

## A Comparative Study of Media Literacy Curriculum Policy in the Education System of Developed Countries and Iran

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim of this study was a comparative study of media literacy curriculum policy in the educational system of leading countries and Iran.

**Methodology:** The approach of the research was qualitative approach and the method used in it was comparative-analytical method. The research population in this study included all valid scientific documents, including books, articles in specialized journals related to media literacy, from which the works related to the subject were selected using purposive sampling method and appropriate to the research objectives of the case. Were analyzed and data were collected by documentary method, Descriptive analysis method was used in data analysis. Based on the research question, a framework for data analysis was considered. Based on this framework, the required data from available resources were selected, organized, and then their similarities and differences were identified and compared and interpreted.

**Findings:** Based on the results of this study, the concerns and views on content, necessities and goals of media literacy in different countries are largely similar and educational planners try to maintain their cultural identity in the use of different media. . The results also showed that media literacy has been considered as one of the most effective monitoring tools in the countries. Also, according to the results of the research, the most important differences between the selected countries and Iran in this regard was that the goal of these countries is to institutionalize the media literacy curriculum in an organized manner and in the form of codified policies and long-term plans, but in Iran. Although this issue has been emphasized in the upstream documents, due to the lack of sufficient infrastructure, lack of culture appropriate to the age of technology and teachers not being familiar with this knowledge, these conditions have not been provided and implementation in schools has been unsuccessful. Several years of implementation have not yet led to a successful indigenous approach and model for implementing this skill in schools.

**Conclusion:** The results showed that the concerns and views on the content, necessities and goals of media literacy in different countries are largely similar and educational planners try to maintain their cultural identity in the use of different media.

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## 1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, the process of change based on technological and media convergence has shown an educational revolution in the education of many developed countries. In such a way that the role of media and information literacy, while becoming an essential prerequisite for the use of information and communication technology in education and equitable access to information and knowledge, especially in the empowerment of individuals, is seen as vital and fundamental. James Potter, a media literacy expert, believes that "media literacy can be considered a suitable audience for analyzing and interpreting various media messages and content, along with the utilization of critical thinking skills" (Potter, et al, 2013). In general, the common denominator of the definitions provided for the purpose of the Media Literacy Curriculum is the definition of the Media Literacy Education Association in the United States: "Assisting students in cultivating a spirit of inquiry and reinforcing skills such as expressing an opinion that students become critical thinkers." They are needed by influential communicators and dynamic citizens in the new world, and in Japan, media literacy are recognized as a subject among the curriculum of middle school to graduate school, and even for adults and higher education. Canada, as one of the most successful models of media literacy education in the world, has taken effective measures in this field by forming the "Media Awareness Association" of numerous and numerous media literacy education associations (Casta, et al, 2018). Jolls (2017) Entitled "How Does Media Literacy Teaching Improve Teaching and Learning?" It concluded that educators need new teaching methods and resources and curricula, given the progress and trend of traditional education toward a technology-based curriculum. To effective consequences D With the teaching of media literacy, this leap becomes possible and becomes a necessity for the preparation and development of a curriculum in the world classroom. Today, new forms of media and culture are expanding day by day as new technologies develop. Researchers believe that media literacy is one of the few literatures students need in the 21st century to participate more effectively in democratic processes. This mindset seems to be correct because critical media literacy rebuilds the foundation of education in the present time, enhances the insight of literacy, and accelerates the process of democratizing society and education (Funk & al, 2016). .

Horton believes that media literacy is accessibility, analysis and production of communication in various forms of media and critical content consumption (Horton, 2017). Wilson also believes that media literacy is a set of competencies and abilities that enable students Builds to understand how the media work, how they make sense, how these meanings can be used, and how the information that the media disseminates is evaluated (Wilson, 2012). Has defined the category as follows; Media literacy is a framework for accessing, analyzing, evaluating and using media, But what is important in the discussion of media literacy education is to pay attention to media literacy policy and related education. Freedman et al (2009) consider media policy to be the same as public policy that analyzes specific media issues. On the other hand, Graham (1998) also makes policy-making in the field of media dependent on various factors, such as where these policies and programs are formed, how the structure of this reference is defined and defined, and how policy-making in the media is related to space. The societies depend on politics. Media policy-making is a set of norms and actions developed by governments as a guide for the operation of media systems. Developed as a mechanism for monitoring and controlling media activities, these policies, despite their differences, are often influenced by Western media policies (Ghanbari & Ansari, 2020). Policy-making is a way of thinking about what the world is like. And provides what should be, and media policy is a set of principles and norms that are formulated to control and guide media systems and solve its problems (Roshandel, 2015). Therefore, it can be said that media literacy means access to Different media messages in different forms such as TV programs, videos, movies, advertisements and the Internet and their analysis from a critical perspective, evaluation and the ability to convey messages. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the most important issue in media literacy is the category of control. The media world helps to access and obtain information needs without encountering malicious messages.

On the other hand, media literacy has four dimensions: cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and moral, each dimension of which can focus on a different domain. Cognitive dimension: The person is required to expand the structure of his knowledge. Acquiring the required knowledge about a subject is done through various media sources and the real world. Emotional dimension: Controlling emotions against media messages is of particular importance. Aesthetic dimension: helping to judge and judge about the message and how to compile, and editing, etc., and also in this dimension, people become aware of how to manipulate and tricks. Ethical dimension: Judging values. Today, the media sometimes blur moral boundaries and introduce new patterns of action and behavior. The moral dimension is the distinction between right and wrong, and media literacy from this perspective is managing and reducing the effects of bad media (Kalantari & (Moemeni, 2015).

Based on the various dimensions of media literacy, several goals can be considered for it, the most important of which are: 1) Creating creative, critical and meticulous thinking in people, 2) The use of new technologies for processing, production and design of information, 3) Recognizing and relating to visual forms and using them along with other communication skills to change media control towards individuals is to understand how the media plans for them (Tolouei, 2012). Another important issue in the field of media literacy is its related elements and components, especially when we consider media literacy as a multidimensional concept. Therefore, the following table summarizes the important components of media literacy:

**Table1.** Components of media literacy

Components	definitions
access	Implication is a social and dynamic process. After initial access is created, literacy development leads users to continuously and significantly change access methods. This component is related to media use opportunities (Livingston, 2007)
Use	This component mediates communication between individuals and the media, which refers to the technical dimension of media literacy. Using these skills, the audience can use communication and media tools effectively. This skill focuses on the audience's ability to use the media (European Commission, 2011)
Critical understanding	This component implies a critical understanding and evaluation of media and media content. It pays attention to the cognitive dimension of media literacy, which includes decoding, analysis, and evaluation. At this stage, one learns how to reveal the hidden meanings of media texts (Sea Loot, 2009).
Generate media messages	Skills by which people create, produce, and transmit messages with different ciphers and apply them to different media. This component is important because people understand how media message producers use to produce media texts (Sea Loot, 2009).

Based on what has been said, it can be said that the education of students equipped with critical thinking skills is above all the institutional importance of education in any country, especially its alignment with political, economic and social developments at the national and international levels. Therefore, the use of media for education and attractive learning in the experiences of different countries in order to nurture critical students, influence and influence of the media, in other words, the rule of media saturation in the world leads to a conscious and intelligent confrontation by the education institution with the category Media literacy is and the use of media literacy curriculum in the education system in the form of software movement approach is inevitable and the education institution should while scientifically educating students with careful planning of children's media literacy curriculum To gain a deep understanding of what is going on in cyberspace and to gain the power of analysis along with a critical view, and the education system can create and strengthen media skills in the age of media life and Students' mastery of the curriculum while achieving goals more quickly and completely, lead them to effective and useful use of communication skills. This article deals with the policy of media literacy curriculum in the educational system of leading countries and Iran. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the fundamental question: What are the features and differences of media literacy curriculum policy in Iran and leading countries?

## 2. Methodology

The approach of this research was qualitative, which was done in a documentary method and in a comparative-analytical (descriptive) method. Descriptive model refers to a research method in which the past or present state of a subject or phenomenon as it was or is (Karasar, 2012). The study population consisted of books, articles in specialized journals related to media literacy, and the statistical sample was selected using purposive sampling method. Also, the necessary information was collected and analyzed from different media literacy training centers of the studied countries in the field of training methods and information related to the history of media literacy training in these countries. To collect the necessary data, several databases were used; the most important internal and external databases used in this study were SID, DOC IRAN, SAGE, and SCOPUS. Therefore, the method of data collection and analysis in the research, due to the quality of the research approach, was the use of the technique of collecting written documents. And were analyzed, in data analysis, descriptive analysis method was used in this study. In descriptive analysis, textual data were reviewed and organized to answer research questions. Based on the research question, a framework for data analysis was considered. Based on this framework, the required data from existing sources, selection, organization and then their similarities and differences were identified and compared and interpreted with each other.

## 3. Findings

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this study was to review and compare media literacy curriculum policy in the education system of leading countries and Iran. For this purpose and according to the available sources and works in this field, Russia, USA, Turkey, Canada, Japan, Finland, Australia, UK were purposefully selected and compared as leading countries in media literacy training. The findings of this study were mostly based on the similarities and differences between media literacy training programs in these countries.

Based on the findings of this study, as previously referred to the dimensions of literacy, components and criteria of the media education program from the perspective and results of research by experts in this field, according to the research approach by reviewing documents and articles, ten training models Media literacy was identified as these media literacy training models, their purpose and approved learning model were summarized: 1) Fellini model whose purpose is to create the necessary conditions for media education. 2) Rogo model, which aims to emphasize the content of media literacy education and is based on the epistemological approach. 3) The Toulouse model, which, like the previous model, emphasizes content, is based on behaviorism with this difference. 4) Bourne and Duran model, which is open to content and is based on the theory of constructivism. 5) Keating and Khan Model emphasize the content of media literacy and is based on constructivism. 6) The Potter and Hobbes model, which is both content-oriented and both based on epistemology. 7) Shipak and Helvik, which are content-oriented and based on constructivism. 8) Masterman, which is a model that provides the necessary conditions for education and media literacy content and is based on a constructivist approach. 9) Duncan model, which is content-oriented and tends to a constructivist approach (Ojagh, 2015).

Given the above and based on the effects and resources available in relation to the characteristics of policy in the field of media, developed countries that have long considered this field, each have considered specific characteristics. Therefore, based on these written sources, in general, the most important features of media policy in these countries can be presented in the form of a table. Furthermore, considering that the research approach was based on the study of media literacy curriculum policy in the educational system of leading countries and Iran, and to answer this research question, what are the features and differences of media literacy curriculum policy in Iran and leading countries? , We will briefly introduce this important issue in the studied countries.

**Table2.** Policy-making of media literacy education in countries

country name	Start a media literacy activity	Training programs and policies	strengths and weaknesses
Russia	1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media literacy is introduced for the first time by the Ministry of Culture</li> <li>- Compulsory in most large cities</li> <li>- Media literacy means the transfer of information through the computer</li> <li>- Literacy training with the aim of analysis as well as production mechanism and performance</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher participation</li> <li>- Publication of the state program of media and film education by education</li> <li>- Publication of the state program of media and film education by the Russian Ministry of Education</li> <li>- Registration of a university course entitled Media Education</li> <li>- Good prospects in Russia in the field of media literacy from the perspective of UNESCO</li> </ul> <p>weak points</p> <p>Non-participation of students</p>
the UK	1930	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media literacy is introduced for the first time in a book called Culture and Living Environment</li> <li>- Media literacy means the analysis of information through a computer</li> <li>- Media literacy training with the aim of solving the problems of media violence</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Naming England as the cradle of media literacy</li> <li>- Creating a national media literacy training program with the aim of meeting the educational needs of the media</li> </ul> <p>weak points</p> <p>Non-participation of students</p>
Finland	1950	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with UNESCO to implement media education and curriculum development in schools with the aim of fostering critical thinking</li> <li>- Executive policies to protect young children to deal with various media messages</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inventing a media education project (2006). Includes daily activities in kindergartens to develop the ability of young children to deal with the media.</li> <li>- Educational reforms and law reform based on changes in children's media environment</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses: Not having a minimum age to start media literacy training</p>
Canada	1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation of teachers of Media Literacy Association in compiling students' books</li> <li>- Critical approach in the field of media literacy</li> <li>- Comprehensive participation and cooperation of teachers, parents, researchers and related people</li> <li>- Holding three training courses</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hosts the first World Media Literacy Conference in Ontario</li> <li>- Teaching media literacy along with teaching English with very different content</li> <li>- Proportion of media literacy training content with the local conditions of each region</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses: Limited support for classroom activities</p>
Australia	1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media literacy is introduced for the first time by cultural organizations</li> <li>- Media literacy means media studies</li> <li>- Media literacy training as part of language skills and technology training</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compulsory media literacy education in primary and secondary schools in all states</li> <li>- Existence of a trustee in media literacy training</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses: Optional media studies in some states at an advanced level</p>
Japan	1980	<p>Education as the custodian of media literacy education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media education with the approach of critical study of media productions and critique and analysis of the facts presented by the media</li> <li>- Media literacy as a computer skills</li> <li>- Emphasis on critical media use</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holding numerous workshops and analyzing media texts</li> <li>- Education with the approach of improving students' education and skills for effective use of information</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses: Insufficient cooperation between teachers, parents, researchers and related people</p>

Turkey	2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Optional training course in sixth, seventh and eighth grades</li> <li>Education and the High Council of Radio as the custodian of media literacy training</li> <li>- Teaching literacy with the aim of developing students and developing critical thinking in them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launching a media literacy website</li> <li>- Holding numerous meetings of conferences and media literacy conferences</li> <li>- Education as the custodian of media literacy training</li> <li>- Preparing teachers' workbooks for teaching the course</li> </ul>
America	1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the term media literacy to mean media education</li> <li>- Optional media literacy unit in most states</li> <li>American Media Literacy Center website to use resources for professors</li> <li>- Educational program with the aim of solving the problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengths</li> <li>Introducing topics related to media literacy in the traditional context of curriculum such as social studies and English</li> <li>- Establishment of media literacy training center</li> <li>Weaknesses: Lack of support for educational institutions</li> </ul>
Iran	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of Media Literacy Association in 1996</li> <li>Optional and non-use of facilities and equipment in schools</li> <li>- Media literacy is introduced for the first time in the constitution</li> <li>- Use of new technologies for processing, production and design of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengths</li> <li>- Establishment of Media Literacy Association</li> <li>- Publishing and publishing books in the field of media literacy training</li> <li>- Holding training courses for trainers by the Media Literacy Association</li> <li>weak points:</li> <li>- Lack of participation of teachers and students</li> <li>- Optional and non-use of facilities and equipment in schools</li> <li>- Lack of adequate infrastructure</li> </ul>

As shown in Table 2 as a comparative comparison of the policy situation in the field of media literacy training in leading countries and Iran, the commonalities and differences of media literacy training in Canada, Japan, USA, Australia, UK, Russia, Turkey, Finland and Iran is mentioned to be:

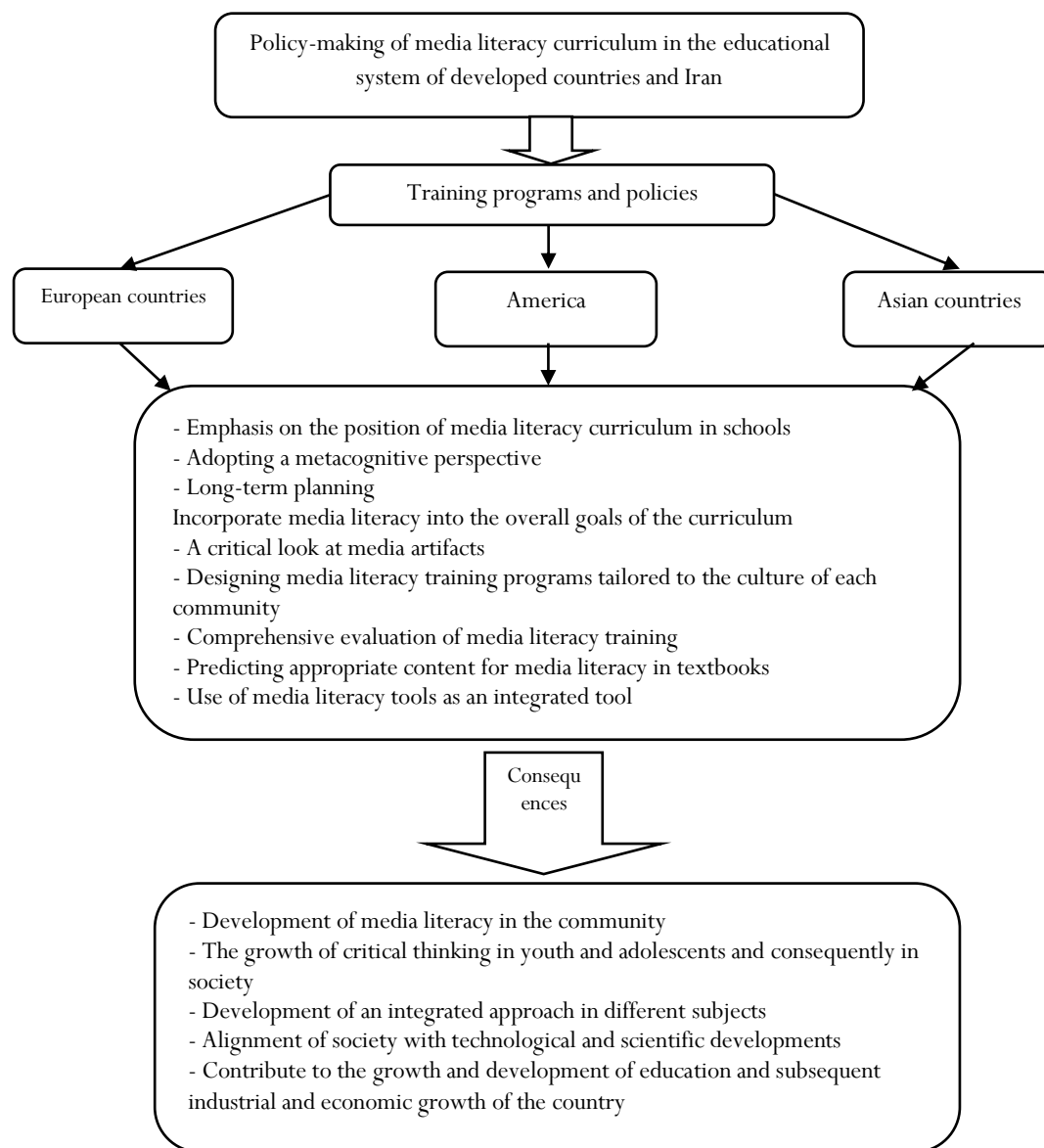
1- Emphasis on the importance and position of media literacy education, especially in schools of the studied countries, 2- Having a metacognitive perspective on education, especially in the field of media literacy, 3- Be purposeful and have long-term planning for media literacy, 4- Include media literacy training as part of the educational mission in the form of the curriculum, 5- In charge of media literacy training, 6- A critical and creative look at media products and empowering audiences in media literacy education, 7- Designing a media literacy training program appropriate to the cultural conditions and situations of the society, 8- Testable and evaluable results of media literacy training, 9- Providing detailed print, audio and visual materials for the development of media literacy education in schools, 10- Emphasis on education and attention to students' media consumption, 11- Consider media literacy education as a monitoring tool for students, 12- Supporting media product stakeholders in producing educational resources

But in comparing these countries with Iran in this regard, the most important differences between these countries can be mentioned as follows: - In countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom, the private sector has entered the field of media literacy and has provided the necessary background and infrastructure for its growth. But in countries such as Japan and Canada, such as Iran, the public education system is in charge of media literacy, and their progress in this area confirms the unimpeded presence of government education systems in this debate. Compulsory media literacy training and not restricting learning in this field to a certain age is one of the most important features of this training in countries such as Canada and Finland, which is different from the Iranian education system in this regard. - In most of these selected countries as leading countries such as Canada, Finland, the United States in this field, critical learning is a priority, while in Iran this issue has not yet been institutionalized.

Unlike the Iranian curriculum, the curriculum of some of these countries, such as Finland, Japan, Russia and the United States, has appropriate content for this training. The goal of the major countries is to institutionalize the media literacy curriculum in an organized manner and in the form of codified policies

and long-term plans. But in Iran, although this is emphasized in the upstream documents, but due to lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of culture appropriate to the age of technology and not equipped and familiar with teachers with this knowledge, this possibility has not yet been provided in practice. .

In general, the findings of the present study are shown in the following diagram:



**Figure1.** Summary of policy features of developed countries in the field of media literacy and education

#### 4. Discussion

The results of research and articles in the field of media literacy policy in both leading countries and our country show that the concerns and views on the content, needs and goals of media literacy in different countries are largely the same and educational planners They can maintain their cultural identity through the use of different media. As a leading country in media literacy education, Canada has targeted its media literacy education policy to counter American culture and strengthen Canadian identity. The Japanese education system has put reliance on information literacy and emphasis on the mental use of the media on its agenda. Looking at media literacy in Australia focuses on a critical perspective and audience empowerment. The UK, as the cradle of media literacy, has emphasized its educational programs with the

aim of promoting culture. In Iran, however, in examining the restrictions on the implementation of media literacy education, the non-recognition of media literacy education in schools, the most important restriction on the entry of education into schools has been raised. Also, lack of attention to technical tools and lack of attention to increasing information literacy in society is one of the most important challenges facing media literacy in Iran. In countries such as Australia and the UK, the private sector has entered the field of media literacy, but in countries such as Japan and Canada Public education is in charge of media literacy, and their progress in this area proves the unimpeded presence of public education systems in this debate.

A review of the documents of the Ministry of Education shows that this institution has paid special attention to media literacy in the Education Transformation Document, although incompletely. The two components of using the media and critical understanding as two technical and cognitive skills in this document has been well received, so that policy clauses have been formulated in this regard. The main problem in the policy clauses of the Education Transformation Document as an upstream document is the disregard for the component of communication ability, which is a significant disadvantage for an educational institution such as the Ministry of Education, the official custodian of literacy education in the country. Paying attention to media literacy, regardless of the component of communication ability, which is considered a creative skill, needs serious attention and review. The education system in Iran is a centralized system and it can be acknowledged that the inclusion of media literacy concepts in Textbooks in Iran is much easier than in decentralized countries. In addition, making the slightest change in the educational content and textbooks of Iran's centralized education system targets all students in the country and subsequent generations. In addition to equipping teachers and administrators in education with media literacy, it is necessary to plan media literacy training for the only input of education manpower. The key to creating a change in media literacy of the next generation of the country, knowledge Increase and improve the media literacy of teachers and include appropriate and variable educational content in the textbooks of schools. Results On the other hand, localization of media literacy education is the most important necessity of addressing this education in schools. In recent years, however, experts have suggested that secondary education be provided as an independent book. Experts considered it more important to start media literacy training in high school due to age and analytical ability, and emphasized the need to conduct a pilot to identify strengths and weaknesses. In this regard, it can be said that the inclusion of media literacy in the tenth grade of high school was one of the important events in recent years - of course, along with criticism (content of the book and the course presented) - along with the formation of the Media Literacy Association and holding He mentioned the conference on media literacy by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in order to create a discourse centered on interaction with the media and holding empirical meetings.

Research findings of domestic researchers such as Tolouei (2012), Kalantari & Momeni (2015), Taslimi & Agha Mohammadi (2015) confirm that these results are consistent with the document of fundamental change in education. Because other necessities such as internal awareness of students, the importance of cultural dynamics, the growing importance of visual information, the impact of the media on beliefs and values and attitudes, in line with the content and objectives of the mentioned documents. Accordingly, the policies proposed in media literacy education should be tailored to the objectives of the Fundamental Transformation Document. On the other hand, experts emphasize the high use of media by students, the importance of virtual communication. In fact, with the high access and use of media by students, the introduction of media literacy education in the country's schools becomes more necessary. In addition, in the educational content of discourse analysis, attention to the opportunities and threats of new media, visual literacy and questioning, and strengthening the power of reasoning and critical thinking along with addressing the characteristics of different types of media is of particular importance. In the meantime, there is a picture of a native view of media literacy education that is in line with the principles and definitions of



UNESCO (2011). In the fundamentals section, there are four important components including production, representation, media language and the media audience has been introduced as a component of media literacy training. Comparison of research findings shows that Iranian experts have paid attention to all four concepts in the proposed content. They want to study these concepts in accordance with the cultural characteristics and the educational system of the country. According to Potter, audiences who are aware of their media goals and use the media purposefully have a stronger position in media literacy. This suggests that media literacy skills training can turn students into active and dynamic audiences in media use. Content and necessities experts focus mainly on critical thinking about media use. They emphasize that it indicates attention to the high levels of analysis and evaluation in dealing with media messages.

On the other hand, the results of internal research show that students, in addition to technical skills and access to media, should be able to use wisely and rationally to be dynamically and actively prepared for a better life in today's media world. Media literacy skills are a necessary ability for effective life in today's world. Gradually, the face of schools and classrooms is changing with intelligence, media convergence, and technological and communication developments. The Internet and other new educational technologies play an important role alongside the teacher. The introduction of media literacy trainings in the country's schools is more necessary than the primary school in accordance with the two. In addition to this training in the form of a native model of media literacy training Adolescents in Iran, two institutions of education and broadcasting, have a significant role in teaching media literacy. As students gain a more real and complete understanding of their media skills.

What can be summarized by comparing the general programs and policies of developed countries in the field of media literacy are: emphasizing the position of media literacy curriculum in schools, adopting a metacognitive perspective, long-term planning, and including media literacy in general goals. Curriculum, a critical look at media artifacts, designing media literacy training programs tailored to the culture of each community, comprehensive evaluation of media literacy education, predicting appropriate content for media literacy in textbooks, using media literacy tools as an integrated tool. The cases that are not considered in the field of media and its education in Iran, and in fact the cases mentioned in the case of developed countries, is the difference between these countries and Iran in this field. Based on the research presented above, more serious policies should be developed and implemented in relation to its education, one of the factors of which is to pay attention to the curricula related to media literacy in different courses, especially the elementary course.

In general, it can be said that lack of attention to technical tools and lack of attention to increasing information literacy in society is one of the most important challenges facing media literacy in Iran. Of course, in today's world we see that those in charge of implementing media literacy are both the private and public sectors. Although in private countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom, the private sector has entered the field of media literacy, but in countries such as Japan and Canada, the public education system is in charge of media literacy, and their progress in this area confirms the unimpeded presence of public education systems. Although this important category has taken its first and most focused steps in recent years, and the writing of the book Media Literacy was the beginning of a great and systematic work, criticisms of this approach have emphasized the importance of teaching from a lower level, ie preschool. In addition to these issues, the need for radio and television activities in the field of media literacy and the allocation of appropriate time for media literacy training in national media programs can have a great impact. Therefore, although there is some research that has led to the presentation of a native model, but there is still a long way to go to a well-established model for teaching media literacy in the form of a curriculum.

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