 students

47. Clock: 2 students

48. Bicycle: 2 students

49. The curtains: 2 students

50. Meat grinder

51. Vacuum cleaner

52. Ladle

53. Glasses

54. Chandelier

55. Eyes

56. Photos

57. Words on this page

58. Ice

59. Refrigerator

60. Motorbike

61. Table/desk

62. Mushroom

8.   How many types of line do you see in the natural phenomena and handmade

things?

1.   Zigzag, straight and curvy lines: 58 students

2.   Straight lines (such as books, boards, etc.): 46 students

3.   Curvy line: 41 students

4.   Trees: 31 students

5.   Zigzag lines: 19 students

6.   River: 16 students

7.   Moonlight: 15 students

8.   Fens: 12 students

9.   Poles:11 students

10.   Plants stem: 11 students

11.   Curvy and straight lines: 7 students

12.   Photo frames: 7 students

13.   Window: 7 students

14.   Door frame: 6 students

15.   Door: 6 students

16.   Light bulb: 6 students

17.   Ruler: 5 students

18.   Click handle: 5 students

19.   Wall corner: 4 students

20.   Zigzag, closed and straight lines: 4 students

21.   Candle: 4 students

22.   Cupboard: 3 students

23.   Gas pipe: 3 students

24.   Closed line such as tyre: 2 students

25.   Heater pipe: 2 students

26.   Pencil: 2 students

27.   Rope: 2 students

9. Where can the natural textures be found? Name and compare their properties.

1. Trees: 56 students

2. Stones: 47 students

3. Deserts: 36 students

4. Spider web: 36 students

5. Animal skin: 33 students

6. Carpet: 23 students

7. Plants in forests: 21 students

8. Cocoons: 16 students

9. Leaf: 13 students

10. Human body: 12 students

11. Bee hive: 12 students

12. Sea and rivers: 10 students

13. Grass: 6 students

14. Flower: 5 students

15. Table/desk: 4 students

16. Chair: 3 students

17. Fish scale

18. Roughness, softness, size.

10. How do you recognize the texture?

- By looking and touching: 37 students

- By looking: 30 students

- By touching: 9 students

+ Natural textures, unnatural textures, plant textures, animal textures (such as bee hives and spider web.): 17 students

+ Material, shapes and touching: 15 students

+ Materials, shapes and colour: 15 students

+ Natural wrapping around things: 5 students

11.   What are the main colors?

+ 3 colors, blue, yellow, red: 212 students

+ Red: 66 students

+ Yellow: 58 students

+ Blue: 64 students

+ Green: 59 students

+ White: 30 students

+ Black: 20 students

+ Orange: 13 students

+ Pink: 9 students

+ Purple: 8 students

12.   Combination of yellow and red is ….

+ Orange: 361 students

13.   Combination of blue and yellow is ….

+ Green: 367 students

14. Combination of red and blue is ….

- Purple: 321 students

15. Combination of every colour with white is ….

- A lighter colour: 253 students

- The colour itself: 46 students

- White: 6 students

16. Combination of every color with black is ….

- A darker color: 230 students

- Black: 59 students

- Darker than black: 15 students

17. Name the different types of each colour.

- Green, light green, dark green, olive drab,: 130 students

- Blue, navy blue, sky blue, dark blue, turquoise: 68 students

- Red, orange, pink, scarlet, maroon: 30 students

- Light green, dark green: 18 students

- Light blue, dark blue: 18 students

- Light pink, dark pink, dirty pink: 5 students

- Dark red, light red, pinkish red: 9 students

- Yellow, lemon yellow: 4 students

- Dark green: 5 students

- Some are darker and some are lighter: 3 students

- Black, grey and brown: 3 students

- Various brown: 3 students

- Purple, dull purple and onion purple.

18. What do you know about the variety of colors in leaves?

- Yellow, red, green, brown: 47 students
- Yellow, green, red, orange: 20 students
- Yellow, orange, red: 28 students
- Yellow, green: 19 students
- Light green, dark green: 12 students
- Light green, dark green, olive drab, leopard: 9 students
- Green: 7 students
- White, yellow, orange, brown: 6 students
- Red, gold, yellow: 3 students
- Colourful:3 students
- Green, blue, yellow: 2 students
- Red, orange, brown.
- Red, brown, yellow.
- Olive brad, jade, yellow, purple
- Yellow, brown, red.
- Green, orange.

19. Where can you find beauty?

1. Nature: 202 students
2. Flowers: 69 students
3. In God creations: 65 students
4. The sky: 32 students
5. Forests, because they are wide and massive: 26 students

6. Growing kids: 25 students

7. Trees: 22 students

8. Change in seasons: 22 students

9. Power of God: 14 students

10. Whitening of human hair: 14 students

11. Human crafts: 12 students

12. Blue sea: 9 students

13. Variety of colours: 9 students

14. Paintings: 9 students

15. In the soil: 6 students

16. The sun, stars and planets: 7 students

17. Grass: 6 students

18. The universe: 5 students

19. Human: 4 students

20. Having a good perspective and seeing everything in a good way: 3 students

21. In shapes and colors: 3 students

22. Houses and schools: 3 students

23. Sound of leaves: 2 students

24. The mountains: 2 students

25. Animals: 2 students

26. Creation of plants and planets: 2 students

27. The colour of the sky and the sun: 3 students

28. Butterflies

29. The sunset

30. In being organised.

20.   How can we make our environment more beautiful?

- By tidy up and being organized: 155 students

- By gardening and planting: 131 students

- By painting the walls and the environment: 47 students

- By decoration: 28 students

- By having aquarium: 12 students

- By being organised: 9 students

- By keeping the air clean: 9 students

- By using the environment properly and keeping it clean: 6 students

- By not carving anything on trees and walls: 2 students

- By not setting fire: 2 students

- By not damaging the flower

- By keeping the water clean

21.   How can we make our things and useful materials more beautiful?

- By colouring them: 57 students

- By decorating them: 48 students

- By cleaning them: 41 students

- By organising them: 38 students

- By decorating and coloring them: 22 students

- By changing their setting: 21 students

- By making beautiful things out of recycles: 17 students

- By seeing things carefully and beautifully: 13 students

- By keeping them clean: 9 students

- By cleaning and coloring them: 9 students

- By using them properly: 6 students

+ By using antiques and decorative things: 5 students

+ By using beautiful birds: 5 students

+ By using sands in the fish tank: 4 students

+ By being organised: 4 students

+ By using beautiful handwriting in the books and their covers

+ By gardening

22.   As an artist, what does it mean by observing a phenomenon?

+ Seeing it properly: 52 students

+ Using different senses: 24 students

+ Listen properly: 16 students

+ Touching, expressing and listening.