

Assessing the Suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) for Iran

An Analysis of Cultural Factors Impacting Implementation

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a. Abstract

This thesis investigates whether high-quality education is appropriate in Iran's cultural setting, which aligns with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The study's exploratory qualitative methodology focuses on identifying and evaluating the cultural elements that affect Iran's ability to execute high-quality education. Twelve parents, educators, and educational consultants participate in semi-structured interviews to get their thoughts and opinions through questions and answers. The study explores the relationship between education and cultural norms, examining how cultural influences affect educational quality.

Based on Pierre Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, this study's theoretical framework emphasizes embodied, objectified, and institutionalized cultural capital. The data revealed significant themes related to gender norms, religious impact, language and ethnicity, socioeconomic level, family expectations, location, and educational access.

The study's conclusions have essential ramifications for the Iranian educational system. They draw attention to the ways that deeply embedded cultural elements in Iranian culture can seriously impede students' access to high-quality education, which can result in educational disparities, especially for marginalized populations. The study also shows that cultural factors affect students' motivation and performance, directly affecting educational outcomes.

The study's results highlight the critical need for educational policies to adopt a more culturally aware stance. Inequality may be sustained by the present policies' inability to adequately address cultural diversity in the educational system. The study makes suggestions for a more integrated strategy that, if put into practice, may significantly improve the caliber and efficacy of educational initiatives. It also urges more investigation into the effects of cultural variations on schooling in various Iranian communities and areas.

Keywords: Quality Education, Sustainable Development, Cultural Capital, Cultural norms, SDG4

b. Acknowledgment

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In the vast global education landscape, pursuing quality education is an enduring aspiration and a cornerstone for societal advancement. As we navigate the complexities of educational paradigms, the overarching goal encapsulated in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), namely Quality Education, emerges as a lodestar guiding nations toward a more equitable and prosperous future. This pursuit transcends borders, resonating across diverse cultures and societies, as attaining quality education becomes a shared ambition woven into the fabric of international development.

Within this global tapestry, the focus of this study converges on the intricate interplay between quality education and the unique cultural dynamics within the context of Iran. The significance of this exploration lies not only in its contribution to the broader discourse on educational frameworks but also in its specific relevance to a nation with a rich historical tapestry and a contemporary trajectory marked by a commitment to progress.

As we embark on this intellectual journey, the lens of inquiry narrows onto Tehran, Iran's capital city, serving as a microcosm of the nation's educational landscape. Tehran, a bustling metropolis at the crossroads of tradition and modernity, encapsulates the challenges and opportunities inherent in the quest for quality education within a culturally rich and diverse milieu. In navigating the labyrinth of educational policies, pedagogical approaches, and cultural nuances, Tehran emerges as an evocative backdrop for assessing the suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) within the specific contours of its societal and cultural fabric.

The threads of this study are intricately woven into the global discourse on education, with Tehran as the focal point for unraveling the complexities that define the pursuit of quality education within a distinctive cultural context. The reader is invited to traverse this intellectual terrain, where the significance of the study becomes apparent not only in the context of international educational benchmarks but, more crucially, in the nuanced exploration of how cultural factors shape and influence the implementation of quality education in Iran.

1.2 Background Information

Education, a universal catalyst for societal progress and individual empowerment, is an enduring cornerstone of human development. Within this broader context of educational pursuits, the global imperative of ensuring quality education, as encapsulated in Sustainable

Development Goal 4 (SDG4), gains paramount significance. Quality education emerges as an abstract ideal and a tangible commitment woven into international efforts to secure a sustainable and equitable future for all.

The global importance of quality education, enshrined in SDG4, transcends geographic boundaries and cultural nuances. It is a shared vision articulated by the international community to address the multifaceted challenges societies face in their quest for educational excellence. SDG4, with its explicit focus on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, recognizes that education's benefits extend far beyond individual enrichment—they ripple through communities and nations, fostering economic growth, social cohesion, and the realization of human potential.

Within the expansive realm of education, the emphasis on quality serves as a guiding principle that acknowledges the transformative power of education when it is not only accessible but also characterized by effectiveness, relevance, and inclusivity. The recognition that educational systems should not only convey knowledge but also provide students with the skills, values, and critical thinking talents they need to navigate a constantly changing environment is emphasised by the global commitment to high-quality education, as expressed in SDG 4. The importance of high-quality education is highlighted even more as the world community struggles with complicated issues including population changes, technology breakthroughs, and environmental concerns. It is the linchpin for fostering innovation, nurturing informed citizenship, and addressing the issues that define the 21st century. Thus, the significance of quality education extends beyond individual classrooms—it resonates as a collective endeavor, shaping the trajectory of societies and contributing to the global tapestry of progress.

In delving into the broader topic of education, with a focal lens on quality education articulated in SDG4, this study situates itself within a global narrative that recognizes education not only as a fundamental right but as a cornerstone for building resilient, sustainable, and inclusive societies. This contextual framing sets the stage for a nuanced exploration of how the principles of quality education manifest within the specific cultural context of Iran, with Tehran as the focal point of analysis.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

Against the backdrop of global educational aspirations, the relevance of this research crystallizes in its commitment to probing the nuanced dynamics of quality education within the specific socio-cultural context of Iran. While the discourse on quality education resonates

universally, the importance of delving into its suitability in the Iranian milieu becomes pronounced. This study is positioned at the intersection of two narratives—the global pursuit of quality education and the unique tapestry of Iranian culture and society.

Iran's rich historical heritage and contemporary commitment to progress provide a compelling canvas for this exploration. As the nation positions itself within the global landscape, the need to assess the suitability of quality education takes on a heightened significance. The cultural, social, and historical nuances embedded in Iran's identity complicate the implementation and reception of quality education practices. Therefore, understanding how these factors interact is academically pertinent and acquires real-world implications for educational policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders in Iran.

The research's relevance extends beyond academic inquiry; it speaks to the imperative of tailoring educational paradigms to resonate with the Iranian people's specific needs, values, and aspirations. Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach to education is inadequate, the study positions itself as a crucial exploration into aligning global aspirations for quality education with the socio-cultural context of Iran. The outcomes of this research can inform educational strategies, policies, and interventions that are effective and culturally resonant.

Moreover, the study underscores the broader global discourse on cultural responsiveness in education. It contends that understanding the cultural intricacies of society is indispensable for crafting educational frameworks that are not only inclusive but also capable of fostering meaningful learning outcomes. The research aims to contribute to the localized context and broader conversations on culturally informed educational practices globally by emphasizing the relevance of assessing the suitability of quality education in Iran. In doing so, it aligns itself with the fundamental principle that quality education should be a universally accessible and culturally responsive endeavor.

1.4 Problem Statement

At the heart of this research lies a pivotal inquiry, addressing a pronounced gap in the existing scholarly landscape: assessing the suitability of quality education, as defined by Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), within the intricate tapestry of Iran. The research problem at the forefront of this study is the imperative to discern how the principles and benchmarks of quality education, globally advocated under SDG4, align with the socio-cultural dynamics and specific needs of the Iranian context.

While extensive in its exploration of quality education on a global scale, the existing body of literature still needs to sufficiently delve into the intricacies of its application within the unique cultural milieu of Iran. This gap is particularly conspicuous given Iran's rich historical heritage, cultural diversity, and commitment to progress in the realm of education. The research aims to bridge this gap by embarking on a comprehensive analysis that scrutinizes the interplay between cultural factors and the effective implementation of quality education in Iran.

The core research problem can be succinctly articulated as exploring how cultural elements intersect with educational policies, practices, and outcomes within the Iranian context. The study seeks to unravel the complexities of this interaction, delving into the cultural nuances that shape and, in turn, are shaped by the country's educational landscape. By doing so, it aspires to shed light on the factors that either facilitate or impede progress toward achieving the overarching goal of SDG4 in Iran.

Essentially, the goal of this research is to provide a more nuanced understanding of the unique opportunities and problems that result from integrating Iran's cultural quirks with worldwide goals for high-quality education. It is a call to scrutinize the universality of SDG4 and its adaptability to diverse cultural contexts. By addressing this research problem, the study seeks to provide insights that extend beyond the theoretical realm, offering practical implications for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders engaged in shaping the educational landscape of Iran. The research endeavors to catalyze dialogue and action, navigating the uncharted waters of cultural responsiveness to pursue quality education.

1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of addressing the identified gap in the literature cannot be overstated, as it represents a critical juncture where theoretical knowledge meets the practical realities of educational development in Iran. By exploring the suitability of quality education (SDG4) within the Iranian context and the cultural factors influencing its implementation, the research seeks to instigate a cascade of impacts on educational practices, policies, and outcomes in the country.

First and foremost, delving into this gap is crucial for crafting educational policies that are not only informed by global benchmarks but are also deeply attuned to the socio-cultural fabric of Iran. The country's rich history, diverse ethnicities, and cultural traditions create a unique educational landscape that demands a tailored approach. This research aspires to provide insights that can guide policymakers in designing interventions that resonate with the values

and aspirations of the Iranian people, thus fostering a more effective and culturally sensitive educational system.

Moreover, understanding the interplay between cultural factors and educational outcomes holds immense promise for improving the quality of teaching and learning experiences in Iran. By identifying how cultural nuances influence teaching methodologies, student engagement, and overall educational practices, the research aims to contribute practical knowledge that can enhance the effectiveness of educators and educational institutions. This can potentially elevate the learning experience for students, fostering a more conducive environment for academic achievement and personal development.

The significance of this research extends beyond the confines of academia; it speaks directly to Iran's broader societal and economic landscape. A culturally informed approach to quality education has the potential to bridge socio-economic gaps, empower marginalized communities, and contribute to the cultivation of a skilled and innovative workforce. As Iran positions itself in a rapidly evolving global landscape, the ability of its education system to adapt and thrive becomes a crucial determinant of national progress. Addressing the gap in understanding how cultural factors impact the implementation of SDG4 is, therefore, integral to shaping the trajectory of the nation's educational and socio-economic future.

In essence, the research endeavors to be more than an academic exercise; it seeks to catalyze positive change. The study intends to open the door for a more adaptable, inclusive, and successful educational system—one that not only complies with international standards but is also firmly anchored in the cultural context of the country it serves—by shedding light on the complexities of cultural effects on education in Iran.

1.6 Research Questions

To address the research problem, the study will focus on the following interlinked research questions:

1. How do individuals, within the Iranian cultural context, perceive and experience the influence of cultural factors on their access to and participation in quality education?
2. How do cultural factors shape the curriculum and pedagogy in Iranian schools?
3. What role do cultural factors play in the educational outcomes and achievements of Iranian students?

1.7 Hypotheses

The study will test the following hypotheses:

1. Cultural factors significantly impact access to quality education in Iran, leading to disparities in educational opportunities, particularly among marginalized groups.
2. The Iranian educational curriculum and pedagogy are influenced by cultural norms and values, reflecting the nation's cultural heritage, but this influence may also create challenges for educational inclusivity and modernization.
3. Iranian students' educational outcomes are significantly impacted by cultural variables, which also have an impact on marginalized groups' chances of success in school and motivation and performance.
4. Iranian educational policies and programs may not sufficiently consider and address cultural diversity, which can lead to inefficiencies and disparities in the education system.

1.8 Study Objectives

This study is centred around the following objectives:

1. To provide a comprehensive understanding of how cultural factors influence access to quality education in Iran.
2. to examine the ways in which Iranian schools' curricula and pedagogy are influenced by cultural elements and the resulting effects.
3. to evaluate how cultural influences affect Iranian students' academic performance and results, paying particular attention to underrepresented groups.
4. to assess the degree to which cultural considerations are taken into account when creating educational policies and initiatives in Iran and to offer suggestions for more successful and inclusive educational policies.

By addressing these objectives, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective, culturally sensitive, and equitable educational policies and practices in Iran, which can serve as a valuable model for other countries facing similar challenges.

Chapter 2: Study area

2.1 Introduction

Understanding the geographical setting of a study is essential as it provides the contextual backdrop for research. This spatial context influences a region's cultural practices, social structures, economic activities, and environmental dynamics. By delving into the geographical setting, researchers gain insights into the study area's unique characteristics, challenges, and interconnections. This understanding is crucial for tailoring the research to the specific circumstances of the location and ensuring the relevance and depth of the study. Understanding the geographical setting lays the groundwork for a holistic and informed research approach. It provides that the investigation is attuned to the unique characteristics of the chosen location, fostering a comprehensive analysis that goes beyond mere statistical data to encompass the rich tapestry of the study area's geographical, cultural, and social fabric.

Iran's capital city, Tehran, is situated in north-central Iran at the base of the Elburz Mountain range. It also serves as the provincial capital. Tehran has developed from a tiny village to a big metropolis since Agha Mohammad Khan established it as the country's capital more than 200 years ago. In an urban area with 14 million residents, Tehran is the largest city in Iran and among the world's most populous cities. The population of the 270 square miles (707 square km) metropolis, based on the latest census in 2016, was 8,693,706 (thmporg, 2023).



Figure 1: Map of Iran and Surrounding Areas

Source: goirantours.com

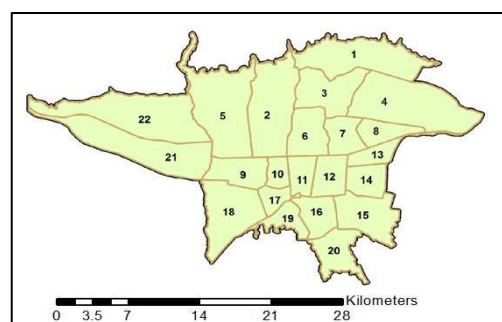


Figure 8: Map of districts of Tehran

Source: researchgate.net

2.2 Character of the city

Tehran is Iran's doorway to the outside world, its dramatic geography reflecting its closeness to the nation's highest mountain. The Iranian Revolution of the late 1970s strongly influenced Tehran's image abroad. Tehran was depicted in newspapers and television shows around the world in the latter half of the 20th century as a deeply traditional and religious metropolis that was resisting Westernization and modernization. Tehran contradicts the traditional perception

of Iran as an old people with a rich history and legacy, given that Tehran is a relatively new physical city. The population mean age is approximately 31 years old, with the majority of structures constructed after the mid-1960s; many of the city's institutions are even younger. The city's vibrancy, tension, and upheaval are caused by the frequently unpleasant juxtaposition of the old and the new, continuity and change, and a significant social difference between the rich and the poor. This was expressed in two revolutions and numerous social movements during the 20th century (Afary, 2024).

2.3 Landscape

2.3.1 City site

Latitude 35°41' N and longitude 51°26' E mark the city's center. Tehran is situated on the precipitous southern slopes of the Elburz Mountain range, which arcs across northern Iran's Caspian Sea coast (Leontiev et al., 2023). At an elevation of more than 18,400 feet (5,600 meters), its tallest peak, Mount Damavand (Demavend), is visible from Tehran on clear days. Damavand, Iran's highest point, is also higher than all other peaks in Asia and Europe to the west of it. Damavand, a figurehead in Persian mythology, is as significant to Iranians as Mount Fuji is to Japanese people. This area has been the site of considerable habitation for several millennia due to the site's symbolic importance and its placement on the historic Silk Road, an east-west trading route the city is dominated from the north by Towchal Ridge (12,904 feet [3,933 metres]), the location of a well-liked ski and recreation area connected to the city by a network of cable cars. On the other hand, the southern part of the city faces the Kavir desert, which is located in north-central Iran (Madanipour, 2024).

About 3,600 feet (1,100 meters) and 5,600 feet (1,700 meters) above sea level mark the city's northern and southern borders. The distance between the northern heights and the southern borders of the city, which are about 19 miles (30 km) apart, is around 2,000 feet (600 metres). This dramatic difference in height and Tehran's location between mountains and desert have significantly impacted the city's social and physical characteristics (Madanipour, 1999).

2.3.2 Climate

Four distinct seasons are associated with the hot and dry weather of Tehran, which is situated in central Iran. The Elburz Mountain range protects the city from the wetness of the northern Caspian Sea, resulting in a climate with long summers but seasonal variation. Tehran has an average yearly temperature of 63 °F (17 °C), with typical highs of 73 °F (23 °C) and lows of

53 °F (12 °C). Extreme temperatures range from 5 °F (-15 °C) in winter to 109 °F (43 °C) in summer. The city experiences frost on around 48 days a year and receives about 10 inches (230 mm) of precipitation annually.

But environmental issues like air pollution, water pollution, and noise are becoming more and more of a problem in Tehran. The topography of the city, with mountains retaining pollutants and limited dispersion, exacerbates atmospheric pollution, which is mostly caused by motor cars, home fuel, and industries. The city's social geography has also been influenced by the many climates that arise from the city's location between a desert and mountains. Rich people had traditionally preferred to spend their summers in the cooler northern foothills, whereas summers in the southern regions—which were closer to the desert—were hotter. The city's social dynamics have changed as a result of the northern heights' integration into it due to better transit (Madanipour, 1999, 2024; Berg et al., 2023).

2.4 People

Initially experiencing rapid urbanization and population growth, Tehran saw a shift towards suburbanization, leading to physical deterioration in its central areas. Factors driving suburbanization include business expansion, traffic regulations, administrative boundary changes, and rising social polarization.

While Tehran remained a magnet for internal migration, immigration slowed due to various factors such as increased living costs, congestion, and economic problems (Madanipour, 2024). The city's population is young, with a significant proportion being immigrants from rural areas, especially in the poorer southern neighborhoods.

External factors such as conflicts in neighboring countries also influenced immigration patterns (Dupree et al., 2024). Despite the majority being native-born Tehranis, a significant portion has roots in other parts of Iran, reflecting the country's multiethnic composition.

Religiously, Tehran's population mirrors that of Iran, primarily Muslim with minorities of Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians (Rahman et al., 2023). Socio-economic shifts, including the transition from extended to nuclear families, have occurred due to changes in economic structure and government policies. Despite these changes, family and kinship remain vital for social support in coping with economic and social challenges.

2.5 Economy

The economic landscape of Iran centers around Tehran, its capital, which serves as the country's economic hub and houses the national government controlling the dominant oil industry (McLeroy et al., 2023). Despite efforts to diversify, oil remains the primary driver of Iran's economy, constituting a significant portion of its foreign exchange income. The country boasts substantial reserves of both crude oil and natural gas (Waddams et al., 2024).

However, Iran's economy faced challenges in the late 1970s and '80s, including a revolution, eight years of war with Iraq, falling oil prices, high inflation, and capital flight. This led to economic stagnation and disinvestment. Liberal economic reforms in the 1990s, along with improved political and economic relations with the West, foreign capital influx, and rising oil prices, helped Iran re-enter the global marketplace (Cornwall, 2024).

Historically, earnings from the oil industry supported a large public sector, with the government employing a significant portion of Tehran's workforce. Privatization efforts in the 1990s aimed to reduce the public sector's size. Employment patterns typically show men as the primary breadwinners, though an increasing number of women seek paid employment outside the home (Wegrich et al., 2023).

The youth in Tehran often require assistance in finding economic opportunities, while the elderly rely on family support due to limited social welfare provisions. Official unemployment rates may underestimate the prevalence of informal employment. Casual jobs such as street vending are common, highlighting the challenges in Tehran's labor market (Madanipour, 2024).

2.5.1 Manufacturing, finance, and other services.

At the end of the 20th century, more than one-third of all jobs in Tehran were related to social and personal services, about one-fifth were in manufacturing, and about one-sixth were in sales. Financial services, construction, and transportation all employed smaller percentages of the labour force. A smaller portion of the workforce works in industry, and very little is employed in agriculture; about two-thirds of all workers are employed in services. Social, public, retail, and security services dominate the service sector. Primary metals, mining, paper, textiles, wood, chemicals, and metal machinery and equipment are examples of manufacturing industries. Tehran houses about one-fifth of Iran's firms. Most firms are tiny, with more than four-fifths employing fewer than five workers (Wegrich et al., 2023).

2.5.2 Transportation

Sometimes it's hard to get about Tehran because of the traffic. The first lines of a new subterranean train network, which had been planned for almost 20 years but had been put on hold due to conflict, revolution, and financial issues, were mobilised at the start of the twenty-first century. Following the Iran-Iraq War cease-fire in the late 1980s, the city's highway network building was restarted. However, the development of Tehran's transit and housing infrastructure has frequently resulted in the neglect or serious destruction of the old city's infrastructure (Madanipour, 2024).

2.6 Administration and social conditions

2.6.1 Government

There are twenty-two districts in Tehran, each having its own municipality that is part of the greater Tehran municipality. Following the 1906 Constitutional Revolution, a municipal organization led by an elected mayor and overseen by a council of representatives was established by law by the first parliament. This legal system generally persisted even after the Iranian Revolution (1978–79). For most of the 20th century, elected municipal councils continued to exist sometimes, and the federal government's influence over local affairs did not entirely disappear; it still held some authority. The formation of elected neighborhood advisory councils in 2006 helped to promote the long-awaited 1999 re-establishment of the Tehran city council. Despite being contentious and primarily influenced by various social and economic factors, the municipality's efforts to achieve financial autonomy from the nation's central government during the 1990s were somewhat successful, and other municipalities throughout the nation followed suit (Afary, 2024).

2.6.2 Municipal services

The high population density of Tehran has made it difficult for the municipality and the federal government to provide several services. Housing Tehran's growing population has proven to be a significant challenge, despite better housing facilities and the fast development work done by governmental and private sector agencies. Water accessibility is an additional issue. Tehran depends mostly on water supplies outside the city because it is not close to any significant rivers. Large dams have been constructed on the Karaj, Jajrud, and Lar rivers in the Elburz Mountains to serve the city. The lack of a sewage collection and processing infrastructure has

caused subsurface water tables to rise and become more contaminated; the city's southern areas are still affected by this unmanaged surface water (Avery et al., 2024).

When visitors arrived, Tehran used to teem with gardens and trees, especially plane trees. The need to preserve and conserve trees and other vegetation has long been understood in Iran's hot, arid country. As seen by their significance in Zoroastrian rituals, gardens have long been held in high regard in Persian society and are still highly valued in contemporary Persian culture. Pairidaeza is an Old Persian term that originally denoted a walled, cultivated hunting reserve or an enclosed garden. It is the source of the English word paradise. Tehran's fast growth reduced many of its garden areas, a loss made more apparent by the city's growing environmental problems. Much of the city's green spaces were formerly made possible by the architecture of the traditional courtyard houses. However, as more people live in apartments and land and water prices rise, creating private green areas has become increasingly difficult. At its Habitat II Conference in 1996, the United Nations recognized Tehran as one of the world's Best Practices towns, endorsing its efforts to plant trees and create more parks (Fomerand et al., 2024).

2.6.3 Health

Although government-supported healthcare networks include hospitals, labs, pharmacies, and rehabilitation centers, most healthcare providers are private clinics and hospitals. However, insurance systems are not set up to facilitate private healthcare provision. A push to educate doctors at the start of the twenty-first century resulted in many medical professionals in the city; overall, Tehran employs more than twice as many physicians as any other Iranian province (Madanipour, 2024).

2.6.4 Education

While there are few private schools, the majority of primary and secondary education is provided by the state. There was an excess of schooling capacity at the end of the 20th century due to a downward trend in population growth. Entrance to universities is contingent upon passing a national exam that is quite demanding.

The 1851 establishment of Dar al-Fonun, a technological institute mostly taught by French and Austrian teachers, was the product of the 19th-century desire for modernization.

Several contemporary universities, including Amirkabir University of Technology (1958), Shahid Beheshti University (1960), and Sharif University of Technology (1965), were founded after the University of Tehran in 1934. After the Iranian Revolution, a number of smaller, privately supported universities were established, all of which were later nationalized and combined to form larger, more prestigious universities. A number of private universities were also founded, including Islamic Azad University in 1982 (Foflonker, 2023).

2.7 Cultural life

Tehran, a diverse and dynamic metropolis in Iran, is a cultural and artistic hub shaped by its rich history and modern influences. Despite hosting numerous ethnic and linguistic groups, the majority of the population identifies with the Shi'i branch of Islam and Persian culture. The Iranian Revolution influenced cultural expression, revitalizing traditional arts such as music and calligraphy while fostering a vibrant arts scene with galleries, educational institutions, youth clubs, and cultural centers (Afary, 2024).

The city is renowned for its arts and cultural events, including the annual Fajr International Theatre Festival and performances by the Tehran Symphony Orchestra. Museums like the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the National Museum of Iran, and the Carpet Museum of Iran showcase Iran's rich heritage and artistic achievements. Tehran's film industry, known for its critically acclaimed movies and new realist school of cinema, enjoys global recognition (Kenny, 2023).

Persian cuisine, characterized by distinctive flavors and ingredients like saffron, lime, fruits, and nuts, reflects Iran's rich culinary heritage influenced by various cultures. Despite political challenges, there has been a desire for a free press, with the emergence of new media outlets and periodicals (Salah & Boxer, 2024).

The cityscape of Tehran features a blend of modern and traditional architecture, including iconic landmarks like the Azadi Tower and Borj-e Milad. The city's diverse architecture mirrors its vibrant atmosphere, characterized by bustling streets, retail malls, public squares, and a mix of contemporary and traditional lifestyles.

Tehran's unique blend of culture, art, cuisine, and architecture makes it a vibrant and dynamic metropolis that continues to evolve amidst modernization and socio-political changes (Madanipour, 2024).

Chapter 3: Literature Review/Theoretical framework

3.1 Literature Review

3.1.1 Introduction

In navigating the multifaceted landscape of quality education (SDG4) and its implementation within the Iranian context, it is imperative to embark on a journey through the scholarly discourse that underpins our understanding of this complex phenomenon. This chapter presents a critical synthesis of contemporary literature to elucidate the nuances, challenges, and opportunities inherent in pursuing quality education within Iran. Departing from conventional approaches prioritizing breadth over depth, this literature review adopts a focused lens, interrogating key themes and perspectives informing our understanding of the interplay between quality education and cultural dynamics.

At the heart of this literature review lies an exploration of how cultural factors shape the implementation and outcomes of quality education initiatives. Recent scholarship underscores the significance of cultural relevance in education, emphasizing the need for educational practices to resonate with the values, norms, and traditions of the communities they serve. Within the Iranian context, characterized by its rich history, diverse ethnicities, and vibrant cultural tapestry, the relevance of this discourse is particularly pronounced. By examining how cultural nuances intersect with educational policies, practices, and outcomes, this review seeks to unravel the complexities that define the quality education narrative in Iran.

As articulated in SDG4, quality education transcends conventional metrics of academic achievement to encompass holistic dimensions of learning. This literature review section delves into contemporary perspectives on quality education, exploring how notions of inclusivity, equity, and learner-centeredness resonate within the Iranian educational landscape. Educational policies serve as linchpins in shaping the trajectory of quality education initiatives within Iran. Through this analysis, we seek to identify gaps, tensions, and opportunities for enhancing policy coherence and efficacy in advancing the goals of SDG4 within the Iranian context.

3.1.2 Quality Education and Sustainable Development: A Global Imperative.

The pursuit of quality education is not simply a noble aspiration; it is an urgent necessity woven into the very fabric of sustainable development. This fact is reflected in all of the research, each

of which provides a distinct viewpoint on the transformative ability of education to create a future that is more just, equitable, and environmentally conscientious.

In their article Dive, Dutta and Das (2024) dive into the heart of this interconnectedness. They illuminate the potential of education, as envisioned in India's New Education Policy, to address critical Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By fostering well-rounded individuals equipped with critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative skills, quality education becomes a potent weapon against poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation.

Moving beyond policy frameworks, Sudarno et al. (2024) explore the captivating potential of social marketing strategies. They suggest that raising awareness and mobilizing communities around education is not just a feel-good exercise; it is a strategic act. By fostering ownership and engagement, such tactics can contribute directly to SDG achievement, ensuring education's long-term sustainability and maximizing its impact.

The focus on inclusivity takes center stage in Pakombwele et al.'s article (2024). They argue that inclusivity is not just a buzzword but the bedrock of quality education. By embracing diverse needs and abilities in early childhood development (ECD) centers, we equip future generations with the empathy, understanding, and collaborative skills needed to build a sustainable society.

Studies weave a powerful tapestry, depicting education not as a luxury but as the engine propelling us toward a sustainable future. By giving people the information, abilities, and critical thinking needed to take on global concerns, it empowers people. It fosters social justice by promoting inclusivity, dismantling barriers, and ensuring equitable access to opportunities. It cultivates environmental stewardship by nurturing responsible citizens who understand the delicate balance of our planet.

However, while studies shed light on this interrelationship's social and environmental aspects, the economic dimension still needs to be explored. A deeper investigation into how quality education translates into economic growth, fosters financial resilience, and empowers individuals to contribute meaningfully to a sustainable economy would paint a more holistic picture.

In conclusion, the review offers a profound glimpse into the intricate dance between quality education and sustainable development. They resonate with a powerful message: education is not just a path to individual fulfillment but a collective investment in a healthier, more

equitable, and environmentally conscious future for all. As we navigate the complexities of sustainable development, let us remember that education is not simply a byproduct; it is the driving force pushing us toward a brighter tomorrow.

3.1.3 Culture and its Impact on Quality Education.

Culture shapes education in many ways, from the values and beliefs that underpin educational systems to the ways that teachers interact with students. It can also influence the curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment practices.

One of the most significant ways that culture impacts education is through its influence on gender roles. In some cultures, there are traditional expectations about what boys and girls should learn and how they should behave in school. These expectations can create barriers to educational equality, particularly for girls. For example, in some cultures, girls are expected to marry and have children at a young age, which can limit their opportunities to pursue education.

A study by Caner et al. (2015) found that traditional views on gender roles held by mothers in Turkey can negatively impact their daughters' educational attainment, even after accounting for a significant education reform that extended compulsory schooling. This suggests that cultural norms can be persistent and difficult to overcome, even in the face of policy changes.

Culture can also shape the way that teachers interact with students. In some cultures, teachers are seen as authority figures who should be obeyed without question. In other cultures, teachers are seen as facilitators who should encourage students to ask questions and think critically. These different cultural norms can have a significant impact on the learning environment.

For example, a study by Pollard (1989) found that Latin American exchange students in the United States were more likely to experience culture shock and have difficulty adjusting to the school environment if their gender stereotypes were incompatible with those of their host families. This suggests that cultural differences in expectations about teacher-student relationships can create challenges for students who are studying abroad.

The curriculum is another area that is influenced by culture. In some cultures, the curriculum is designed to transmit traditional values and knowledge. In other cultures, the curriculum is more focused on preparing students for the modern world. These various curricular approaches can significantly impact the quality of education that students receive.

For example, a study by Tavakoli and Tavakol (2017) found that the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) curriculum in Iran is often based on uncritical assumptions about Western culture and needs to take into account the cultural needs of Iranian students adequately. This suggests that a curriculum that is not sensitive to the cultural background of its students can be ineffective.

Finally, culture can also influence assessment practices. In some cultures, students are assessed on their ability to memorize facts and figures. In other cultures, students are assessed on their ability to think critically and solve problems. These different assessment practices can have a significant impact on the way that students learn.

For example, a study by Ayati et al. (2005) found that the Iranian education system emphasizes rote memorization and needs to assess students' higher-order thinking skills adequately. This suggests that assessment practices that do not align with the cultural values of a society can be counterproductive.

In conclusion, culture plays a complex and multifaceted role in education. It can both shape and be shaped by educational systems. Understanding the role of culture is essential for creating quality education that is equitable and effective for all students.

3.1.4 Iran's Education System: Progress, Challenges, and Uncertain Futures.

Iran's education system, like many aspects of the nation, reflects the profound transformations that followed the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Formerly modeled on Western structures, the current system stands as a centralized entity deeply imbued with Islamic principles (Sajjadi, 2015). From ages 6 to 18, education is compulsory, encompassing three distinct tiers: primary (grades 1-6), secondary (grades 7-12), and tertiary (university). However, beneath this seemingly straightforward structure lies a complex system grappling with unique challenges and harboring hopes for an uncertain future.

Stepping into classrooms across Iran, one encounters several distinct features shaping the educational experience. Islamic values permeate the curriculum, weaving through language, literature, mathematics, and science, ensuring religious principles inform students' intellectual and moral development (Moinipour, 2021). Gender segregation, particularly at the secondary level, remains a defining characteristic, with boys and girls typically receiving instruction in separate schools (Nazari et al., 2023). However, this strict separation raises concerns about

gender equality within the system, as girls face higher dropout rates, particularly at the secondary level, further perpetuating educational disparities (Moinipour, 2021).

While the integration of Islamic values serves as a guiding light, it also raises concerns about academic freedom. The curriculum and textbooks are heavily regulated by the government, which may restrict educators' and learners' capacity to foster critical thinking skills and investigate other viewpoints (Kheiltash & Rust, 2009). This centralized approach, while ensuring uniformity, can create an environment where open discourse and intellectual exploration are constrained.

Another notable feature of the system is its emphasis on rote memorization. Critics argue that this approach prioritizes regurgitating information over fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are vital for success in the modern world (Nazari et al., 2023). While memorization has its place in foundational learning, striking a balance between retaining information and developing analytical thinking remains a crucial challenge.

Despite evident progress in recent years, the Iranian education system has grappled with several significant challenges. Gender inequality remains a persistent issue, with girls facing numerous barriers hindering their educational attainment (Moinipour, 2021). Additionally, socioeconomic disparities create unequal access to quality education, disproportionately impacting children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Nazari et al., 2023). Ethnic and religious minorities also face potential discrimination and marginalization within the system, further exacerbating existing inequalities (Kheiltash & Rust, 2009).

Furthermore, limited resources pose a significant hurdle. Overcrowded classrooms, outdated textbooks, and a shortage of qualified teachers are realities many students encounter (Nazari et al., 2023). These resource constraints hinder the system's ability to provide a high-quality education for all, perpetuating existing inequalities and limiting individual potential.

As Iran navigates to the 21st century, the future of its education system remains uncertain. The government has embarked on a series of reforms aimed at improving quality, addressing inequalities, and enhancing access (Mahmoudian, 2023). These reforms encompass curriculum revisions, teacher training programs, and efforts to address resource constraints. However, the success of these initiatives remains to be seen, and some experts suggest that more fundamental changes, such as decentralization and increased academic freedom, might be necessary (Sajjadi, 2015).

Iran's education system stands as a complex tapestry woven from tradition, progress, and ongoing challenges. While it has made strides in recent years, significant hurdles remain. The future holds both opportunities and uncertainties. Whether the system can overcome its challenges, embrace genuine reform, and provide all its students with an equitable and empowering education will depend on a collective commitment to progress and a willingness to embrace the dynamism of the 21st century.

The English language education system in Iran faces numerous hurdles, impacting both students and teachers. The current curriculum, as outlined in Safari & Rashidi's (2015) work, needs to be updated and aligned with learner needs. Its emphasis on grammar and vocabulary drills overshadows crucial communication skills development, leaving students ill-equipped for real-world interactions. Additionally, a lack of differentiation fails to cater to diverse learning styles and paces, perpetuating inequalities within the system.

Furthermore, the assessment system relies heavily on standardized tests solely measuring grammar and vocabulary proficiency. This narrow focus incentivizes rote memorization instead of nurturing communicative competence, potentially hindering genuine language acquisition. This mismatch between assessment and desired learning outcomes can create frustration and demotivation among both students and educators.

Teacher training emerges as another significant challenge. Many teachers lack proper training in communicative language teaching methods. This can lead to overreliance on traditional grammar-translation approaches, hindering the development of interactive and engaging learning environments. Moreover, limited access to up-to-date materials and resources further exacerbates their challenges, restricting their ability to implement innovative teaching strategies effectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced a rapid shift towards online education, presenting novel challenges alongside potential benefits. While online learning offers flexibility and accessibility, as highlighted by Nikdel Teymori and Fardin (2020), several roadblocks hinder its smooth implementation.

One of the primary reasons to be concerned is the uneven distribution of technology and internet access. It draws attention to the reality that some students lack the resources and bandwidth necessary for equitable participation. The digital divide possesses the capacity to exacerbate pre-existing educational inequalities, further lagging behind disadvantaged students.

Another essential component of online learning success is teacher preparation. Transitioning from traditional classroom environments to online learning environments requires specific skills and pedagogical adjustments. Many teachers may not have the necessary abilities to adequately engage students and create a positive learning environment in this new digital world. This could lead to challenges maintaining student motivation and ensuring participation online.

Student motivation is ultimately a significant barrier that appears in online learning contexts. Nikdel Teymori and Fardin (2020) claim that absence of in-person interactions with peers and distractions from home may have a negative impact on students' focus and participation. In order to optimize student engagement and academic performance, it is critical to tackle these challenges and foster a sense of community inside the virtual learning setting.

The difficulties mentioned above present a nuanced picture of the state of the education system today, both in its conventional form and in its quickly developing online version. But acknowledging these difficulties opens the door to possible fixes. Our goal should be to create an online and offline education system that is more inclusive and successful by tackling issues like equitable access to technology, teacher training, curriculum alignment, assessment reform, and equitable reform. Additionally, encouraging cooperative learning settings and cutting-edge teaching strategies can boost motivation and engagement among students even more, making learning more enjoyable and fulfilling for everyone.

3.1.5 comparative studies between Iran and other countries.

The educational systems of Iran and China after their respective revolutions are compared by Shekari and Rahimi (2009). The authors use George Beredy's framework to analyze the two systems, looking at factors such as the philosophy and objectives of education, educational programs, and teacher training. They find that both countries have centralized educational systems but that there are also some key differences. For example, Iran's system is more focused on religious education, while China's system is more secular.

The differences between the dentistry education system in Iran and other countries, including Turkey, the Philippines, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, are compared. The author finds that all of the countries studied use a course-oriented curriculum but that there are some differences in the specific courses offered. For example, Iran's system includes more

courses on Islamic ethics and law, while other countries may offer courses on medical ethics or the principles of law (Hamed Rad, 2022).

The authors examine the Islamic Republic of Iran's formal education system using six education indicators, such as student enrollment, teacher qualifications, and educational funding, in order to compare it to that of its neighboring countries. They find that Iran ranks seventh among its neighboring countries in terms of overall education quality. However, they also note that Iran has made significant progress in recent years and that it is now outperforming some of its wealthier neighbors (Madandar Arani et al., 2018).

The primary education systems of Iran, Spain, Turkey, Finland, and the Czech Republic are studied, and the author finds that all of the countries studied have made significant progress in recent years in terms of educational quality. However, he also notes that there are some critical differences between the systems, such as the level of centralization and the use of standardized testing (Norouzi Larsari, 2022).

Studies show valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Iranian education system in comparison to other countries. They suggest that Iran has made significant progress in recent years but that there is still room for improvement. In particular, they highlight the need for Iran to address issues such as the centralization of the education system, the lack of religious freedom in schools, and the limited use of standardized testing.

3.1.6 Gaps in Research

While research exists exploring the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) on quality education in Iran, several crucial gaps remain regarding the impact of cultural factors on its suitability. Addressing these gaps is essential for the practical assessment and adaptation of SDG4 to the Iranian context.

Limited Understanding of Culturally Specific Needs: Existing studies often adopt Western-centric quality education frameworks, potentially overlooking the unique cultural values and needs of Iranian society. This raises concerns about the generalizability and applicability of findings, as crucial aspects like language, pedagogy, and curriculum content might not resonate with Iranian cultural norms and expectations.

Nuances of Religious and Political Influences: The significant role of religion and politics in Iranian education necessitates deeper exploration. Research often treats these influences as monolithic entities, neglecting the diverse interpretations and perspectives within Iranian

society. A more nuanced understanding of how these factors interact with quality education concepts is crucial for tailoring SDG4 implementation effectively.

Insufficient Attention to Gender Dynamics: Cultural norms regarding gender roles and expectations in education require further investigation. Studies focus on overall enrollment rates without delving into the quality of education received by girls and boys separately. Additionally, the experiences of minority groups within Iran, such as ethnic and religious minorities, might be underrepresented, creating an incomplete picture of educational equity and its cultural nuances.

Lack of Research on Local Contexts and Communities: The vastness and diversity of Iran necessitate research that moves beyond national averages and delves into the specific contexts and experiences of local communities. Understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by different regions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups is crucial for developing targeted interventions and ensuring inclusive implementation of SDG4.

Need for Longitudinal Studies and Impact Assessments: Most studies focus on static snapshots of the education system, neglecting the dynamic interplay between cultural factors and quality education over time. Longitudinal studies tracking the evolution of cultural influences and their impact on SDG4 implementation are needed to inform long-term strategies and measure progress effectively.

Addressing these gaps requires collaborative research efforts involving Iranian scholars, educators, and communities alongside international researchers. By employing culturally sensitive methodologies, incorporating diverse perspectives, and focusing on local contexts, research can provide valuable insights for tailoring SDG4 to the Iranian context and ensuring its successful implementation towards achieving quality education for all.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 The Culture Capital Theory

The theory of cultural capital was created by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Cultural capital theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how cultural factors influence the implementation of quality education. At its core, cultural capital theory emphasizes that cultural knowledge, behaviors, and resources are unequally distributed within society and confer social advantages to those who possess them. This theory highlights three

primary forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Yamamoto& Brinton,2010).

Embodied cultural capital encompasses the cultural knowledge, habits, and behaviors individuals internalize through socialization. In the context of quality education, students bring varying levels of embodied cultural capital to educational settings based on their cultural backgrounds. This includes language proficiency, communication styles, and learning habits acquired within their communities. Educators must recognize and value the diversity of embodied cultural capital among students to create inclusive learning environments that honor their cultural identities and experiences.

Objectified cultural capital refers to material resources associated with cultural knowledge and status. This can include access to books, technology, educational materials, and extracurricular activities. Disparities in access to objectified cultural capital can significantly impact the implementation of quality education. Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds may lack access to essential resources, hindering their ability to engage with the curriculum and fully participate in educational opportunities. Addressing these disparities requires equitable distribution of resources and targeted interventions to ensure all students have access to the objectified cultural capital necessary for quality education.

Institutionalized cultural capital encompasses formal credentials, qualifications, and educational experiences that confer social legitimacy and status. This includes academic degrees, certifications, and participation in prestigious educational programs. Institutionalized cultural capital can influence access to educational opportunities and pathways for implementing quality education. Students from privileged backgrounds may have greater access to high-quality schools, advanced coursework, and enrichment programs, giving them an advantage in academic achievement. Efforts to promote quality education must address disparities in institutionalized cultural capital by providing equitable access to educational resources, opportunities, and support services for all students, regardless of their background.

Overall, cultural factors, as conceptualized through cultural capital theory, play a significant role in shaping the implementation of quality education. By recognizing and addressing disparities in embodied, objectified, and institutionalized cultural capital, educators and policymakers can promote more equitable and inclusive educational practices that support the academic success of all students.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter outlines the strategy and processes used to meet the research questions or objectives, acting as a road map for the investigation. It is a crucial component of the research process, providing clarity and transparency regarding the methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The methodology chapter lays the groundwork for the validity and dependability of the study's conclusions by describing the steps taken to implement the selected research methodologies and explaining their choice.

At its core, the methodology chapter aims to answer "how" the research will be conducted. It delineates the research design, participant selection criteria, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures, providing readers insight into the systematic approach adopted to investigate the research questions. Additionally, the methodology chapter addresses ethical considerations, limitations, and assumptions inherent in the research process, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the study's scope and constraints (Rajpurohit, 2023).

The primary purpose of the methodology chapter is to ensure the rigor and credibility of the research methodology employed. By clearly articulating the procedures and techniques used to gather and analyze data, researchers enable readers to assess the validity and reliability of the study's findings. Moreover, the methodology chapter guides future researchers, offering insights into the practical considerations and methodological challenges inherent in the research process.

A crucial part of any research project is the methodology chapter, which offers an open and organized framework for conducting and assessing scholarly investigation. By elucidating the research methods employed and their rationale, researchers contribute to advancing knowledge in their field and uphold the principles of academic integrity and rigor.

4.2 Epistemological and Ontological Considerations.

In crafting a methodology chapter, it is imperative to grapple with epistemological and ontological considerations underpinning the very foundations of research inquiry. Epistemology pertains to the nature and scope of knowledge and how it is acquired, while ontology delves into questions concerning the nature of reality and existence. These philosophical foundations influence the researcher's viewpoint, directing the selection of study techniques and the interpretation of results (Chowdhury, 2023).

Epistemologically, researchers must reflect on their stance regarding the nature of knowledge. Are they proponents of positivism, which emphasizes the objective pursuit of empirical evidence and the testing of hypotheses? Or do they lean towards interpretivism, which acknowledges the subjective nature of human experience and seeks to understand meaning through context and interpretation? This epistemological stance informs the selection of research methods, with positivists favoring quantitative approaches to emphasize objectivity and generalizability (Bryman, 2016, p. 695). At the same time, interpretivists gravitate towards qualitative methods for their depth of understanding and exploration of subjective phenomena.

Ontologically, researchers confront questions about the nature of reality and the existence of phenomena. Are they realists who believe in an objective reality independent of human perception? Or are they constructivists who contend that reality is socially constructed and shaped by human interactions and interpretations? This ontological perspective influences the researcher's view of the phenomena under study and their approach to data collection and analysis (Clark et al. 2021). Realists may adopt methods to uncover objective truths and causal relationships, while constructivists prioritize understanding the multiple realities and subjective perspectives that characterize social phenomena.

Navigating epistemological and ontological considerations is essential for ensuring the coherence and validity of the research endeavor. By critically examining their assumptions about knowledge and reality, researchers can make informed choices about research methods and theoretical frameworks that align with their philosophical stance (Bryman, 2016, p. 28). This reflexivity enhances the transparency and credibility of the research process, enabling researchers to account for the complexities and nuances inherent in the study of social phenomena. Ultimately, researchers enrich their understanding of the nature of knowledge and reality by engaging with epistemological and ontological considerations, contributing to advancing scholarly inquiry.

Constructivism and interpretivism are the best ontological and epistemological positions within the parameters of this investigation (Della Porta & Keating, 2008). The interpretive position allowed me to deeply understand the subjective social realities that people perceive by exploring their explanations and perspectives. The importance of subjective meaning is the foundation of this strategy. Using the constructivist approach in this research has made it easier for me to observe and carefully analyze social phenomena that result from social interactions.

4.3 Research Design

This research endeavor, which uses a qualitative exploratory approach, aims to investigate the complex relationship between cultural dynamics and the execution of quality education efforts in the Iranian environment. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for this inquiry as it enables me to explore complex phenomena, understand social processes, and uncover rich, contextualized insights that may not be captured through quantitative approaches alone (Clark et al, 2021).

The exploratory nature of this design allows me to embark on an open-ended journey of discovery, seeking to understand the multifaceted dimensions of quality education within the cultural landscape of Iran (Bryman 2016, p.40). Rather than testing predetermined hypotheses or theories, the focus is on generating new perspectives, identifying patterns, and elucidating the nuances that shape the implementation of quality education initiatives.

Central to the qualitative exploratory design is flexible and iterative data collection methods that accommodate the dynamic nature of the research process (Creswell, 2014). Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and participant observation offer opportunities for in-depth exploration and allow participants to share their lived experiences, perspectives, and insights regarding quality education and its cultural dimensions.

Data collection in this design is characterized by a holistic and immersive approach, enabling me to capture the richness and complexity of cultural dynamics in educational settings (Clark et al, 2021). Through in-depth interviews, I can engage with key stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, parents, and students, to gain diverse perspectives and uncover underlying beliefs, values, and practices that influence the implementation of quality education initiatives.

Additionally, participant observation provides me with firsthand experiences of educational contexts, allowing for a deeper understanding of the cultural norms, interactions, and dynamics that shape the implementation of quality education. By immersing themselves in the day-to-day realities of educational settings, I can identify emerging themes, observe contextual nuances, and develop a comprehensive understanding of the cultural factors at play (Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative exploratory design also embraces a reflexive and iterative approach to data analysis, emphasizing the continuous engagement with data to uncover meanings, themes, and patterns. Techniques such as thematic analysis, constant comparison, and memoing enable me

to organize, interpret, and make sense of the data in a manner that respects the complexity and richness of the cultural context.

Overall, the qualitative exploratory design adopted for this research endeavor embodies a commitment to understanding the cultural dynamics that shape the implementation of quality education initiatives in Iran (Clark et al, 2021). My aim is to use immersive and flexible methods of data gathering along with reflexive and iterative methods of data analysis to achieve a greater understanding of the complex link between education and culture. This knowledge will be useful in forming practice and policy in the effort to provide all students with a top-notch education.

The selection of qualitative research methodology for this study is rooted in its profound suitability for addressing the research questions and objectives effectively. Qualitative research offers a nuanced approach that explores intricate social phenomena, making it particularly well-suited for inquiries seeking to understand the complex interplay between culture and education within specific contexts, such as Iran. By adopting qualitative methods, I aim to delve deeply into the cultural dynamics that shape the implementation of quality education initiatives, uncovering rich, contextualized insights that quantitative approaches may overlook.

One compelling reason for opting for qualitative research lies in its capacity to facilitate the exploration of cultural dynamics within educational settings. Through interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, qualitative research enables me to engage directly with key stakeholders, such as educators, policymakers, parents, and students, to gain a profound understanding of their perspectives, beliefs, and practices. This immersive approach allows me to capture the complexity of cultural influences, offering valuable insights into how cultural factors manifest in educational contexts and impact the implementation of quality education initiatives.

Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes the importance of context in understanding social phenomena, aligning closely with the objectives of this study. By immersing themselves in the cultural context of Iran, I can gain a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural factors that shape educational practices and outcomes. Through participant observation and in-depth interviews, I can explore the intricate web of cultural norms, traditions, and societal expectations that inform the implementation of quality education initiatives within specific educational settings. This contextual understanding is essential for generating insights that are not only rich but also relevant and applicable to the local context.

The flexibility and adaptability inherent in qualitative research methodology further justify its selection for this study. Qualitative methods allow me to adjust their approach based on emerging insights and unexpected findings, facilitating a responsive and iterative research process. This adaptability is particularly advantageous when studying dynamic and complex phenomena within diverse cultural contexts, as it enables me to capture the nuances and complexities of cultural dynamics in education. By embracing qualitative methods, I can explore the multifaceted nature of cultural influences on quality education implementation in Iran, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between culture and education.

4.4 Sampling Method

The study's chosen sample is a representative portion of the total population, which serves as the study's foundation. Thus, the sampling strategy mainly used determines a study's quality. A sample is a smaller, hopefully representative fraction of a larger whole or population, according to Clark et al. (2021, p. 166). In this study, sampling with a purpose is employed to select participants who can provide insightful information about the cultural elements influencing schooling in Iran. Purposeful or criterion-based sampling is deemed appropriate for this research endeavor as it allows me to strategically choose participants based on their ability to offer rich and diverse perspectives on the subject matter. By intentionally selecting individuals with varying geographic locations, cultural backgrounds, and educational positions, I aim to capture the breadth and depth of cultural influences within the Iranian educational context.

Purposeful sampling involves carefully considering the characteristics and attributes relevant to the research objectives. In this case, I prioritize selecting participants who can offer unique insights into the cultural dynamics shaping schooling in Iran.

Additionally, purposeful sampling entails selecting participants with diverse educational positions, ranging from students to educators, policymakers, and parents. This approach allows me to gather perspectives from multiple stakeholders involved in the educational system, each offering valuable insights into the cultural factors influencing schooling in Iran. Students, in particular, play a central role as cultural dynamics directly impact them within educational settings. By including students across different age groups (aged 7 to 18), I can capture the evolving nature of cultural influences on schooling throughout the developmental stages preceding university entry.

The target population for this study consists of Iranian students aged 7 to 18, encompassing the range of ages typically associated with compulsory education before entering university. Concentrating on this particular group of people, I hope to thoroughly grasp the cultural factors influencing Iranian adolescents' early school experiences. This age range allows me to explore how cultural influences manifest across different stages of education, from primary to secondary levels, and how they impact students' academic experiences and outcomes.

Due to the vast expanse of Iran and the impracticality of studying all its cities within the scope of this thesis, sampling will be conducted at the level of Tehran (Shayegan, 2002). Considering Tehran's status as a global metropolis with extensive spatial, economic, cultural, and social dimensions and its distinction as one of the most diverse cities in the world regarding cultural and social diversity within Iran, sampling from Tehran provides assurance. It is acknowledged that the ethnicities, groups, languages, and religions established in Tehran bring with them a part of their national industries, folk arts, music, literature, cultural customs, and identities, contributing to the diverse cultural tapestry of the city (Fazeli, 2012). Tehran's various national, neighborhood, linguistic, and religious identities represent microcultures within the city and form part of its cultural capital.

In this regard, twelve people were interviewed. Nine were parents of students whose children were between 7 and 18 years old and were studying in Tehran schools. One of the interviewees was an educational consultant who had much experience in communicating with students and had worked for many years in various schools and educational institutions in Iran and Tehran. Two of the interviewees were coaches and teachers, each of whom had a high teaching experience. In selecting the interviewees, care was taken to ensure gender and age diversity. For this purpose, parents who had male and female students were selected. Also, teachers, trainers, and educational consultants worked with both groups of boys and girls.

4.5 Data Collection Method

This study's data collection is primarily conducted through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in Iran's education system, including legislators, teachers, parents, and community leaders. In-depth interviews offer a valuable opportunity to gather rich and detailed insights into the cultural elements influencing schooling in Iran directly from those intimately involved in the educational process. The interview process is designed to be comprehensive and inclusive, ensuring that a diverse range of perspectives and experiences are captured (Clark et al, 2021).

The selection of interview participants is purposeful, guided by the aim of obtaining insights from individuals with significant roles or perspectives relevant to the study's focus. This may include policymakers who shape educational policies, teachers who implement curriculum and interact with students daily, parents who play a crucial role in supporting their children's education, and community leaders who influence cultural norms and values related to schooling. My objective is to comprehensively grasp the cultural dynamics inherent in Iran's educational system through broad stakeholder interaction.

The semi-structured nature of the interview method allows for flexibility and in-depth exploration of cultural influences in schooling (Clark et al, 2021). Interviews are open-ended, allowing participants to express their opinions, share experiences, and offer insights freely. This approach enables me to delve into the complexities of cultural dynamics, probing beyond surface-level observations to uncover deeper meanings and understandings.

One key consideration in the interview process is the concept of theoretical saturation (O'reilly, 2012, p. 120). Theoretical saturation is reached when the researcher determines that no new information or insights are emerging from the interviews, indicating that a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study has been achieved. To ensure rigor and completeness in data collection, interviews continue until theoretical saturation is reached, signifying that the breadth and depth of perspectives have been adequately captured.

Overall, the in-depth interview method offers a robust and comprehensive approach to data collection, allowing me to gather rich, nuanced insights into the cultural elements influencing schooling in Iran. Through purposeful selection of participants, semi-structured interview techniques, and a commitment to theoretical saturation, I aim to uncover the complexities of cultural dynamics within the educational context, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intersection between culture and schooling in Iran.

4.6 Data Analysis Procedures

In order to find recurring themes, narratives, and patterns in the qualitative data gathered from in-depth interviews, this study used the qualitative method of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis provides a methodical and adaptable way to examine qualitative data, which enables me to find hidden interpretations and meanings within the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through data coding and categorization, I aim to identify and explore the cultural impacts on education within the Iranian context.

The qualitative data collection is examined using a combination of coding and thematic analysis approaches based on the criteria. The initial stage of analyzing and determining the primary themes and improving the accessibility and comprehensibility of thematic analysis was coding. The application of these techniques took place in phases. Initially, a detailed transcription of the interview responses was made, including all the information about the study questions. I then familiarized myself with the collected data by reading the transcriptions multiple times, line by line, as advised by Bryman (2014). Even though both the interviewer and the interviewee spoke Persian as their first language, it took little time to go over and comprehend the points made by the participants.

After reading and carefully analyzing every line of the transcriptions, I bolded and highlighted the salient points of the responses. I came across a lot of essential and fascinating codes while coding. A handful of them were in opposition to one another, while others were repeated or similar to one another. I coded, then looked for similar codes and categorized them together. Even though I had multiple themes for this analytical stage, there were some connections and parallels between them.

To put it another way, I had identified sub-themes and needed to proceed with further analysis. After carefully going over all of the data that was gathered, I was able to identify three major themes from all of the codes and sub-themes, which are:

- gender, religion, language
- socioeconomic condition, accessibility,
- family, location,

The final step was writing down and defining the themes found during the investigation. An analytical review was conducted to ensure a clear relationship between the replies and themes and to generate a more trustworthy and confident interpretation when writing the results.

I use a reflexive approach to data analysis, questioning their expectations, assumptions, and biases that could affect how the data is interpreted. Reflecting continuously on how the researcher may influence the research process and how their viewpoints may collide with participants is critical to reflexivity (Jafar, 2018). By remaining mindful of their positionality and engaging in reflexive practice, I aim to enhance the rigor and validity of the thematic analysis.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Several fundamental principles guide my approach to the ethical conduct of research with human beings:

Firstly, informed consent is paramount. It is imperative to clearly articulate the study's purpose, potential risks, and benefits to participants and obtain their written consent. Participants should also be assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing consequences. Additionally, I ensure that interview subjects fully understand the aim of our conversations.

Privacy and anonymity are non-negotiable. Given the sensitive nature of cultural issues, particularly in Iran, safeguarding participants' privacy and anonymity is essential. All data and personal information are treated with utmost confidentiality, with efforts made to anonymize data and eliminate any identifiable information.

Cultural sensitivity is crucial in navigating potentially divisive subjects. Approaching cultural topics with respect and awareness, while avoiding stereotypes or harm, is integral to ethical practice. Collaborating with local authorities or individuals familiar with customs can help ensure a nuanced and respectful representation of cultural nuances, especially given the diverse nationalities and traditions within Iran.

Transparency regarding conflicts of interest is vital. Any potential biases or influences impacting the study's findings should be openly declared. Maintaining impartiality, recognizing conflicts, and upholding transparency are fundamental principles guiding my research conduct.

Data integrity and honesty are sacrosanct. It is imperative to prevent manipulation or misrepresentation of data to fit preconceived notions or agendas. A commitment to accuracy, integrity, and transparent reporting of outcomes is non-negotiable.

Prejudice and bias must be actively avoided. I strive to maintain objectivity and refrain from allowing personal biases to influence the data collection process.

Academic integrity, including proper citation and referencing of sources, is foundational. Upholding academic standards and avoiding plagiarism are integral to maintaining credibility and ethical conduct in research.

Beneficence and non-maleficence guide decision-making. Efforts are made to minimize harm and maximize benefits, such as by conducting risk-benefit analyses and taking actions to ensure the success of the research.

Publication and dissemination of findings are done responsibly and transparently. Sensationalism or exaggeration of results is avoided, and any limitations or uncertainties are clearly communicated.

Community engagement is essential throughout the research process. Stakeholder input is valued, and efforts are made to engage with and acknowledge the local community's perspectives and contributions.

4.7.1 Personal Data Protection

In my study, the target population is students between the ages of 7 and 18 (before entering university) in Iran's educational system. According to the rules and regulations, I do not interview children. No photos or videos are taken in order to collect information from children. Interviews will be conducted with their parents, teachers, and people who are working in the education system and have responsibility. In this regard, I will make sure that the device used to record the interviews does not have an internet connection, and to be sure, I will borrow this device from the university. The device's password will be changed to ensure the protection of interviews.

Moreover, these interviews will not be shared with anyone. After the completion of this study, all interviews will be deleted. Furthermore, throughout the research process, I will remain compliant with guidelines and regulations from my university (UiA) and the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) to ensure that the highest ethical and legal standards are conducted in my research.

In addition, the research was carried out following the guidelines set forth by SIKT and the University of Agder. In particular, because the study required specific data deemed to be participant personal information, the data collection was done with SIKT's consent. The respondents' signed consent forms were safely kept at home to avoid unauthorized access.

4.8 Challenges and risk

Navigating the intricate landscape of culture in education and the nuanced tapestry of cultural differences presents a multifaceted challenge, often underscored by participants' reluctance to share their experiences openly. The hesitancy stems from a deeply ingrained fear of potential

stigma and discrimination, which casts a shadow over the candor of discourse. This reticence, though understandable, can yield a cascade of repercussions, chief among them being the generation of inaccurate or incomplete data. Without the unfiltered narratives of those directly impacted, the intricate interplay between cultural dynamics and educational outcomes remains obscured, hindering comprehensive understanding and effective policymaking. Moreover, the issue of trust compounds the challenge, as establishing rapport and fostering an environment of openness demands a delicate balancing act. Researchers striving to unravel the complexities of cultural influences in education are confronted with the daunting task of reaching respondents across diverse socio-cultural spectra. However, this endeavor is thwarted by the looming specter of distrust, which erects formidable barriers to engagement. Consequently, the risk of perpetuating representation or selection bias looms large, threatening to undermine the integrity and validity of findings. To put it simply, overcoming the many challenges that arise from trying to disentangle the complex web of cultural influences in education will require a determined effort to build trust, promote inclusivity, and elevate the voices of those who are marginalized.

Chapter 5: Empirical Findings

5.1 Introduction

As indicated in the first chapters, this qualitative research aims to understand how cultural dynamics intersect with educational policies, practices, and outcomes within the Iranian context. Under the study problem statement, the study explores the need to understand the cultural factors influencing the implementation of quality education (SDG4) in Iran in the frame of Culture Capital. The effort of this research was to answer the following Question:

1. How do individuals within the Iranian cultural context perceive and experience the influence of cultural factors on their access to and participation in quality education?
2. How do cultural factors shape the curriculum and pedagogy in Iranian schools?
3. What role do cultural factors play in the educational outcomes and achievements of Iranian students?

The exploration questions were important while conducting semi-structured interviews, especially when preparing an interview companion for the sample group. The actors' appreciation of their issues and points of view was enhanced by the occasion to freely partake their ideas concerning the exploration problem and questions during the semi-structured interview. It was imperative to ensure that the interview questions, which were deduced from the exploration questions and extant literature, would not stymie the inductive approach to data collection and analysis. The study employed individual semi-structured qualitative interviews as a means of data collection. Twelve actors shared in the study three preceptors, trainers, and nine parents. The reiterations of all twelve interviews were written in Persian, and thematic analysis and rendering ways were applied. The results are published entirely anonymously, with no recognizable names or aliases, either directly or laterally, to cover the actors' safety and sequestration.

The research findings clarify several personal, social, and environmental factors in the analysis of cultural factors affecting the implementation of education quality in the context of Iran, and they were identified and categorized as influential factors through thematic analysis. The findings of this research have been presented in the framework of several theoretical and conceptual themes and sub-themes created from the collected data to facilitate its follow-up and contextualization. The primary research findings are provided in this chapter using semi-structured interviews. The gathered information is arranged and examined using the primary theoretical framework for this study, cultural capital. This chapter also presents any pertinent

and valuable data from participant replies that can assist us in analyzing the cultural aspects influencing the implementation and providing an answer to the study question.

5.2 Themes for Analysis

The data collected for this study was examined using thematic analysis approach. To conduct this assessment, the pertinent themes that addressed the goals and research objectives of the study were identified. The researcher engaged in the practice of reading and rereading the data collected from interviewees and establishing codes and categories as a means of obtaining relevant themes. The researcher then examined the pattern of codes, categories, and themes comparatively to identify the commonalities, differences, and connections of the data obtained from study participants. The actual names of interviewees were not stated; on the contrary, the researcher adopted descriptors to ensure that the ethical considerations of anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality were maintained.

Interviews were transcribed for easy reading and coding. The coding process divided the interviews into different parts to acquire a comprehensive data view. The participant selected the place where the interviews were held. Transcripts were classified according to the themes identified in the interview questions. The researcher took quick notes following each interview, even if they were later transcribed, to make sure that the impressions that were formed at the time—which were based on the participants' gestures and mannerisms—were preserved. These brief notes captured the main topics discussed in interviews and the researcher's field experiences. The field notes helped me nudge my memory during the transcription stage. They ensured that my analysis of the interviews was more of an ongoing process than a one-stop procedure at the end of writing this analysis chapter.

Responses obtained from the interview were captured according to the following themes and will be discussed in the subsequent sections of the chapter:

The results of the three elements of quality education are presented and analyzed in this chapter using Pierre Bourdieu's Culture Capital Framework as a basis. Pierre Bourdieu identified Embodied Cultural Capital, Objectified Cultural Capital, and Institutionalized Cultural Capital as the three elements of Quality Education.

5.2.1 Embodied Cultural Capital:

In the context of Quality Education, Embodied Cultural Capital refers to the cultural dispositions, knowledge, and values that individuals possess and bring into educational

settings, influencing their learning experiences and outcomes in Iran. This includes gender norms, religious beliefs, and linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, which shape students' interactions with the curriculum, their engagement in learning activities, and their perceptions of educational institutions. For example, gender norms may influence students' educational aspirations and the subjects they choose to study, while religious beliefs may impact their attitudes toward specific topics or educational practices. Similarly, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds can affect students' language proficiency and sense of belonging within the educational environment. Thus, embodied cultural capital is crucial in determining how people learn, emphasizing the necessity of inclusive educational policies and culturally sensitive teaching methods to guarantee all Iranian students' fair access to high-quality education. In this study, we consider three categories, namely, gender norms, religious influence, and Language and ethnicity. The findings revealed the following breakdown of the cultural factors impacting implementation as the main theory theme:

5.2.1.1 Gender norms

Gender norms, as a cultural factor impacting the implementation of quality education, are rooted in societal expectations and beliefs regarding individuals' roles, behaviors, and capabilities based on their gender. Within the Iranian educational context, interviews with parents and educators provided valuable insights into the manifestation and perceived effects of gender norms within the schooling system. Among the interviewed parents are five parents of female children (students) and four parents of male children (students). Among the interviewed teachers and trainers, two of them worked with female students, and one of them worked with male students. During the interview, the interviewees were asked to talk about traditional gender roles and their implementation in the education of students. Most of the participants in this research believed that they had witnessed gender norms from time to time in schools and the process of educating students and mentioned them as an influential factor. Parents of female students articulated concerns regarding gender inequality in schools, identifying a perceived bias favoring male students. One parent elucidated the prevailing anti-feminist sentiment permeating Iranian society and its reflection within educational institutions. She said:

" I believe that gender inequality exists in schools, with a tendency for the male gender to be disadvantaged. We live in a society that is strongly anti-feminist, and this is a problem in the whole society and It's visible even in schools".

Also, educators with substantial pedagogical experience underscored the enduring impact of gender stereotypes on the quality of education. A teacher remarked on how traditional gender roles may shape classroom dynamics, particularly in religious education settings where gender segregation is practiced to uphold cultural norms of modesty and propriety.

"Traditional gender roles may influence classroom dynamics, with cultural expectations shaping interactions between male and female students and their teachers. In some cases, gender segregation may be practiced, particularly in religious education settings, to uphold cultural norms regarding modesty and propriety."

Gender norms are also defined by an education expert as attitudes or standards for proper conduct exclusive to a given gender. These regulations, which are rooted in Iranian culture and society rather than biology, draw attention to the historical practice of gender segregation in the country's educational system and acknowledge the possibility that it will continue to exacerbate gender differences in access to high-quality education. These viewpoints highlight the complex interactions that exist between gender dynamics, cultural norms, and educational practices, and they call for a thorough and nuanced strategy to combat gender inequality in the Iranian educational system.

One of the parents acknowledged that gender stereotypes play a significant role in determining students' access to high-quality education when they expressed the following:

"Parents actively want to reduce gender discrimination, despite the fact that some aspects of Iranian culture still adhere to antiquated gender conventions. Furthermore, let's make sure that these discriminations don't stand in the way of our kids' education in schools."

Conversely, a parent of a male student expressed optimism about diminishing gender taboos and downplayed the influence of gender norms on educational outcomes. He said:

"No, maybe in the past, male students were more specific than female students. will experience because of their gender, but in my opinion, many gender taboos have disappeared in recent years, and gender norms cannot be a deterrent or a stimulus for students."

5.2.1.2 Religious influence

Religious influence, as a cultural factor impacting the implementation of quality education, refers to the pervasive role of religious beliefs, practices, and institutions in shaping educational policies, curriculum content, and school practices.

In the interviews, many participants mentioned religious factors as influencing factors in education. Since Iran is an Islamic country, religious teachings are an integral part of education

in Iran. This education starts from the first year of education in schools, and even in the university, religious units must be passed. One parent said:

"Religious and Quranic courses are compulsory in students' curriculum and teachers force students to memorize the Quran or learn religious issues and rulings, if it is not necessary for students to learn religious issues by force. They will have a lot of time to determine their path in the future."

Another parent spoke angrily about the influence of religion in schools and student curricula. He said:

"Students are forced to attend school, and occasionally they are given false information. These programs are mandatory and conflict with our family and cultural teachings, causing children to experience religious dilemmas because they are given information at school but are treated differently at home."

Confirming the influence of religion on the education process in schools, one of the teachers added:

"Iran's strong Islamic culture and religious values shape educational content and practices. The education system often includes religious studies, and adherence to religious principles may influence curriculum design, school policies, and social norms within educational institutions".

Furthermore, a mom brought up the subject of how much more rigidly religious concerns and morals are enforced for females attending schools. She stated:

"Girls attending girls' schools are unable to feel comfortable in the classroom due to the restrictive and burdensome clothing requirements. In online classes, they are even required to wear head coverings. Students' GPAs decline when religious and Quranic lessons are included. Therefore, there is no desire to understand anything about them. Students are even required to pray at certain schools in order to improve their behavior grade. Students should act as though they are fasting during the month of Ramadan because it is against school policy for them to eat or drink during this time. Students become skilled at lying as a result in order to follow the rules."

5.2.1.3 Language and ethnicity

Language and ethnicity, as cultural factors impacting the implementation of quality education, encompass the linguistic and cultural diversity present within educational settings. As said in the third chapter about Iran's social and geographical situation, people of different ethnicities live in Iran and in the metropolis of Tehran. These people not only have different cultures but also have preserved their language and dialect. In some tribes, their language is entirely different from the country's official language (Persian). In line with the questions of this research, the participants were asked to talk about cultural factors affecting education.

Considering that some of the participants are from different Iranian ethnicities, they talked about the issue of language and its impact on the education process of students. One of the parents said:

" Persian is Iran's official language, thus our kids struggle to speak and understand it from the moment they are born until they start school. It is quite difficult for students to acquire a language other than their mother tongue because all school textbooks are published in Persian. Students face difficulties as a result, but there is no way to resolve them."

Furthermore, a different participant underlined the language barrier and added:

" Due to problems at work, our family moved from the south of Iran to Tehran. While everyone in the south spoke the local language, our children had to attend Persian-language classes. The school's principal and teachers were able to communicate with the students in their native tongue, which was a plus. However, due to their accurate assessment of the circumstances, the teachers in Tehran do not speak our language, which caused our child to struggle academically and experience depression during the early years of our migration. because he struggled to comprehend the material and interact with his friends because he did not speak Farsi well."

One parent cited language barriers as a significant hurdle. Even though his children are fluent in the Persian language and have no problem learning, remembering his past, he says:

" Due to the fact that we had to study in a foreign language, I always struggled in classes like Persian literature and writing. My family and I moved to Tehran on the eve of entering the university, and I became a very isolated and isolated person. I got stuck because I had a completely different accent. That's why after I had children, I taught my children Persian from birth so that they wouldn't experience my problems. But I was never satisfied with this, because our language is a part of our culture and due to the deficiencies in the country's education system, we have to hide a part of our culture."

Considering the importance of the role of language as an influential factor in quality education, school counselors and teachers mentioned:

" It is possible for students from immigrant or minority cultural backgrounds to have difficulties in educational contexts concerning language skills and cultural integration. Inadequate command of the primary language of instruction can impede students' academic progress and educational opportunities, and cultural disparities can make it difficult for them to communicate, interact socially, and engage with the curriculum. Iran is home to various ethnic and linguistic minority groups, each with its own cultural heritage and language. However, the dominant language of instruction in schools is Persian, which can pose challenges for students from minority language backgrounds. Cultural factors related to language and identity may impact these students' educational experiences, as they navigate between their native language and Persian while striving to access quality education and preserve their cultural heritage."

5.2.2 Objectified Cultural Capital:

In the context of Iranian education, "objectified cultural capital" refers to the material cultural resources and assets people own or can access. These resources include material goods, educational credentials, and institutional affiliations symbolizing cultural value and prestige. Objectified Cultural Capital can manifest in various forms, such as books, educational technology, access to high-quality educational institutions, and participation in cultural activities or enrichment programs. Objectified Cultural Capital plays a significant role in shaping students' learning experiences and opportunities in education. For example, providing students access to materials, computers, and textbooks can improve their academic performance and increase their involvement with the program.

Similarly, possessing educational credentials and institutional affiliations can confer social status and open doors to further educational and career opportunities. Objectified Cultural Capital thus represents an essential aspect of cultural advantage in education, highlighting the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities within educational systems. We divided our findings into two themes: socioeconomic status, and education accessibility.

5.2.2.1 Socioeconomic status

Socioeconomic status (SES), as a cultural factor impacting the implementation of quality education, refers to the economic and social conditions that influence individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and educational outcomes. All the participants in this research mentioned socioeconomic factors as very important and influential factors in the quality of education. It should be noted that education in Iran is free for all students at pre-university levels. However, in addition to public and free schools, semi-public and non-profit schools enroll students by charging different tuition fees.

A parent whose child studies in a non-profit school says:

"We are satisfied with the services and facilities provided by the school to the students. Side programming classes and English language training are among the things that are offered to the students. But due to the high school fees, we do not have the possibility to register our children in non-profit schools in the following years. Because economically, we are no longer in a position to pay the tuition."

Also, another participant emphasized economic factors and said:

"I have two children who are students. Both of them are studying in public schools. I would like to enroll my children in non-profit schools, but I can't because we have to spend all our salary on school fees, and this is not possible for us. On the other hand, in public schools, due

to the large number of students in each class, teachers cannot teach each student well, and we are forced to teach our children after school hours. Since there is not enough time for students and teachers in schools, some education is provided online by the school. I would have liked my children to attend extracurricular classes, but unfortunately there is this inequality, and the facilities and opportunities are only available to students who pay more money."

Teachers and educational consultants are among the individuals who have a deeper understanding of this problem. They emphasized the importance of family economies by citing instances in which many students were compelled to leave school and enter the workforce due to their families' dire financial circumstances. One of the teachers who has experience working in different schools says:

" The majority of parents nowadays, particularly females, have a college degree, understand the value of their kids' education, and keep up with pertinent educational topics. But there are still families who do not have an acceptable social and economic status and do not care about their children's education They prefer to marry their daughters at a young age so that the financial burden of the girls is on someone else and send their sons to work at a young age to help the family and this means that the children will be deprived of education."

Also, the rest of the participants said:

" Cultural perspectives on poverty, wealth, and social standing can have an impact on access to education. Families with higher socioeconomic status may prioritize education and have greater resources to invest in their children's schooling, while those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face barriers such as lack of financial resources or pressure to work instead of attending school. Families' ability to pay for educational costs including school fees, uniforms, books and transportation depends on their socioeconomic condition. Lower-income families may struggle to meet these costs, leading to barriers to enrollment and participation in education."

" Socioeconomic status affects access to educational resources, including reputable schools, skilled teachers, and instructional materials. Compared to lower-income families, higher-income families might have better access to these resources, which would improve their educational possibilities. It also affects the quality of extracurricular enrichment activities and educational support offered to students. Rich families can help their children succeed academically by offering extracurricular activities, tutoring, and access to educational technologies".

5.2.2.2 Education accessibility

Education accessibility, as a cultural factor impacting the implementation of quality education, refers to the extent to which individuals or communities can readily access and participate in educational opportunities. It encompasses factors such as physical access to schools, affordability of education, availability of educational resources, and inclusivity of diverse populations. Access to education was one of the things that was visible in the conversations of

the participants in this research. In this regard, the text of the interview of teachers and counselors is given here because of a more specialized view:

" According to Maslow's pyramid, food, drink, air and shelter are among the human physiological structures that are located at the base of the pyramid. Due to difficult financial circumstances, some families try their best to meet their fundamental necessities while also considering their children's future educational paths. However, there are instances where they are unable to cover their basic demands, which makes it impossible for them to attend school because of financial difficulties. Additionally, there are some geographic locations where it is extremely difficult to physically enter schools, and there are others where it is impossible to contact a qualified instructor or coach. All of these situations make it difficult for people to easily access education."

" In a society, accessibility has a big impact on educational equity and quality. Regardless of their history, socioeconomic level, or location, people have equal opportunities to register in schools, access educational resources, receive sufficient support, and engage in learning activities in environments where education is accessible. On the other hand, obstacles to educational accessibility, such lack of funds, inadequate infrastructure, prejudice, or cultural norms, might make it more difficult for people to get the benefits of high-quality education. In order to address education accessibility, comprehensive strategies are needed that guarantee inclusive policies, eliminate obstacles, encourage diversity, and establish support networks to enable equal educational opportunities for all people. These strategies will improve the overall execution of quality education initiatives."

5.2.3 Institutionalized Cultural Capital

Institutionalized Cultural Capital refers to the social networks, institutional affiliations, and credentials individuals acquire through interactions within formal education systems and other institutional contexts in Iran. Unlike Embodied and Objectified Cultural Capital, which are internalized or tangible forms of cultural wealth, Institutionalized Cultural Capital encompasses institutional authorities' external validation and recognition of cultural resources. This includes educational qualifications, certifications, professional memberships, and affiliations with prestigious institutions, which confer social status and credibility within society. In the context of education, Institutionalized Cultural Capital influences individuals' access to educational opportunities, their trajectories within the education system, and their prospects for social mobility. For example, individuals with high levels of Institutionalized Cultural Capital may have access to elite educational institutions, prestigious academic programs, and influential social networks, providing them with advantages in academic and professional pursuits.

Conversely, those lacking Institutionalized Cultural Capital may face barriers to accessing quality education and may experience limited opportunities for advancement. Understanding

the role of Institutionalized Cultural Capital is essential for addressing inequalities within educational systems and promoting more significant equity and social justice in Iran. We break down it into two themes: family expectations and geographical location.

5.2.3.1 Family expectations

As a cultural factor, family expectations refer to the aspirations, beliefs, and values that families hold regarding their children's education and academic success. These expectations can significantly influence students' motivation, engagement, and educational outcomes. In many cultures, including Iran, families highly value academic achievement and view education as a pathway to social mobility and success. In the interviews, many parents and teachers believed that there are certain expectations related to academic performance, field choice, career paths, and educational levels from parents, which will create positive and negative pressures on students and their attitude towards It will shape learning, study habits, and educational goals. Parents talk about their expectations for their children; some believe these expectations and demands will not pressure their children, and some believe they will improve the student's education. Here are the words of parents about their expectations:

"As parents, we want our child to become a successful doctor in the future, so we have provided special facilities for her. We have prepared educational classes and electronic facilities for her. And even if needed, we can send her abroad for education. Maybe this is a form of perfectionism, but our child has accepted that this path will lead her to success."

"Yes, we try day and night to make it easier for our children to study and live, and in return we expect them to be able to create a better future for themselves by studying in a good university and finding a suitable job, and we don't think that this expectation is a lot and they are under pressure. They are free to choose their field of study according to their taste and interest, and we are with them in this way and will support them."

Also, teachers and educational consultants, emphasizing the role of family and society's expectations as an influential factor in the quality of education, mentioned some things based on their work experience:

" " Cultural expectancies withinside the domestic may have a huge effect on how nicely youngsters do in school. Iranian families' expectations and support for education may be influenced by cultural norms and beliefs, which in turn may have an effect on people's motivation, goals, and ability to access educational resources. The influence of family on educational prospects is significant. Families that have high hopes for their children can occasionally have favourable outcomes because these parents support and nurture their offspring. And as a result, kids learn more motivated and enthusiastically. However, there are instances where parents' expectations prevent students from attaining the intended outcome because they stress and confuse them."

“In Iranian culture, academic success holds great significance, driven by familial, societal, and personal aspirations. Students face substantial pressure to excel, viewing education as a pathway to fulfillment, status, and future opportunities. This emphasis on achievement motivates them to set ambitious goals and work diligently. Family expectations are pivotal, with parents prioritizing and investing in their children's education, fostering a sense of obligation in students to meet these high standards.”

“In Iranian culture, while academic success is highly esteemed, there's also a pervasive fear of failure. This fear stems from the pressure to meet both personal and familial expectations, driving some students to work diligently while causing anxiety that can impact performance. Education is seen as crucial for social and upward mobility, directly linking academic achievement to future socioeconomic status and career prospects. This perception motivates students to excel academically, particularly in STEM fields, which are culturally valued for their perceived opportunities for career advancement. Consequently, there's often pressure on students to pursue STEM subjects, potentially leading to imbalances in educational and career paths.”

5.2.3.2 Geographical location

Geographical location, as a cultural factor impacting the implementation of quality education, refers to the physical setting and regional context in which educational institutions operate. It encompasses urban or rural settings, resource access, infrastructure, and local socioeconomic conditions. Because the interviews were conducted in the city of Tehran, and due to the vastness of the metropolis of Tehran, it was impossible to interview all people in different urban areas. The parents of the students in this interview emphasized and mentioned the role of geographical location and its impact on the level of education. However, none of these parents were marginalized and had no experience in this field. They emphasized that the level of schools in different regions is very different. One of the parents said about his experiences and observations:

" Our family's place of residence is in an average neighborhood and its facilities are normal and average. However, there are significant differences between the schools in the city's northern regions. In terms of geographical location, they are in a better location, and it is easier for students to access the schools. They also provide more facilities for students. They have better and more experienced teachers and modern teaching methods. And subsequently, in schools that are located in the south of the city and peripheral areas, this location shows its effect well because even these schools do not have proper physical facilities."

Then, the teachers and consultants who had experience working in different regions analyzed the geographic location and its impact on the quality of education with a broader perspective:

" Geographical region can notably impact the excellent of training and academic effects for students. For example, schools in urban areas may have better access to educational facilities, technology, and qualified teachers, leading to higher educational standards and opportunities. Conversely, schools in rural or remote areas may face challenges such as limited resources,

teacher shortages, and infrastructure deficits, which can impact the quality of education provided. Additionally, geographical location can also affect cultural aspects such as community values, traditions, and educational priorities, all of which play a role in shaping the educational experience for students."

"Geographical location and cultural variables interact to affect educational chances. Compared to rural areas, urban communities offer superior educational infrastructure in many places, such as schools with greater resources, qualified teachers, and access to technology. Geographical obstacles can prevent people from accessing education, especially in rural and isolated locations. These obstacles include a lack of transportation infrastructure and extended school travel times. Cultural factors may also influence attitudes toward girls' mobility, affecting their ability to travel safely to school. Cultural norms within communities may shape attitudes toward education and influence community support for educational initiatives. In some regions, cultural traditions and values may prioritize other pursuits over formal education, impacting school attendance and retention rates. Understanding how these cultural factors intersect with socioeconomic status and geographic location is essential for addressing disparities in educational access and promoting inclusive and equitable education for all individuals, regardless of gender, income, or location."

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter, which focuses on the junction between cultural dynamics and educational policies and practices, offers a thorough summary of the empirical findings from the qualitative research within the Iranian cultural environment. This study focused on three main research questions: the impact of cultural variables on curriculum and pedagogy, the perception and experience of cultural factors on access to high-quality education, and the role of cultural factors in educational outcomes and achievements.

The theme analysis of the semi-structured interview data provided a critical new understanding of how Iranian culture influences the delivery of high-quality education. Based on Pierre Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Framework, these results were divided into three major themes: institutionalized cultural capital, embodied cultural capital, and objectified cultural capital.

Embodied Cultural Capital: This theme examined how cultural attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge affect students' educational experiences and results in Iranian classrooms. Language/ethnicity, religious influence, and gender norms appeared as important sub-themes under this category. The participants emphasized how linguistic diversity, religious doctrine, and conventional gender norms have a widespread impact on educational practices and results.

Objectified Cultural Capital: This theme concentrates on how a person's access to or possession of tangible cultural assets and resources affects their chances for an education. The distribution of resources and opportunities within the Iranian education system is significantly influenced by socioeconomic position and accessibility to education. Participants talked about

how the economy affects students' ability to choose their schools and the difficulties physically accessing educational facilities and resources.

Institutionalized Cultural Capital: This theme explored the affiliations, social networks, and credentials people gain from formal education and other institutional settings. The emphasis was placed on the importance of family expectations and geographic location in determining students' educational paths and opportunities for upward social mobility. Participants discussed how geographical differences and parental aspirations affect students' educational results.

Overall, the results demonstrated the intricate relationship between Iranian cultural dynamics and educational practices, emphasizing the necessity of culturally aware policies and procedures to guarantee all students fair access to high-quality education. By addressing the various cultural elements this study revealed, Iranian lawmakers and educators might endeavor to create more inclusive and efficient educational systems.

Chapter 6: Analysis

6.1 introduction

As described in previous chapters, this research addresses a critical gap in the scholarly landscape by examining the suitability of quality education, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), within the complex context of Iran. The central research problem revolves around understanding how the global standards and quality education benchmarks advocated under SDG4 intersect with Iran's sociocultural dynamics and specific needs. Despite extensive literature exploring quality education globally, an in-depth analysis of its application within Iran's unique cultural milieu still needs to be in-depth. This gap is particularly salient given Iran's rich historical heritage, cultural diversity, and commitment to educational progress. The research endeavors to fill this void by conducting a comprehensive analysis investigating the interplay between cultural factors and the effective implementation of quality education in Iran.

According to the UNDP, "The realization that everyone can access inclusive, high-quality education validates the notion that it is among the most dependable and efficient drivers of sustainable development." By 2030, all boys and girls will have free access to elementary and secondary education thanks to this aim. In addition, it aims to erase wealth and gender disparities, provide equal access to fairly priced vocational training, and provide universal access to high-quality higher education." The findings in chapter five discuss the leading theory employed in this study, the Cultural Capital, by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Cultural capital theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how cultural factors influence the implementation of quality education. This theory highlights three primary forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Yamamoto& Brinton,2010).

This chapter uses thematic analysis and coding techniques to examine the empirical findings from Chapter 5. The overarching narrative that emerges from the data analysis provides us with a thorough comprehension of the experiences and high-quality education of the participants. The resulting conclusions are arranged by the primary theories and ideas that emerged from the data. By talking about the outcomes, the data and findings are analyzed. This chapter analyzes Embodied Cultural Capital, Objectified Cultural Capital, and Institutionalized Cultural Capital through an analytical data analysis. The analysis chapter's primary goal is to emphasize the theme's relation to the research questions to best address the research's problem statement. The research questions are addressed appropriately at the end of this chapter.

Furthermore, at the end of the discussion, the hypotheses will be answered in the following way.

6.2 Embodied Cultural Capital

Pierre Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory defines embodied cultural capital as the internalized attitudes, practices, and routines that people develop via socialization in certain cultural contexts. The quality of education in Iran is greatly influenced by embodied cultural capital, which includes gender norms, language, ethnicity, and religious influence. These factors shape people's views, behaviors, and experiences in educational settings.

6.2.1 Gender norms

In Iran, gender norms significantly influence the possibilities and results of schooling. Social expectations about people's duties, actions, and skills based on their gender are set by traditional gender roles. Gender norms in Iranian society might affect students' access to resources, educational goals, and career aspirations. For instance, cultural barriers may prevent girls from following career routes or academic subjects often associated with men, like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. Furthermore, the social connections, self-esteem, and educational experiences of students may be impacted by gender-segregated schooling practices that are affected by religious and cultural standards. Gender inequalities in enrollment rates, academic success, and educational attainment demonstrate that, despite efforts to enhance gender equality in education, gender norms continue to have a lasting impact on educational outcomes in Iran.

As revealed in interviews and expressed by parents, teachers, and educational counselors, gender norms influence the quality of students' education. These gender norms, primarily rooted in Iranian culture and tradition, lead to girls facing limitations in education. This discrimination and inequality reduce the average human capital in society and harm economic performance (Kaveh, 2021). Moreover, replacing more capable girls with less capable boys diminishes the education retention rate. Gender norms that result in deprivation of education, particularly affecting girls, paint a grim picture.

6.2.2 Religious influence

Another critical component of Embodied Cultural Capital that influences educational experiences and activities in Iran is religious influence. Iran is an Islamic Republic, and Islamic beliefs, values, and teachings heavily influence its educational system. Schools frequently

encourage religious beliefs, morals, and practices in addition to integrating religious education into the curriculum. Religious influence can be seen in curriculum content, dress norms, moral teaching, and behavioral expectations, among other areas of education. For example, it can be mandatory for students to follow Islamic dress requirements, take part in religious ceremonies and rituals, and respect Islamic holidays and customs. Furthermore, religious instruction may influence students' educational decisions and actions by influencing their attitudes toward social standards, academic subjects, and ethical principles.

Many interviewees, considering Iran a Muslim country, believe that religious influence in schools decreases the quality of education for students. They argue that textbooks and educational programs are influenced by religion and structured accordingly. They believe that religion has deeply penetrated all layers of society, and education is not exempt from this. Additionally, many schools and teachers believe education must be religious, leading to disagreements between families and schools (Habibi, 2020). Many educational planners believe that through religion, students can be guided on the right and scientific path, and those who are lazy and playful in their studies can be brought onto the path of acquiring knowledge. However, this leads to disagreements between parents and planners, as parents see religion and religious influence as obstacles to education.

6.2.3 Language and ethnicity

In Iran, language and ethnicity also significantly impact the experiences and results of schooling. Iran is a multiethnic and multilingual nation with a rich cultural diversity, each with its languages, customs, and cultural history. Students' academic success, sense of belonging in educational environments, and access to educational resources can all be impacted by language and ethnicity. Minority ethnic groups may experience discrimination, cultural marginalization, or language hurdles in the educational system, which would limit their access to school and make it more difficult for them to succeed academically. Furthermore, there are benefits and drawbacks to linguistic ability and cultural capital when interacting with academic discourse, navigating educational systems, and gaining entrance to higher education. The impact of language and ethnicity on educational outcomes in Iran can be addressed by initiatives to support linguistic variety, cultural inclusion, and fair educational opportunities for all students.

Gender norms, language, ethnicity, and religious influence are all crucial elements of Embodied Cultural Capital in Bourdieu's concept of Cultural Capital, and they have a significant impact on people's educational experiences and results in Iran. Policymakers, educators, and

stakeholders can create more equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environments that support the different needs and experiences of all children by acknowledging the importance of these cultural elements in educational contexts.

Cultural and linguistic differences, alongside gender, are among the many factors that significantly affect the quality of education for students in Iran. Given Iran's diverse natural cultural landscape and the diversity of languages and ethnicities, linguistic and ethnic diversity has led to many non-Persian speakers facing challenges in the education process. As interviewees noted, learning and teaching in a language other than the mother tongue creates difficulties in learning and students' overall communication skills. Teaching in the mother tongue is one of the principles of Iran's constitution, and there has always been considerable debate about it (Fatemi & Khaghaninejad, 2011).

6.3 Objectified Cultural Capital

Objectified Cultural Capital, as defined by Pierre Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory, refers to financial resources, material belongings, and physical assets that people can utilize to improve their educational outcomes and access educational opportunities. The quality of education in Iran is significantly influenced by two crucial characteristics of Objectified Cultural Capital: socioeconomic level and accessibility to education.

6.3.1 Socioeconomic status

Socioeconomic status is a subset of Objectified Cultural Capital that includes a person's financial resources, social standing, and level of material wealth. Socioeconomic status has a significant impact on educational experiences and results in Iran. Differences in wealth and income lead to different access to educational opportunities, resources, and support networks. Wealthy families can improve their children's educational attainment and academic achievement by providing extracurricular activities, private tutoring, educational technology, and admission to elite institutions or colleges. On the other hand, low-income families could have financial obstacles to education, such as tuition, school supplies, transportation expenses, and lost opportunities to work before pursuing education. These economic gaps support social stratification and poverty cycles by causing differences in educational attainment.

All interviewees acknowledged the direct impact of socioeconomic status on students' education. The interviews revealed that socioeconomic status directly affects students' academic performance. Parents with higher socioeconomic status provide their children with

better and more educational services. Additional tutoring classes, non-profit schools, and similar services incur high costs for parents, which not all members of society can afford (Naghsh et al, 2017).

6.3.2 Education accessibility

The availability, affordability, and inclusivity of educational opportunities and resources in the Iranian setting are all factors that contribute to education accessibility, which is another facet of Objectified Cultural Capital. Challenges with geography, infrastructure, and resource allocation remain despite government efforts to increase educational access and upgrade educational facilities, especially in rural and marginalized communities. Students' access to high-quality education may be limited in remote or under resourced regions by the need for more suitable school facilities, trained teachers, instructional materials, and technological infrastructure. Furthermore, marginalized groups—such as refugees, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities—may find it difficult to access educational opportunities or fully engage in the educational system due to physical, linguistic, or cultural hurdles. These impediments to accessibility worsen educational disparities and perpetuate patterns of marginalization and social exclusion.

In Iran, differences in socioeconomic status and access to education combine to influence people's educational paths and experiences, mirroring systemic obstacles in the educational system and, more generally, social injustices. Policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can work towards addressing socioeconomic disparities, enhancing education accessibility, and promoting more significant equity and inclusivity in the Iranian educational system by understanding the role of Objectified Cultural Capital in influencing educational opportunities and outcomes. More equitable and accessible educational opportunities can be made available to everyone in Iran through initiatives to improve resource allocation, build the country's educational infrastructure, lower economic barriers, and support inclusive educational policies.

As articulated in the interviews, one influential factor in the quality of education is its accessibility for students. Access to suitable infrastructure and a conducive learning environment is essential. In overcrowded classrooms without sufficient equipment, the quality of education may diminish. A good environment facilitates positive interaction between students and teachers, enhancing the educational process's effectiveness. Access to suitable libraries, laboratories, educational materials, and necessary equipment also helps students learn and understand subjects more deeply (Abdollahi, 2022).

6.4 Institutionalized Cultural Capital

In Pierre Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory, institutionalized forms of knowledge, credentials, and degrees that bestow social status and privilege inside a particular society are referred to as institutionalized forms of cultural capital. The quality of education in Iran is shaped by two crucial elements of institutionalized cultural capital: family expectations and geographic location. These factors affect individuals' access to educational options, aspirations, and outcomes.

6.4.1 Family expectations

Family expectations are a part of institutionalized cultural capital; they include the goals, beliefs, and priorities ingrained in families and passed down through the generations regarding schooling. In Iran, family expectations for schooling frequently reflect cultural beliefs, economic concerns, and societal standards. Families may place a higher value on social mobility, career success, and academic achievement because they see education as a way to enhance socioeconomic standing and acquire better prospects. These expectations can include pressure on students to achieve academic excellence, pursue particular fields of study, or follow social or family norms about their future choices and life trajectories. Additionally, how a family views education can affect how students view themselves, their motivation, and their goals, affecting their involvement in their education and their academic performance.

Reviewing research in the educational field underscores the crucial role of families in their children's academic progress. Most studies have emphasized the family as a significant factor in children's educational outcomes. Many parents solely attribute their children's academic success and progress to excessive attention and high expectations in academic matters. However, these high expectations, at times, not only fail to enhance academic progress but may also create negative stress. Nevertheless, interviewees consistently cited parental support, encouragement, and involvement as influential factors in the quality of students' education (Kurt & Tas, 2018).

6.4.2 Geographical location

Another aspect of institutionalized cultural capital is geographic location, which describes the physical environment where people live and have access to educational opportunities. Inequalities in educational achievements between areas in Iran result from geographic differences in school infrastructure, resources, and quality. Urban communities have better-

resourced schools, qualified teachers, educational facilities, and extracurricular possibilities than rural or distant places. Furthermore, metropolitan areas can provide easier access to libraries, cultural centres, educational support services, and higher education institutions, improving students' educational options and experiences. On the other hand, kids who live in rural or marginalized areas can encounter difficulties such as poor school facilities, a lack of teachers, restricted access to educational technology, and lengthier commutes to school, which could impede their ability to receive a high-quality education and achieve their educational goals.

Family expectations, regional location, broader societal norms, cultural values, and structural disparities within the educational system shape individuals' educational paths and prospects in Iran. Policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can work towards addressing geographic disparities, improving educational infrastructure, and promoting more significant equity and inclusivity in the Iranian educational system by acknowledging the role of institutionalized cultural capital in influencing educational access, aspirations, and outcomes. Reducing educational disparities and promoting social mobility for all Iranians can be accomplished through initiatives to enhance educational resources, increase access to high-quality education, and support students' educational goals.

The physical location of educational institutions, such as schools, significantly influences the quality of education. The role of schools and classrooms' physical and geographical space in students' learning has been studied extensively (Alhami, & Akbari, 2022). Striking a balance between various criteria in selecting an appropriate school building location is a complex task. In urban areas, proximity to highways, railway lines, and industrial centers can pose risks to students. Additionally, some schools are located in areas with difficult access for parents and students, significantly impacting the quality of education.

6.5 Research Questions

Using the rich insights from the semi-structured interviews, I address the research questions that served as the study's main focus in this part. By examining the viewpoints and experiences that different stakeholders—parents, educators, and educational administrators—share, I hope to offer thorough responses to the main questions that guide this research. This analysis will clarify how cultural factors affect Iranians' ability to access and engage in high-quality education, how they influence curricula and pedagogy, and how these influences affect students' academic performance. I aim to close the knowledge gap between

theoretical concepts and real-world implementations by providing a nuanced viewpoint on the possible problems with the Iranian educational system.

Q1: How do individuals within the Iranian cultural context perceive and experience the influence of cultural factors on their access to and participation in quality education?

People see and feel that cultural elements influence their involvement in and access to quality education in the Iranian cultural environment through various deeply ingrained societal norms and practices. For example, gender norms define traditional roles and expectations for men and women, which affects educational options and paths from a young age. Even though Iran has made progress toward gender equality in education, societal expectations, professional choices, and academic interests are nevertheless influenced by the persistence of traditional gender roles. The socioeconomic class also greatly influences educational experiences, with differences in academic support, school quality, and resource availability frequently reflecting more enormous societal inequalities. Economic obstacles can make it difficult for marginalized communities to attend extracurricular activities, high-quality schooling, and educational enrichment programs, which can prolong cycles of disadvantage. Religious influence also penetrates educational settings, directing the incorporation of religious studies, upholding religious customs in schools, and the curriculum's incorporation of moral and ethical principles. Language and ethnicity also matter; the impact of linguistic and cultural diversity on educational opportunities and experiences is particularly noticeable for marginalized groups.

Q2: How do cultural factors shape the curriculum and pedagogy in Iranian schools?

Iranian schools' curricula and pedagogy are deeply influenced by cultural aspects, which mirror the country's rich cultural heritage, historical legacy, and societal norms. The curriculum transmits information and instills ideals consistent with Iran's ideology, national pride, and cultural identity. Language, history, and literature are stores of cultural legacy that help kids feel like they belong. Pedagogical practices, which emphasize rote memorization, deference to authority, and hierarchical teacher-student relationships, sometimes borrow from conventional teaching methods. Despite efforts to modernize teaching methods and foster critical thinking abilities, classroom dynamics and instructional methodologies are still influenced by cultural conventions surrounding education. Additionally, religious studies may be included in the curriculum to help students develop their moral and ethical principles and represent Islam's significant influence in Iranian society. Iranian schools' curricula and pedagogy are intricately

entwined with social norms, cultural values, and traditions, demonstrating a dedication to upholding social cohesiveness and maintaining national identity.

Q3: What role do cultural factors play in the educational outcomes and achievements of Iranian students?

Iranian students' educational results and achievements are greatly influenced by cultural elements, shaping their academic trajectories, goals, and future possibilities. One crucial factor is socioeconomic background; wealthy children typically have better access to resources for their education, enrichment activities, and high-quality instruction. On the other hand, obstacles, including a lack of finances, a lack of support, and restricted access to educational opportunities, affect children from underprivileged backgrounds, which leads to differences in their academic performance and achievement. Gender norms influence boys' and girls' academic expectations, job choices, and prospects. Although there has been progress in gender equality in education, cultural expectations surrounding conventional gender roles still exist and impact educational opportunities and outcomes. Students' moral growth, moral judgement, and engagement with academic material are shaped by the intersection of their religious beliefs and values with their educational experiences. Policymakers and educators can seek to promote inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive learning environments that support the academic performance and well-being of all Iranian students by recognizing and addressing the many ways that cultural variables intersect with education.

6.6 Hypotheses

It is crucial to consider how these suggested claims relate to the research questions, literature review, and empirical results in order to effectively incorporate the hypotheses into the more extensive study environment. Every hypothesis builds upon the fundamental knowledge presented in the sections that come before it, forming a seamless story that directs the research.

According to the first hypothesis, cultural influences majorly impact Iranians' ability to obtain a high-quality education, which causes gaps in educational possibilities, especially for marginalized groups. This theory is based on a thorough literature study, which demonstrated how ubiquitous cultural norms affect educational accessibility. This hypothesis is evaluated against actual experiences by looking at the viewpoints of different stakeholders through interviews, and the results provide empirical proof of the obstacles marginalized communities confront.

According to the second hypothesis, cultural norms and values influence the curriculum and pedagogy of Iranian schools, reflecting the nation's rich cultural legacy. However, this influence may also pose obstacles to educational modernization and inclusivity. This claim strongly relates to the Cultural Capital Theory theoretical framework, which emphasizes how cultural norms influence educational practices. Semi-structured interviews with educators and policymakers evaluate the validity of this hypothesis, providing insights into how cultural expectations are ingrained in the curriculum and instructional strategies.

According to the third hypothesis, cultural factors significantly impact the educational achievements of Iranian students, affecting marginalized groups' success rates as well as their motivation and performance. This hypothesis highlights the relationship between cultural capital and academic achievement by integrating findings from the literature review and empirical data. This theory is supported or refuted by the qualitative data from interviews, which offer a comprehensive knowledge of how cultural influences affect student performance.

According to the fourth hypothesis, there could be inadequacies and inequalities in the Iranian educational system due to policies and programs that do not adequately consider and correct cultural diversity. This theory is supported by the literature review's critical examination of the current educational policies. Stakeholder interviews yielded empirical findings that provide a practical perspective on how successfully these policies accept cultural diversity, allowing for an evaluation of the efficacy of existing educational practices.

Basically, the primary research hypotheses were supported by literature review, empirical data, and interview findings, and based on the obtained data, they are reasonably accepted and probably true.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Results of Discussions

This research is of significant importance as it delves into the cultural factors that profoundly influence the quality of education in Iran. Iran, a multi-ethnic country, boasts a rich tapestry of literary and historical rituals unique to each ethnic group, some of which have endured for centuries. The fourth sustainable development goal, slated for achievement by 2030, underscores the need for inclusive and equal quality education, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all. Given the cultural diversity in Iran, this research aims to comprehensively understand the impact of cultural factors on education quality, with the results meticulously analyzed.

This research is grounded in the cultural capital theory, a concept introduced by Pierre Bourdieu. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital can be classified into three main forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. Embodied cultural capital encompasses gender norms, religious beliefs, and language and ethnicity. Objectified cultural capital includes socioeconomic status and education accessibility. Lastly, institutionalized cultural capital refers to family expectations and geographical location. This theoretical framework examines the cultural elements influencing the quality of Iran's educational system.

Embodied cultural capital, deeply rooted in gender norms, religious influences, and linguistic and ethnic diversity, significantly determines students' educational experiences and opportunities. The results of this study indicated that gender norms often lead to inequality in access to education and affect classroom dynamics. According to the interviewees, this inequality usually disadvantages girls, and the persistence of these traditional norms can cause girls to fall behind in learning important subjects like engineering and technology. Educational advisors believe this injustice is more pronounced in certain regions of Iran with a more traditional and religious fabric. In some areas, girls cannot study and achieve academic progress on par with boys. Efforts have been made to address these limitations and inequalities. However, it cannot yet be said that gender norms have been completely eradicated or have no impact on the quality of education in Iran.

Moreover, religious influences can lead to imposing certain beliefs that may conflict with the student's family and personal values. Iran is a Muslim country, and religion permeates all layers of society, including education. The research results show that education in Iranian schools occurs under the influence of religion, which is reflected in textbooks and curricula, as well as

in students' dress and behavior. Sometimes, the imposition of religion on society and students has led to parental dissatisfaction, as they believe that the influence of religion and religious restrictions hinders the provision of quality education.

Language is undoubtedly one of the most fundamental means of communication and a tool for social interaction and exchange. As mentioned, Iran is home to diverse ethnicities and, consequently, diverse languages, but its official written and spoken language is Persian. Educational books and materials are in Persian, and instruction is also conducted in Persian. Thus, the presence of linguistic and ethnic variety poses both opportunities and challenges that impact students' capacity to participate fully in the curriculum and the larger educational community. In certain instances, this variability may hinder certain students' ability to advance academically. On the other hand, it can create significant opportunities to enrich the educational experience. This diversity can enhance the curriculum by incorporating diverse cultural perspectives and insights, broadening students' understanding of different cultures. Multilingual development programs encourage students to learn language skills, create better communication and understanding among different communities and ethnicities of Iran, and prepare students to progress in the globalized world. If used effectively, these opportunities contribute to the overall goal of quality education.

Objectified cultural capital, reflected in socio-economic status and access to education, emphasizes inequalities in educational opportunities. According to this study, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds frequently encounter significant obstacles to receiving a high-quality education, such as a lack of resources and assistance. Even in areas where students do not pay tuition to attend school, costs must be covered. According to the interviewees, students are often asked to pay for school uniforms, transportation, and essentials like textbooks, pens, and notebooks. Moreover, since some students are forced to work due to family economic issues, there are indirect costs while they are studying, such as loss of income from not working. On the other hand, the services provided in private schools encourage parents to enroll their children in these institutions for better educational advancement. However, financial and economic conditions are significant obstacles.

Access to education, particularly in rural or underserved areas, remains a critical issue that exacerbates the gap between different social groups and limits the potential for equitable educational outcomes. In some regions, parents do not allow their children, especially daughters, to attend school. However, this is not necessarily because they do not want their

children to be educated or because of financial issues. Sometimes, parents keep their children at home because travelling to school is unsafe and poses potential risks. Furthermore, in some rural and underserved areas, access to resources, textbooks, the Internet, and teaching guides is lacking, which leads to a decline in the quality of education.

Institutionalized cultural capital, encompassing family expectations and geographical location, significantly impacts academic achievement. Family expectations, driven by cultural values and norms, can shape students' aspirations and achievements, sometimes exerting undue pressure. These expectations can positively enhance students' academic levels, as parents will encourage and make every effort to ensure their children receive a quality education. Conversely, in some families, household chores, caring for family members, early marriage, and early childbirth are factors that prevent girls from continuing their education. Similarly, working male students can be deprived of educational opportunities. In cultures where these expectations are social norms, education for girls and boys may be a low priority for the family.

The allocation of space for educational use is a critical issue in urban planning. Due to the sensitivity of educational land use concerning various environmental factors, the allocation method is highly significant. Geographical location affects the availability and quality of educational institutions, with urban areas generally offering more resources and opportunities than rural areas. It is important to note that this disparity is between urban and rural areas and within different geographic areas of a single city. This intra-city difference in the quality of educational institutions is visible and is a result of class differences in various parts of the city.

7.2 Policy Recommendations

These policy recommendations seek to address my thesis's findings and conclusions by promoting cultural sensitivity, diversity, and equity in the Iranian educational system. By implementing these suggestions, legislators can establish an educational setting that honours and celebrates cultural variety, encourages all students to succeed academically, and advances harmony and social cohesion in society.

1- Teachers' Cultural Sensitivity Training:

- Educators at all levels of the Iranian educational system should be required to participate in mandatory cultural sensitivity training programs.
- The main objectives of these programs should be to remove unconscious biases, promote inclusive teaching techniques, and raise understanding of cultural diversity.

- Ensure educators have the tools and assistance they need to continue their professional development to design inclusive learning environments.

2- Diversification of the Curriculum:

- Examine and update the national curriculum to include varied viewpoints, historical accounts, and cultural contributions from Iran's numerous linguistic, ethnic, and religious groups.
- Ensure that instructional materials foster respect and understanding between cultures and appropriately portray the nation's cultural variety.
- Promote the creation of additional teaching materials that honor cultural variety and allow students to investigate their own cultural identities.

3- Assistance for Underprivileged Communities:

- Provide funds and resources to support educational programs aimed at underrepresented groups, such as members of ethnic minorities, refugees, and people from low-income families.
- Adopt focused initiatives, such as tutoring services, mentorship programs, and educational resource access, to meet these groups' particular needs and difficulties.
- To guarantee that marginalized students can fully participate in their education, foster collaborations with community organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide wraparound support services, including health, nutrition, and social assistance.

4- Encouragement of Language Diversity:

- By encouraging the use of several languages in educational contexts, we can acknowledge and appreciate Iran's linguistic diversity.
- Offer assistance with bilingual education initiatives that let children learn Persian and other instruction languages while retaining their native tongues.
- Invest in materials and programs for language acquisition to help students from linguistic minority backgrounds acquire the language skills necessary for social integration and academic achievement.

5- Inclusive Educational Policies:

- Examine current programs and policies to identify and close any gaps in addressing cultural diversity and advancing educational justice.
- Create and implement inclusive policies that guarantee equitable access to high-quality education for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity, or cultural background.
- Create systems for tracking and assessing how well educational policies support fairness, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity. Modify policies as necessary in response to stakeholder input and evidence-based practices.

6- Community Empowerment and Engagement:

- Encourage collaborations among educational institutions, families, and community groups to establish safe, nurturing learning spaces that honor cultural diversity and advance academic achievement.
- Encourage parents and community people to actively participate in educational decision-making processes, such as curriculum creation, school administration, and resource distribution.
- Give children the chance to participate in civic involvement and community service projects that foster empathy, social responsibility, and cross-cultural understanding.

7.3 Research Limitations

This study is conducted in the form of a master thesis as a scientific requirement of the University of Agder, and I, as a researcher, lacked prior experience in scientific research and had a time limitation. Likewise, my research process faced limitations in data collection and interviews. It is crucial to approach the limitations of this work with candor and dedication to academic integrity. A noteworthy constraint is the extent of the study, which concentrated exclusively on cultural elements influencing the execution of high-quality education in Iran. The results might only partially be transferable to other cultural or national contexts despite this restricted emphasis allowing for in-depth investigation within a particular environment. Comparative studies examining how cultural influences affect schooling in various nations or locations could be helpful for future research.

Another drawback is the approach used in this research, primarily based on semi-structured interviews and other qualitative data collection techniques. Although qualitative approaches provide valuable insights into the viewpoints and experiences of participants, they are not without limits, including the possibility of subjectivity and bias on the researcher's part.

Furthermore, practical limitations might have restricted the study's sample size, which could have reduced the range of viewpoints represented in the data. By combining qualitative data collecting with quantitative analysis, mixed-methods approaches could be used in future research to overcome these constraints and provide a more thorough grasp of the research issue.

It is essential to know the potential for social desirability bias in participant responses, particularly when discussing delicate topics like cultural norms and teaching methods. It is possible that participants were more likely to give socially acceptable answers or hide facts that they thought would be unfavorable or contentious. Although measures were taken to address this bias, such as using open-ended interview questions and providing confidentiality guarantees, it remains a possible study weakness.

Furthermore, the study was carried out with restricted time and resources, which might have affected the analysis's depth and scope. These limitations may have prevented some cultural elements or educational practices from being thoroughly investigated. Future research could build upon this work by conducting more thorough data collection efforts or using longitudinal research methods to examine changes over time.

In summary, even though this study offers insightful information about the cultural elements affecting high-quality education in Iran, it is critical to acknowledge its limitations and possible ramifications for interpreting the results. Future studies might build on this foundation and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complex interaction between culture and education by identifying and fixing these constraints.

7.4 Recommendations for Further Research

This section is a crucial link between the study's conclusions and the continuous investigation into the intricacies of Iranian education. In it, I suggest directions for future research, emphasizing areas where more studies might build upon and improve the knowledge this study has provided. With these suggestions, I hope to encourage more research, creativity, and cooperation in the fight for justice and excellence in Iranian education.

Investigating the complex relationship between cultural influences and educational outcomes would be a valuable addition to any future research on education in Iran. Longitudinal studies that follow students' academic paths from various cultural origins over a prolonged period could be one direction for future research. This research could shed light on the long-term impacts of cultural determinants on educational results by analyzing how these variables change over time and how they affect academic achievement.

Further qualitative research that explores the lived experiences of students, teachers, and other stakeholders in the Iranian educational system is also necessary. Ethnographic research may provide comprehensive and in-depth explanations of how cultural norms, beliefs, and practices influence actual educational experiences and results. Through ethnographic research, researchers can gain insight into the intricacies and subtleties of educational environments that may not be fully represented by means of quantitative methods alone.

Additionally, comparative studies that examine educational practices and systems in diverse cultural contexts may clarify how effective certain strategies are at fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness in the classroom. Such studies could provide insights into global best practices and help build evidence-based policies and programs tailored to Iran's particular cultural environment.

Another exciting field for future study is the investigation of creative teaching strategies that use cultural diversity as a strength rather than a problem. Collaborative action research initiatives involving educators, students, and community members may offer opportunities to jointly develop and execute culturally sensitive teaching approaches that enhance student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement.

Finally, studies examining the interface of culture, education, and emerging technologies are needed, given the speed at which social and technical change occurs. Research on the best ways to use digital platforms, virtual classrooms, and AI tools to support inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in education may open the door to game-changing advancements in the area.

Finally, suggestions for future research in Iranian education should focus on expanding our knowledge of the intricate relationships between culture and education, investigating novel techniques and strategies for examining cultural aspects in learning environments, and providing guidance for the creation of research-based practices and policies that support equity, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity in the classroom. By filling these research gaps, researchers can further understand and improve educational achievements for all students in Iran and abroad.

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Appendix 1: Consent form

Are you interested in taking part in the research project “Assessing the Suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) for Iran: An Analysis of Cultural Factors Impacting Implementation”?

Purpose of the project

You are invited to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to understand how culture interacts with educational policies, practices, and outcomes in Iran, and how this interaction influences the country's progress toward achieving SDG4.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

University of Agder in Norway is responsible for the project (data controller).

Why are you being asked to participate?

You have been randomly selected to answer my questions as one of the samples. The rest of the participants in this interview were randomly selected.

What does participation involve for you?

If you decide to participate in the project, it will require a private interview that will last approximately one hour. This interview includes questions about students and cultural factors affecting the quality of their education. Your responses will be recorded and kept confidential until the end of this study.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or

later decide to withdraw. This issue will not have any effect on the education process of students.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

- In connection with the institution responsible for the project, my supervisor will have access to personal data.
- I will replace your name and contact information with a code. The list of names, contact details and relevant codes are stored separately from the rest of the data collected, I store the data on the research server, locked/encrypted etc.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is August 2024. At the end of the project, all your personal data, including the digital recording of interviews, will be completely deleted.

Your rights

- So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:
- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with University of Agder The Data Protection Services of Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- University of Agder (hjelp@uia.no) via Prof. Dr. Christian Webersik (christian.webersik@uia.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer: Trond Hauso (trond.hauso@uia.no)
- If you have questions about how data protection has been assessed in this project by Sikt, contact: email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 73 98 40 40.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader

Student

Prof. Dr. Christian Webersik

Nahid Jamebozorg

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project “Assessing the Suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) for Iran: An Analysis of Cultural Factors Impacting Implementation” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate interviews

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 2: Interview guide for Coaches, teachers, and school administrators

My name is Nahid Jamebozorg. I am currently a master's student in Global Development and Planning at the University of Agder in Norway. I am gathering information for my dissertation on “Assessing the Suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) for Iran: An Analysis of Cultural Factors Impacting Implementation”. The purpose of this study is to understand how culture interacts with educational policies, practices, and results in Iran and how this interaction affects the country's progress towards achieving SDG4. I would be grateful if you could participate in this study by providing the best answers to the following questions. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the scientific purposes of this study.

Personal Information:

- Male or Female
- Level of education
- Number of years employed.
- Position (occupation)

Section 1: Cultural Factors Influencing Educational Access and Participation

Q1: How much do you think cultural factors affect people's ability to access and participate in quality education in Iran?

Q2: From your point of view, what cultural norms and values do you believe have the most significant impact on educational opportunities in Iran?

Q3: Could you please explain how cultural factors, like gender, socioeconomic status, and where someone lives, contribute to differences in how accessible education is?

Section 2: Cultural Factors Shaping Curriculum and Pedagogy

Q4: What do you think about the cultural elements in Iranian school curriculums and how they reflect the country's cultural heritage?

Q5: Based on your experience, can you tell me how teaching methods and classroom dynamics in Iranian schools either follow or challenge cultural norms and expectations?

Section 3: Cultural Factors in Educational Outcomes and Achievements

Q6: From your point of view, how do cultural beliefs about success and achievement influence how motivated students are and their performance in Iran?

Q7: Have you noticed any specific cultural barriers that impact students' educational achievements, especially those from marginalized groups?

General Questions:

Q8: Can you share any specific stories or examples that show how cultural factors have affected education in Iran?

Q9: Are there any recent changes or efforts to deal with the impact of culture on education in Iran that you know about?

Q10: How do you see the role of policy and government actions in addressing cultural factors and enhancing access to quality education in Iran?

Q11: Is there anything else you'd like to add or share regarding this interview?

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for parents

My name is Nahid Jamebozorg. I am currently a master's student in Global Development and Planning at the University of Agder in Norway. I am gathering information for my dissertation on “Assessing the Suitability of Quality Education (SDG4) for Iran: An Analysis of Cultural Factors Impacting Implementation”. The purpose of this study is to understand how culture interacts with educational policies, practices, and results in Iran and how this interaction affects the country's progress towards achieving SDG4. I would be grateful if you could participate in this study by providing the best answers to the following questions. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the scientific purposes of this study.

Personal Information:

- Male or Female
- Number of children
- Age of children
- Level of education

Section 1: Cultural Factors Influencing Educational Access and Participation

Q1: As a parent, how do you personally see cultural factors influencing children’s ability to access and participate in quality education in Iran?

Q2: Are there any specific cultural values or expectations within your community or family that you believe affect children’s educational opportunities?

Q3: How do you manage the impact of cultural factors, like gender, socioeconomic status, and where you live, to support children’s education?

Section 2: Cultural Factors Shaping Curriculum and Pedagogy

Q4: From your point of view, how do cultural elements in the curriculum impact children’s learning experience, and how do they reflect our nation's cultural heritage?

Q5: Have you noticed any ways in which teaching methods and classroom dynamics either align with or challenge cultural norms and expectations in children’s school?

Section 3: Cultural Factors in Educational Outcomes and Achievements

Q6: How do cultural beliefs about success and achievement motivate or influence children's performance in school, in your experience?

Q7: Have you come across any cultural obstacles that have affected children's education, particularly if children belong to a marginalized group?

Section 4: Parental Involvement and Cultural Factors

Q8: How does your own cultural background and values affect how you support children's education?

Q9: Are there any cultural practices or traditions within your family that either support or hinder children's educational progress?

Q10: What do you think can be done to better involve parents from diverse cultural backgrounds in their children's education in Iran?

General Questions:

Q11: Can you share any personal stories or experiences that highlight how cultural factors have impacted children's education?

Q12: Are there any programs or initiatives in your community or school that work to address the impact of culture on education, and have you been involved in them or are aware of them?

Q13: What are your hopes and expectations for children's education, especially considering the cultural diversity in Iran?

Q14: Is there anything else you'd like to share or add regarding this interview?