





## Examining the Components of a Curriculum Based on Cultural Literacy in Education

Ayoub Abdulahi<sup>1</sup>, Vida Andishmand<sup>2</sup><sup>\*</sup>, Anahita Bahreinizadeh<sup>3</sup>, Zahra Zeinaddiny Meymand<sup>3</sup>

1. PhD student, Department of Curriculum Planning, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran.

2. Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran  
(Corresponding author).

3. Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran

<sup>\*</sup> Corresponding author email address: dr.vidaandishmand@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to identify the key components of a curriculum based on cultural literacy in the education system.

**Methods:** The study employed a qualitative research design, using content analysis to examine a wide range of documents and scholarly articles on cultural literacy. The data were collected from reputable sources between 2009 and 2024, including books, articles, and reports. Through open, axial, and selective coding, the data were analyzed to identify recurring themes and concepts. In total, 665 initial concepts were extracted, which were categorized into 46 subcategories, representing the core components of a culturally literate curriculum.

**Findings:** The analysis revealed 46 distinct components of a culturally literate curriculum, including critical, personal, and cultural evaluation; historical, religious, and political knowledge; student-centered learning strategies; and environmental and social goals. These components emphasize the importance of fostering cultural literacy as a multifaceted concept, incorporating evaluative skills, social responsibility, and awareness of cultural diversity. The study highlights the need for both student-centered and teacher-centered strategies to balance critical engagement with structured learning.

**Conclusion:** The study provides a comprehensive framework for integrating cultural literacy into the education system. By identifying the core components, it offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers to develop curricula that promote cultural understanding, critical thinking, and social cohesion. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach that incorporates cultural, educational, and social goals to prepare students for diverse and multicultural environments.

**Keywords:** Curriculum components, cultural literacy, education.

## 1. Introduction

The educational system, as the foundation of social development, plays an instrumental role in cultivating cultural literacy (Fel Araghi et al., 2024; Gholamian et al., 2019; Kafshchian Moghadam et al., 2024; Rayeji et al., 2020). Several studies have emphasized that integrating cultural literacy into the curriculum can enhance students' ability to navigate multicultural environments, participate in cultural exchanges, and contribute to a knowledge-based society (Jafari & Reyis Mirzaei, 2014). As Farmehini Farahani and Sabbagh Esmaili (2016) suggest, the inclusion of cultural literacy within education fosters a more harmonious society by reducing cultural misunderstandings and enhancing mutual respect among different social groups (Farmehini Farahani & Sabbagh Esmaili, 2016). The development of cultural literacy can also address the demands of modern economies, where individuals are increasingly expected to operate within diverse cultural contexts (Roumiani & Ziaian, 2014).

The concept of cultural literacy is not new, but its interpretation and application have evolved significantly over time. Harvey J. Graff (1987), in his seminal work "The Legacies of Literacy," discusses how literacy in the Western context has often been seen as a marker of social and cultural progress. This viewpoint aligns with modern educational theories, where literacy is not confined to reading and writing but extends to cultural competencies that enable individuals to function effectively in a multicultural society (Graff, 1987). In a more contemporary context, Cook, Maine, and Čermáková (2022) argue that cultural literacy should be viewed as a dialogic social practice, where language and communication play central roles in shaping individuals' cultural understandings. Their study highlights how classroom discussions, when facilitated with a provisional approach to language, can foster cultural literacy among students by encouraging them to explore and respect different perspectives (Cook et al., 2022).

One of the key benefits of promoting cultural literacy in education is its impact on students' cognitive and social development. According to Awaludin et al. (2024), using a dialogical approach in teaching cultural literacy allows students to engage in meaningful conversations about culture, thereby deepening their understanding and fostering respect for cultural diversity (Awaludin et al., 2024). This dialogical method, as applied in senior high schools, demonstrates the effectiveness of encouraging students to voice their cultural perspectives, which in turn supports the

development of a culturally literate society. These findings are consistent with the work of Sarkar Arani (2021), who highlights the importance of embedding cultural literacy in the pedagogy of teaching and learning to address the diverse cultural backgrounds of students (Sarkar Arani, 2021).

In the context of Iran, where cultural diversity is deeply ingrained in the national fabric, the need for a curriculum that emphasizes cultural literacy is even more pressing. As Danayi Tousi and Kiamesh (2009) point out, various countries, including the United States, Canada, England, Singapore, and Iran, have adopted different approaches to literacy, with each system reflecting its unique cultural and social needs (Danayi Tousi & Kiamesh, 2009). In Iran, the education system has been slow to integrate cultural literacy into the curriculum comprehensively. However, recent efforts, such as the study by Khakzad et al. (2022), suggest that there is growing recognition of the importance of developing a curriculum framework that fosters cultural literacy, particularly in secondary education. This study underscores the necessity of aligning educational goals with cultural values to ensure that students are not only academically proficient but also culturally aware and socially responsible (Khakzad et al., 2022).

The integration of cultural literacy into education is not without its challenges. One major obstacle is the lack of clear guidelines for how cultural literacy should be taught and assessed. As Maleki (2021) notes, curriculum planning in Iran has often been focused on technical subjects, with less attention given to the cultural aspects of education. This imbalance has led to a gap in students' understanding of their own cultural heritage, as well as their ability to engage with other cultures meaningfully. Addressing this issue requires a shift in educational policy and practice, one that prioritizes the development of cultural literacy alongside traditional academic subjects (Maleki, 2021).

Furthermore, the role of teachers in promoting cultural literacy cannot be understated. As Farmehini Farahani (2019) observes, teachers are the primary agents through which cultural literacy is transmitted to students. Their understanding of cultural dynamics and their ability to foster an inclusive learning environment are critical to the success of any cultural literacy initiative (Farmehini Farahani, 2019). This perspective is supported by the work of Pirbadaghi (2009), who advocates for a more holistic approach to content analysis in education, one that includes cultural literacy as a key component (Pirbadaghi, 2009). In this regard, qualitative content analysis, as outlined by Eiman and Noushadi (2011), offers a valuable methodological tool

for examining how cultural literacy can be integrated into various subjects and teaching practices (Eiman & Noushadi, 2011).

The impact of cultural literacy extends beyond the classroom. As Fazeli (2020) argues in his ethnographic study, educational settings are microcosms of society, and the values and competencies taught in schools have far-reaching implications for broader societal cohesion (Fazeli, 2020). This idea is further explored by Ameer (2009), who highlights the importance of linguistic and cultural knowledge as essential components of literacy. In a globalized world, where cross-cultural communication is a daily reality, the ability to understand and navigate different cultural contexts is a vital skill that should be cultivated from an early age (Ameer, 2009).

In addition to fostering social cohesion, cultural literacy also has economic implications. As Jafari and Reyis Mirzaei (2014) suggest, the promotion of cultural literacy can have a positive impact on cultural tourism, which is a significant economic driver in many countries. By educating students about their cultural heritage and the importance of preserving cultural landmarks, schools can play a key role in promoting sustainable cultural tourism. This connection between education, culture, and the economy highlights the broader societal benefits of cultural literacy, making it an essential component of any modern educational curriculum (Jafari & Reyis Mirzaei, 2014).

Another significant consideration is the role of technology in enhancing cultural literacy. As Khakbaz (2019) explains, the use of digital tools and platforms in education can provide new opportunities for students to engage with cultural content in innovative ways. For example, online resources and virtual exchanges can allow students to interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds, thereby expanding their cultural horizons and enhancing their literacy. This technological approach to cultural literacy is particularly relevant in today's digital age, where students are increasingly exposed to diverse cultural influences through media and the internet (Khakbaz, 2019). This study aims to identify the key components of a curriculum based on cultural literacy in the education system.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study utilized a qualitative research design with the aim of examining the components of a curriculum based on

cultural literacy in education. The study focused on analyzing documents and research articles related to cultural literacy, which were selected from reputable databases and websites spanning the years 2009 to 2023 and 1983 to 2024. The participants of the study, in this case, were the documents and articles themselves, which were carefully chosen based on the criterion of relevance to cultural literacy in education. Sampling followed a purposive, criterion-based approach. As is common in qualitative research, sampling continued until theoretical saturation was reached, ensuring that no new information emerged from the collected data. The inclusion of both domestic and international sources allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the subject.

### 2.2. Data Collection Tools

The data for this study were gathered through extensive review of books, articles, documents, and other texts related to cultural literacy. A note-taking tool was employed to systematically record relevant information from these sources. Data were collected from digital libraries and electronic platforms, such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and other scientific databases. The process of data collection was designed to ensure that the materials were current, credible, and relevant to the focus on cultural literacy in the field of education. After identifying relevant texts, notes were taken to capture key information that could be coded and analyzed.

### 2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, which involved several coding stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the open coding stage, the data were broken down into smaller segments, and key concepts were identified. These concepts were then grouped into categories based on their thematic relevance to the research questions. Axial coding involved refining these categories, establishing relationships among them, and organizing them into broader themes. Finally, selective coding was employed to synthesize the data into core categories that reflected the primary components of the curriculum based on cultural literacy. Through this method, 665 initial concepts were extracted and categorized into 46 subcategories, leading to the identification of 46 curriculum components related to cultural literacy. The analysis provided a structured understanding of how these components can be integrated into educational curricula,

ensuring they address cultural knowledge, strategies, and social goals.

### 3. Findings and Results

The findings derived from the qualitative content analysis of both domestic and international research articles and books in the field of cultural literacy were presented in response to the research question. As previously mentioned, the qualitative part of this study was conducted using qualitative content analysis. To achieve this goal, various articles and books related to cultural literacy in education were reviewed. Then, significant paragraphs and sentences from these articles were extracted and coded using open, axial, and selective coding methods. In the final step, by

consulting experts again, efforts were made to ensure the credibility of the data and findings. In this section, the researcher relied on studying fully relevant books and articles on cultural literacy in education, extracting related sentences and paragraphs, and then coding, categorizing, and identifying the initial core concepts.

Give Research Question: What are the components of a curriculum based on cultural literacy in education?

At this stage, the initial concepts discovered were categorized using an inductive approach. Table 1 shows the subcategories of cultural literacy concepts obtained through content analysis. These 665 initial concepts were grouped into 46 new subcategories, resulting in the identification of 46 curriculum components.

**Table 1**

*Primary Concepts and Sub-Category Concepts (Components) of the Cultural Literacy Curriculum in Education*

Sub-Category Concepts	Primary Concepts
Critical Evaluation	Ability for critical evaluation, high expectations, multiple evaluation strategies, student receptiveness to criticism
Personal Evaluation	Development of intellectual and communicative levels, influence on human actions, identity formation, personality shaping, personal problem-solving ability, ability to evaluate, discovering fundamental identities, individual identity, emphasizing students' strengths, evaluating students' information, generalizing students' information, identifying students from different groups, diagnostic use of evaluation, assessment and accountability systems, exam learning
Cultural Evaluation	Assessment of the current cultural situation, identification of effective cultural activities, recognition of cultural challenges and crises arising from the development of cultural interactions, recognition of cultural challenges and crises from foreign cultural invasion, recognition of cultural features, coordination and influence in the intercultural environment, understanding other people's cultural structures, responding to different cultural cases without interference from biases, recognition of the positive and negative dimensions of culture, awareness of problems and issues of different masses, reflection on cultural lenses
Environmental Evaluation	Utilizing opportunities, drawing the audience's attention to the weaknesses and problems of Western civilization
Social Goals	Creating sustainability, preserving material and spiritual heritage, reducing individual and social violence, reducing social harms, improving daily life, solving human issues, developing individual and social capacities of humans and society, achieving developmental goals in the country, fostering literate citizens, ease of transportation and travel, reducing the negative burden of today's urban life, social acceptance, strengthening social-cultural intelligence, the role of culture in social cohesion and development, social development, community cohesion, and unity, stabilizing national identity, reducing conflicts in society, reducing cultural abnormalities in society, achieving development goals, developing societies, immunity from multiple cultural and social harms, national progress and excellence, strengthening the view of education as a human and social capital formation institution, meeting students' social needs, developing social intelligence, social solidarity, sustainable development, promoting peace, creating a citizen aware of their rights, civic participation, democratic participation, enhancing adolescents' social competencies
Economic Goals	Reducing the costs of cultural activities, economic progress in society
Educational Goals	Producing more scientific papers, creating a holistic and multi-dimensional educational system, impacting the performance of the educational system, the importance of educational discussions, knowledge-based society, holistic view, meeting students' cognitive needs, changing the way the educational system is managed, reengineering the teacher training system with a cultural literacy approach, developing the use of educational technologies
Health and Wellness Goals	Preserving people's health, the role of culture in health, meeting students' emotional needs, meeting students' physical needs
Developmental Goals	Feeling progress and excellence, enhancing adolescents' personal competencies, increasing optimism, increasing the sense of trust, increasing the motivation for success, individual acceptance, strengthening communication intelligence, changing perspective, positive attitude, increasing public responsibility, acquiring a new outlook, increasing students' abilities, fostering knowledge and skills, nurturing multidimensional humans, responsible behavior, creative spirit, law-abiding spirit, participatory spirit, strengthening convergence, strengthening unity, boosting self-confidence, creating a scientific spirit in national scholars, nurturing creative and innovative elites, achieving levels of pure life, strengthening students' self-esteem, institutionalization, equality, promoting respect for student diversity, individual and collective responsibility
Environmental Goals	Preserving forests, preventing water pollution, reducing environmental pollution, preventing the destruction of forests, preventing the desertification of plains, using fossil fuels, adhering to environmental principles, maintaining the environment
Cultural Goals	Preserving cultural heritage, reducing violence and tension among different ethnicities and cultures, ability to use cultural learnings, understanding cultural manifestations, improving the efficiency of cultural institutions, globalizing cultural institutions, understanding the cultural similarities and differences of all ethnicities, attention to local cultural models, attention to national



	cultural models, attention to international cultural models, broadening cultural perspectives, developing ethnocentrism, cultural richness, broad access to cultural literacy, the civic importance of cultural literacy, cultural development, national cultural continuity, preventing and treating cultural abnormalities, cultural awareness, accepting cultural differences, feeling of national identity and self-confidence, creating a sense of national self-confidence, following the path of predecessors, strengthening managerial belief in enhancing cultural literacy, strengthening the cultural planning system, elevating inherent topics in cultural education, meeting students' cultural needs, meeting students' linguistic needs, overcoming adversities of all cultures, increasing social and cultural diversity for teachers, promoting authentic Iranian-Islamic culture, human excellence
Social Knowledge	The role of the individual in society, understanding individuals' social relationships, understanding written and unwritten rules, national cohesion, national diversity, individual and social lifestyle, the impact of managers' intercultural literacy on students' quality, individual identity, the dependence of true freedom on knowledge, understanding national identity, the necessity of social and economic life, survival of an ideal society, knowledge-based society, family identity, social identity, civilizational identity, authoring textbooks and educational content to enhance students' cultural literacy, knowledge-based society
Historical Knowledge	Understanding individuals' knowledge of their society's history, understanding individuals' knowledge of global history, history, the role of past honors and human capital, youth role modeling past figures, familiarity with historical achievements of various Iranian cities and regions, attention to cultural damages in our country during historical periods, familiarity with Iran's history, especially contemporary times, attention to the historical and commendable traits of Iranian people and promoting them, keeping alive the admirable customs and traditions of the Iranian people, familiarity with the resilience of Iranian people throughout history, familiarity with national and global history
Environmental Knowledge	Environmental warnings, preserving forests, environmental literacy, understanding the richness of the country's environment, the impact of societies on the environment, valuing the environment
Political Knowledge	Politics as a factor for societal survival, politics in modern thoughts, increasing political awareness, freedom dependent on knowledge, protecting the educational curriculum from political influences, meeting students' political needs, clear political support for implementation, formulating macro-cultural policies, adopting public policies
Cultural Knowledge	Understanding cultural symbols, understanding cultures and subcultures, understanding organizational culture, designing literacy flows, understanding existing cultural values, ethnic diversity, linguistic diversity, understanding cultural artifacts, updating cultural institutions, people's tolerant attitudes towards other cultures, understanding individuals' cultural differences, individuals' cultural structures, cultural identity, local cultural awareness, familiarity with symbols, multicultural literacy, cultural beliefs and priorities, material culture, tacit culture, subcultures, civic importance of cultural literacy, cultural integration, understanding spiritual identity, understanding valuable heritage, students' awareness of cultural literacy, the cultural richness of Iran, acceptance of cultural differences, knowledge dependent on literacy, literacy dependent on cultural literacy, cultural identity, trustworthy Islamic-Iranian civilization, philosophy, the peak of Islamic civilization flourishing, familiarity with religious culture and authentic religious ceremonies in Iran, familiarity with Islamic-Iranian architecture, promoting Islamic-Iranian architectural symbols, intercultural awareness, familiarity with cultural engineering for preparing educational and curriculum programs, subcultures and ethnicities, awareness of values and aspirations, awareness of cultural taboos, emphasizing enrichment, multicultural content, multicultural content, understanding cultural artifacts as texts
Religious Knowledge	Religious and sectarian diversity, beliefs, religion and sect, understanding religious and minority requirements, religious identity, philosophy of religion
Literary Strategy	Education through children's literature, using literature for teaching, students' familiarity with national and global poets and writers, students' familiarity with Persian proverbs, familiarity and understanding of great Iranian and global figures in textbooks
Economic Strategy	Allocating sufficient credits, attention to students' different economic backgrounds, addressing poverty and financial issues
Motivational Strategy	Academic motivation and performance, providing rewards for academic excellence, having a challenging curriculum
Game-Oriented Strategy	Attention to sports and local games, attention to traditional sports, attention to sports recommended by religion and history
Experiential Strategy	Experience and practice, immersion in real experiences, outdoor education, reimagining perception, experiencing and constructive interaction, the ability to interpret and explore different cultural experiences, education based on students' previous experiences and knowledge, reflecting social experiences, analyzing and reconstructing one's worldview, teachers' knowledge of students' learning experiences, openness to experiences, adding to the collection of experiences through exploration
Analytical Strategy	Reflection and analysis to extract meaning, discoverable meanings, strategic meanings, analytical and critical understanding of texts, analytical ability, increasing citizens' analytical capacity, using sample models in developing educational structures, ability to analyze and compare dominant cultural behaviors compared to other cultures, methods of thinking and analysis from different intercultural perspectives, analysis, comparison, synthesis, questioning, explanation, knowledge categorization, deduction, curiosity, and problem-solving
Educational Strategy	Training and supplying the human resources of society, rational education, inner transformation in humans, activity in religious and cultural environments, responsibility, valuing students, training a new generation with a dynamic culture, institutionalizing behavior, attention to fundamental self-identities, striving for the growth and promotion of fundamental self-identities, training managers familiar with the field of culture and cultural literacy, training teachers familiar with the field of culture and cultural literacy, positive models
Interactive Strategy	Empathetic dialogue, guiding dialogue, mutual respect, not mocking others, going to the library to interact with books, the librarian, and readers of similar levels, establishing connections with others, intercultural understanding, communication strategies, intercultural cooperation skills, communication abilities, coordination and synergy, tolerance, more tolerance and patience, understanding and open dialogue between different social, ethnic, and religious identities, respect for others' beliefs, individual responsibility, civic participation, participation in group and social activities, ability to exchange information in different forms, need for effective communication skills, social participation, intercultural participation globally, emphasis on intergroup relations, improvement and interaction between school and parents, meaningful parental access to school officials, community cooperation with the school, parental involvement and educational support, fostering positive interaction between teacher, principal, and parents, parental participation in school affairs, linguistic and cultural interaction, flexibility, students' communication skills, social interaction, dialogue and understanding the other side, designed discourse, gaining knowledge through interaction, social interactions, ethical behaviors, ethnic and multicultural studies, critical dialogue

Thought-Oriented Strategy	Human awareness and thinking, critical thinking, increased memory power, critical thinking for problem-solving, thinking skills and reflection, self-reflection, thinking in terms of class and race, thinking in terms of gender, thinking in terms of meritocracy, creative thinking, viewing intelligence as an effort-based phenomenon, higher-order thinking, logical reasoning
Technology-Oriented Strategy	Utilizing different media and technologies, modernity and industrialization, acceptance of communication technologies, development of social technologies, communication and cultural technologies, inevitable technological changes, the virtual world, the realm of media waves, the boundless spread of media messages, communication and information technologies, communication technologies
Creativity-Oriented Strategy	The role of new innovations, enhancing the cultural innovation system, dynamic approach, attention to the principle of vitality and dynamism in cultural institutionalization, creating attraction for human resources, attracting creative and innovative elites in education, the ability to respond creatively, the foundation for the use and formation process of ideas
Cultural Strategy	Familiarity with semantic systems (body language or fashion), meaning-making, managing cultural diversity, cultural synergy, understanding culture, exposing students to cultural issues in the real world, cultural engineering map, cultural self-awareness, development of cultural and literary studies, expressing cultural perception, development of cultural literacy, introducing culture, the cultural learning process, the necessity of convergence and national unity, development and cultural relations globally, theoretical discourses in multicultural curriculum programs, multicultural programs, development of cultural relations globally, the ability to inspire cultures, proper culture-building for progress, cultural values, promoting cultural values, protecting culture, cultural literacy matrix, the power and ability of an individual or group's culture, raising the level of cultural literacy, understanding and recognizing the differences and commonalities of cultures, familiarity with the sublime civilizational and divine heritage of Islamic-Iranian culture, identifying practical solutions for reviving Islamic civilization-building identity, organizing congresses, honoring great historical and contemporary figures, holding professional exhibitions on Islamic-Iranian civilization, organizing trips to introduce great figures and the history of Islamic-Iranian civilization, presenting the true face of Western civilization progress, scientifically and precisely explaining the inefficacy of the Western development model in seminars and free-thinking circles, familiarity with the obstacles to the progress of Iranian civilization and culture, attention to the cultural and territorial characteristics, empowering cultural norms and tools to confront cultural invasions, promoting cultural identity, validating cultural and value reference groups in the country, producing high-quality domestic cultural industries, expanding cultural amenities and facilities in line with cultural needs, introducing and promoting appropriate and worthy cultural models for the new generation, creating vibrant cultural spaces, strengthening the government for enhancing citizens' cultural literacy, raising family awareness of cultural literacy and its components, attention to students' cultural backgrounds, attention to students' ethnic backgrounds, reflecting cultural symbols, if necessary, changing one's own culture, respecting cultural diversity, focusing on linguistic needs, citing examples of resilience in all cultures, reviewing mono-cultural tests, familiarity with works registered in national and international references, developing and strengthening cultural literacy through educational institutions, cultural diversity, helping to bridge cultures, cultural integration, individual identity formation
Quality Improvement Strategy	Observing principles of quality improvement, promoting effectiveness, improving teaching quality, paying attention to the quality of the educational system, increasing the capacity for cultural change and reform, efficient teaching methods, updating knowledge, strengthening general culture, reinforcing fundamental knowledge, access capability, strengthening national religious identity, cultural competence, providing high-quality education, enrichment programs for gifted students
Management Strategy	Accurate planning, the leader as a change agent, impactful leadership, conflict management, combating social determinism, accurate cultural and educational planning, multidimensional and process-oriented planning, attention from educational officials, attention from national cultural officials, management measures for running affairs, preventing the creation of crisis spaces and tension, management stability in culture, reducing bureaucracy, caring for and validating students, classroom management, parental awareness, drafting educational transformation documents and programs, changing the overall management approach of education, reforming curricula, drawing roles, social structures mapping, cultural structures mapping, emotional structures mapping, attention to the family institution, attention to emotions, understanding and management
Reading Strategy	Children reading books or being read to, discussing the content of books, habituating children to reading their own publications, reading books, reading magazines and newspapers, reading rate, reading ability, reading comprehension, intelligent reading, improving fluency, reading cultural artifacts
Skill-Oriented Strategy	Formation of necessary skills, individuals' ability to read culture, individuals' ability to interpret culture, essential skills for understanding cultures, familiarity with practical skills, familiarity with academic skills, familiarity with life skills, multiple capabilities and competencies, performing tasks better and more scientifically, intercultural competencies, applying cultural skills and concepts in real life, acquiring individual capacities, need for specific skills, need for specific competencies, personal skills for facing change agents, identifying students' skills, reaction ability and personal skills for confronting change agents, descriptive ability
Artistic Strategy	Film screening, painting exhibitions, understanding and performing appropriate music, film, television, teaching Iranian, local, and global music styles, using art, creatively and artistically depicting the glorious history of Islamic-Iranian country, art education, better understanding of Iranian architectural styles, programs for visiting architectural landmarks, teaching painting and calligraphy styles, teaching arts and crafts
Student-Centered Learning Strategies	Collaborative learning, active learning, apprenticeship, group discussion, constructivism, identifying and preventing bias in the classroom system, using students' culture to share the curriculum, bringing real-world issues into the classroom, desirable expectations for all student spectrums, modern methods and techniques
Teaching-Oriented Strategies	Continuous education, purposeful teaching, diverse education, culturally relevant education, cultural and linguistic development and education, preschool education, compensating for children's weaknesses, teaching cultures to teachers, teaching languages to teachers, practical education, cultural literacy education, teaching methods adapted to new and real conditions and needs, appropriate educational actions, more media literacy education, teaching how to use the internet to all members of society, teaching values, teaching norms, disruptive teaching methods, teaching the components of cultural literacy, civic education, teaching social skills, teaching necessary skills and expertise, teaching through children's art, learning and teaching
Justice-Oriented Strategy	Helping educational equality, responding to new demands, creating fairness and justice in schools, justice and institutional actions, expanding justice and moral virtues, fair access to educational opportunities and resources, quantitative and qualitative educational justice, resource distribution based on territorial planning, providing internet access to all members of society
Social Elements	The main factor for societal survival, a united society, individual and social life, social and cultural realities, easier achievement of social and cultural goals, population growth, invulnerable borders

Communication Elements	The connection between cultural literacy and study, appropriate reaction to cultural signals, aligning individuals' behavior with the environment, the relationship between individuals, individual participation in society, the relationships between individuals and the world, collective participation, discourses, increased migration to cities and different countries, aligning individual behavior with the environment, empathy, social interaction and communication in society, constructive interactive skills with people from different cultural groups, placing oneself in the position of others, intersubjective agreement among different people, using alternative methods for follow-up, effective communication abilities, cooperation, inclusive interactions
Informational Elements	General knowledge, literacy or illiteracy rate, the effect of informational literacy on learning quality, the effect of media literacy on learning quality, cultural awareness, human self-awareness, ability to discover existing information, beyond everyday awareness, transfer of special shared knowledge, improvement in learning, having basic knowledge for survival and growth, having basic knowledge for thriving in the modern world, consumption rate of industries, awareness of alternative knowledge sources, attention to students' historical, cultural, and ethnic information, absorbing students' information, integrating students' information, criticizing and interpreting information
Developmental Elements	The foundation for fostering, patience, curiosity, spiritual awakening, tolerance, seeing the world from another perspective, self-confidence, self-esteem
Cognitive Elements	Knowledge of learning methods, understanding various types of capital, change in cognitive structure, knowledge and information in different fields, identifying new needs, a set of knowledge and skills, a network of awareness, contextual knowledge, public and elite awareness, increasing awareness of existing values, increasing awareness of Islamic-Iranian components, understanding our homeland, knowledge and understanding of the situation, greater familiarity with students regarding the Fundamental Transformation Document, greater familiarity with students and teachers regarding the National Curriculum Document, knowledge-building methods, knowledge of social protocols, understanding different ways of living among people, deepening fundamental knowledge
Skill Elements	Required competencies, individuals' ability to read different semantic systems, individuals' ability to use different semantic systems, educational skills, communication skills, strengthening communication skills
Global Surrounding Environment	Environmental warnings, globalization, the removal of geographical borders, formation of new societies, understanding and reacting to the surrounding environment, the impact of globalization, a safe and trustworthy environment, attention to cosmopolitanism, attention to the global community
Learning Environment	A sense of vitality and excitement in the learning environment, the need for a safe and encouraging environment for all students, student diversity, accurate educational environment
Cultural Environment	Cultural fields, the existence of different cultural spectrums in our country, interaction in a multicultural environment, national norms and traditions, intercultural sensitivity, the cultural contexts of society, preparing a rich and dynamic environment, the status of cultural literacy in society

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study, which focused on identifying the components of a curriculum based on cultural literacy, provide valuable insights into the integration of cultural literacy into the education system. Through qualitative content analysis, 665 initial concepts were distilled into 46 distinct curriculum components related to cultural literacy. These components reflect a wide range of educational, cultural, social, and cognitive goals, illustrating the multifaceted nature of cultural literacy and its importance in shaping well-rounded individuals who can thrive in diverse cultural contexts. This section discusses the significance of these findings in relation to previous studies, addressing both the contributions of this research and its implications for future practice.

The most prominent finding from the analysis was the identification of cultural evaluation, personal evaluation, and critical evaluation as key components of a culturally literate curriculum. These components align closely with the work of Cook, Maine, and Čermáková (2022), who emphasize the role of dialogic social practices in fostering cultural literacy. Their study demonstrated that cultural literacy emerges through classroom discussions, where students are encouraged to engage critically with cultural

issues (Cook et al., 2022). Similarly, in this study, the emphasis on evaluative strategies underscores the importance of equipping students with the skills to analyze, reflect upon, and critically engage with cultural content. This critical engagement is essential for developing students' cultural competencies, as it encourages them to think beyond surface-level understanding and engage with deeper cultural meanings.

Another important finding was the inclusion of social and environmental goals within the cultural literacy curriculum. These goals focus on fostering social cohesion, reducing violence, and promoting environmental awareness, all of which are critical in the current global context. Farmehini Farahani and Sabbagh Esmaeili (2016) argue that cultural literacy should extend beyond individual knowledge to include a societal dimension, where students are taught to recognize the importance of social and environmental responsibility (Farmehini Farahani & Sabbagh Esmaeili, 2016). This study supports that perspective by identifying social and environmental goals as essential components of a culturally literate curriculum. By integrating these elements, the curriculum not only addresses cultural knowledge but also instills values that are crucial for fostering a more just and sustainable society.

The findings also revealed the importance of historical, political, and religious knowledge as components of cultural

literacy. This aligns with previous research by Farmehini Farahani (2019), who explored the role of cultural literacy in the transformation of Islamic human sciences, highlighting how historical and religious knowledge plays a central role in shaping cultural literacy within specific contexts (Farmehini Farahani, 2019). In the Iranian context, where religion and politics are deeply intertwined with cultural identity, it is not surprising that these elements would feature prominently in a culturally literate curriculum. The inclusion of political knowledge, in particular, reflects the need for students to understand the socio-political structures that shape their society, enabling them to participate as informed citizens.

In terms of educational strategies, the study identified student-centered learning and teacher-centered teaching strategies as key components of a curriculum based on cultural literacy. This finding is consistent with the work of Awaludin et al. (2024), who found that dialogical approaches, which encourage student participation and discussion, were effective in developing cultural literacy (Awaludin et al., 2024). In this study, the emphasis on both student-centered and teacher-centered approaches suggests that a balanced pedagogical strategy is necessary to foster cultural literacy. While student-centered approaches encourage active learning and engagement, teacher-centered methods provide the structured guidance needed to ensure that students acquire the necessary cultural knowledge.

Moreover, the identification of creativity and technology as important components of the curriculum reflects the evolving nature of education in the digital age. Khakbaz (2019) emphasizes the importance of integrating technology into the curriculum to enhance cultural literacy, arguing that digital tools can provide new opportunities for students to engage with cultural content (Khakbaz, 2019). This study supports that assertion by highlighting the role of technology in cultural literacy education. In particular, the use of technology allows students to access diverse cultural resources and interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds, thereby expanding their cultural horizons. Similarly, the inclusion of creativity in the curriculum aligns with the findings of Pirbadaghi (2009), who advocates for a more holistic approach to content analysis that includes creative and critical thinking as central to cultural literacy (Pirbadaghi, 2009).

While the findings of this study align with much of the existing literature on cultural literacy, they also provide new insights into the specific components that should be included in a culturally literate curriculum. The identification of

environmental, social, political, and religious goals, alongside more traditional educational objectives, suggests that cultural literacy is a broad and multifaceted concept that requires a comprehensive approach. This finding is particularly important in the context of Iran, where cultural identity is shaped by a unique blend of historical, religious, and political factors. By incorporating these elements into the curriculum, educators can ensure that students are not only academically prepared but also culturally aware and socially responsible.

Furthermore, the study's emphasis on evaluative strategies, such as cultural and personal evaluation, highlights the importance of fostering critical thinking and self-reflection in students. These skills are essential for navigating an increasingly complex and interconnected world, where cultural literacy is not just about knowledge acquisition but about the ability to engage meaningfully with diverse cultural perspectives. As Gall, Borg, and Gall (2007) argue, the development of critical thinking is central to both educational and cultural literacy, as it enables students to analyze and evaluate cultural content in a way that is reflective and informed (Gall et al., 2007).

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on cultural literacy by providing a comprehensive framework for integrating cultural literacy into the education system. The identification of 46 curriculum components, ranging from evaluative strategies to social and environmental goals, provides a roadmap for educators and policymakers seeking to foster cultural literacy in students. By aligning these components with the existing literature, this study demonstrates the importance of a holistic and multifaceted approach to cultural literacy education.

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study relied on a qualitative content analysis of research articles and books, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. The scope of the data sources was confined to specific databases and documents, and it is possible that relevant materials from other sources were not included. Additionally, while the qualitative approach allowed for a deep exploration of the components of cultural literacy, it did not capture the perspectives of educators or students themselves, which could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural literacy is implemented in practice. Finally, the study focused on the Iranian context, which, while important, limits the



applicability of the findings to other educational systems with different cultural and socio-political dynamics.

Future research should address some of the limitations identified in this study. One potential avenue for future research is to conduct empirical studies that examine the implementation of cultural literacy in various educational settings. This could include quantitative studies that measure the effectiveness of different cultural literacy components on student outcomes, as well as qualitative studies that explore the perspectives of teachers and students on cultural literacy education. Comparative studies across different countries and educational systems could also provide valuable insights into how cultural literacy is taught and assessed in different cultural contexts. Additionally, future research could explore the role of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence, in enhancing cultural literacy education, given the increasing role of technology in modern classrooms.

To enhance the integration of cultural literacy into education, several practical recommendations can be made. First, curriculum developers should ensure that cultural literacy is embedded in all subjects, not just those traditionally associated with culture, such as history or literature. This holistic approach will ensure that students develop a well-rounded understanding of cultural literacy across different disciplines. Second, teachers should receive professional development training on how to effectively teach cultural literacy, with an emphasis on fostering critical thinking and intercultural dialogue in the classroom. Finally, schools should leverage technology to provide students with access to diverse cultural resources and opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, thereby expanding their cultural horizons and enhancing their overall cultural literacy. By implementing these practices, educators can create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century.

### Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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