

An Overview of the Education System of Islamic Republic of Iran

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Basic Facts about education
in Iran as compared to
education system in U.S.

1

Iran's education system was modeled on French Education system in the 19th century. Prior to the mid-19th century, education was associated with religious institutions. First polytechnical school was established by government in 1851. Ministry of Education was formed in 1910 after constitutional revolution in 1906 and women were first admitted to colleges in 1925. University of Tehran was established in 1934.

2

Education is highly centralized and Ministry of Education is the center of power. Ministries of Education and Higher Education specify a national course of study for all subjects, publish text books, finance the education and design and make tests. Education is uniform throughout the country.

3

All levels of education culminates in the end of the year stringent testing which determines the students' promotion to the next level. Social promotion is not the norm and if students fail the end of the year testing, they must repeat the entire year. Overall, government testing is a driving force in teaching and learning.

Konkur (university entrance examination) is a comprehensive and the most stringent test to enter universities.

4

Instruction is content centered, rote memorization is emphasized and students are required to acquire a great deal of factual knowledge. Teaching is test driven in all levels of education.

5

Textbooks tend to be short, paperbound volumes with sophisticated text and relatively few illustrations. Texts are published by the Ministry of Education.

6

Schools (grades 1-12) are segregated and students are required to wear uniform. Schools operate for 200 days and children go to school from Saturday to Thursday. Schools are closed on Fridays and national and religious holidays.

7

Language of instruction is Farsi and foreign languages (English and Arabic) are taught in schools. International schools teach French or German.

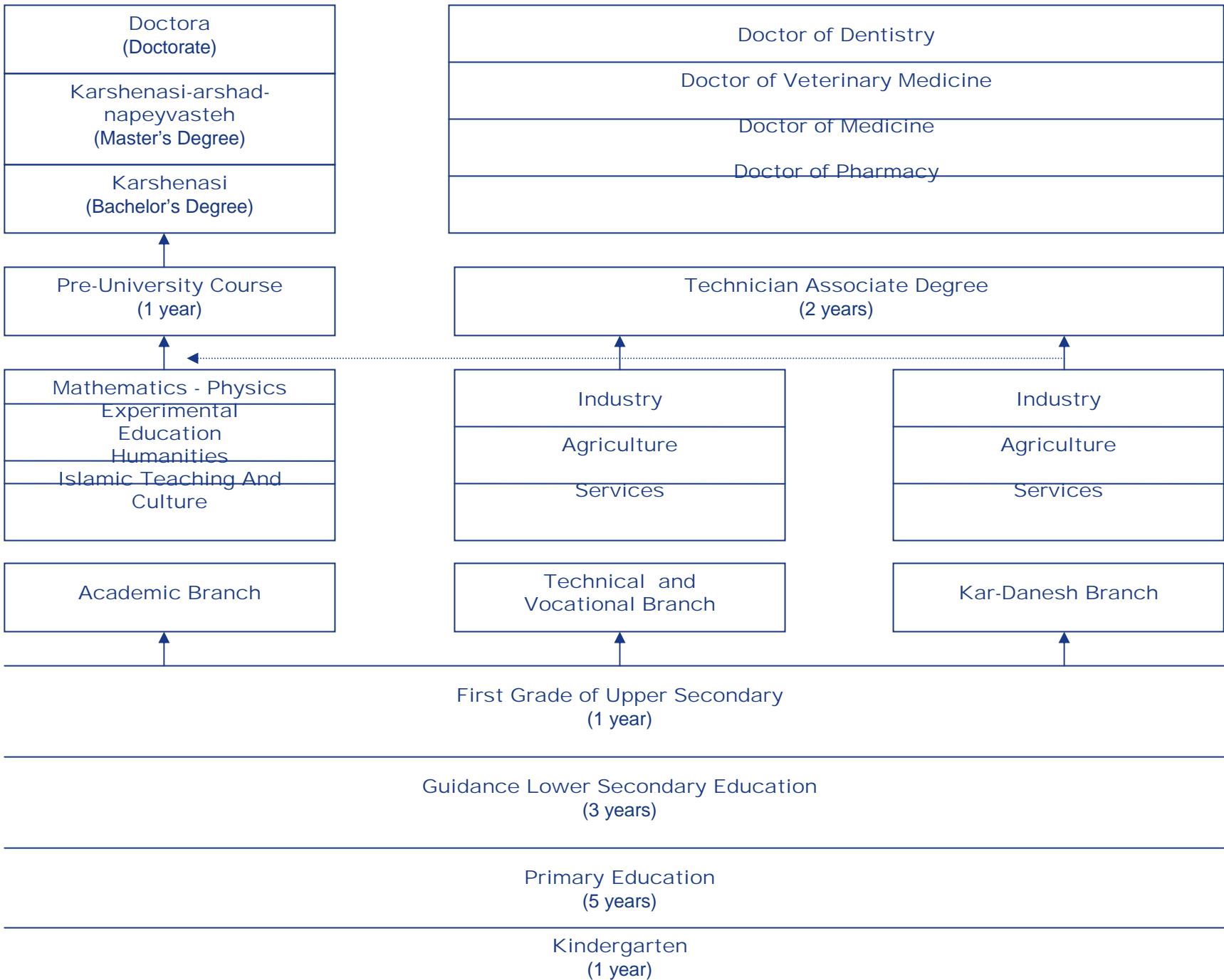
Ministries:

Ministry of Education: Grades 1-12th

Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT): Colleges and Universities

Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education: Medical schools

Education Ladder



Diploma & Higher Education Degrees Post-reform Act of 1990: Credit Unit system

High school diploma is awarded at the end of 11th grade and requires 96 units (60 units in the first two years and 36 units in the 3rd year) to complete. Pre-University certificate requires 30 units to complete.

Technical/Vocational high school diploma requires 96 units to complete.

Pre-reform Act of 1990

High school diploma was awarded at the end of the 12th grade; No credit unit system.

Kardani or Higher Technical Diploma:

A two year post secondary degree offered by institutes of technology and Medicine. It requires 68-78 units to complete.

Karshenasi or Bachelor's degree:

Offered by four year universities, it requires 130-140 semester hours to complete.

Karshenasi-Arshad or Master's degree:

Requires a competitive exam to enter and it is awarded after completion of 36-40 semester credit hour. A written thesis and a passing grade of 12 in a comprehensive examination is required to graduate.

Doctor of Philosophy degree or Ph.D.:

Requires a competitive exam to enter and it is awarded after completion of 3 years of study (60 units) and passage of a comprehensive examination before moving onto the dissertation phase.

Specialized Doctorates:

The Doctor in pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine and medicine are awarded after six years of full time study (completion of 210-290 semester credits) and a thesis.

Grading system:

Grading system at all levels of education (primary through university) is based on a 0-20 scales. An average scale of 10 is required for promotion at 1-12th grade and undergraduate programs. In graduate program is 12 and in Doctoral program is 14.

A=17-20

B=14-16.9

C=12-13.9

D=10-11.9

Women, Higher Education and Employment:

Iranian women make up almost 60% of university entrants. Iranian women are economically productive and have had a great impact on Iran's labor market, Iran's labor market is facing an influx of females that has never existed before.

Challenges Facing Iran today:

High rate of “brain drain”. According to IMF which surveyed 61 countries, Iran suffers the highest rate of brain drain as every year 150,000 educated Iranians leave their home country. The economic loss of brain drain is estimated at \$50 billion dollars or higher a year.

Causes:

- A.** Unsuitable social conditions and lack of resources such as new books, access to education web-sites, etc.
- B.** Massive unemployment/underemployment among educated youths (one out of every ten jobless youth holds a university degree). Unemployment rate is at 11%.
- C.** High demand and enthusiasm to attend foreign college and universities as higher education is highly sought after.
- D.** Stringent university entrance examination (Konkur). Only 10% of the participants enter universities.

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