

#3 – Education

A. Excerpt from: Koyagi, Mikiya. “Moulding Future Soldiers and Mothers of the Iranian Nation: Gender and Physical Education under Reza Shah, 1921-1941.” *International Journal of the History of Sport*. 26:11, 2009. Pages 1668-1696.

...when Reza Khan came to power, the new state put more emphasis on education as one of the three pillars of reforms and encouraged the enrolment of girls. Between 1924 and 1944, the percentage of female students at all levels nearly doubled, from 16.8 to 28 per cent. The number of government-run girls' schools similarly increased from 645 to almost 2,000 between 1931 and 1941. Also, female enrolment in secondary education increased from 1,715 in 1930/1 to 5,816 in 1941/2. [The statistical data here are based on the information from Amin, *The Making of the Modern Iranian Woman*, 145, and Matthee, ‘Transforming Dangerous Nomads into Useful Artisans’s]

These new girls' schools emphasized motherhood as the ultimate goal of educating girls. Issa Sadiq, who became the Minister of Education after completing his education in the United States, defined the aims of education as ‘to train boys and girls to become good citizens of modern Persia ... to train the girls to be worthy mothers of the coming generation, upon those [sic] education rests the future of the Nation’. [Sadiq, *Modern Persia and Her Educational System*] In the Iranian press, too, the metaphor of a bird functioned as a way to justify educating girls. A writer for *Ettela'at* claimed that progress was not restricted to men because women were the other ‘wing’ of a bird called Iran, which would not be able to fly without both wings functioning. The function of the other ‘wing’ as defined by the writer was to nurture children, in the context of which the importance of women's education was emphasized. [‘Hemayat-e zanan va atfal’, *Ettela'at*, 8 Sept. 1935]...What is significant in this metaphor is that the equal importance of women as the other wing did not deny the existence of differences. The differences between men and women were essentialized and the duties of men and women were separated based on the ‘natural aptitudes’ of the two sexes. As one article claimed, no man could breastfeed children and be a housewife, and no woman could fight like men. Although the article admitted the equal importance of the two sexes in society, it concluded that due to the biological differences men should defend and fight, while women should excel in other fields, such as nurturing children and managing family life. [‘Asas-e khanevadeh zan va mard ast’, *Ettela'at*, 8 Jan. 1938].

B. Literacy rates under Reza Shah's son, Muhammad Reza Shah: Notice the difference between men and women, between urban and rural, and between 1966 and 1976.

	Total		Urban		Rural	
	1966	1976	1966	1976	1966	1976
Male	30.1	58.9	61.4	74.4	25.4	43.6
Female	17.9	35.5	38.3	55.6	4.3	17.3
Difference	12.2	23.4	23.1	18.8	21.1	26.3

Table 1.2 : Literacy Rates by Sex and Residence[19]

Chart cited in an article by: Girgis, Monique. "Women in Pre-Revolutionary, Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary Iran." *Iran Chamber Society*. 1996. Web. 23 Oct. 2018.