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Presenting the Model of the Current and Desirable State of the Family Economics Curriculum in the Second Level of High School in Iran

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study was to construct a model delineating the existing and preferred configuration of the family economics curriculum at the secondary level of high schools in Iran.

Methods: The qualitative segment of the study adhered to grounded theory, while the quantitative aspect adopted a descriptive survey approach. The study participants comprised experts within the field, selected through non-random sampling techniques such as the snowball method. Semi-structured interviews were conducted until reaching theoretical data saturation, involving 30 individuals. In the quantitative phase, a researcher-developed questionnaire was utilized to assess the current and desirable states of the family economics curriculum model. Experts were sampled using a simple random method, resulting in a sample size of 118 participants.

Results: The outcomes indicated that the various dimensions and components of family economics education for students encompassed family education, individual factors, societal economic perspectives, social influences, appropriate educational content for enhanced comprehension of economic principles, conducive learning environments, life skills, and pedagogical approaches to economic concepts.

Conclusions: In conclusion, the prevailing condition of the family economics curriculum at the secondary level of high schools in Iran demonstrated a positive status.

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Introduction

Paying attention to education and training is evidently crucial, as it has a significant impact on various aspects such as cultural, economic, religious, and lifestyle paradigms, while also enhancing the educational system and the advancement of knowledge (Hendaryati, 2015). Education stands out as the primary influencer of societal dynamics, being both influenced by and influencing global changes and advancements. Consequently, aligning educational initiatives with global progress and societal needs becomes imperative. The empowerment and investment directed towards educating adolescents play a pivotal role in shaping their life trajectories and serve as an effective strategy in mitigating potential risks they may encounter (Gültekin et al., 2010).

Given the imperative nature of societal transformations, the education system emerges as a complex and extensive entity within every nation, closely intertwined with social, cultural, and economic evolution and progress (Dale, 2000). Aside from catering to societal demands, education assumes a primary role in driving scientific and economic advancements through the cultivation of specialized and dedicated human capital. Thus, even in the face of natural resource scarcity, nations can rely on proficient and skilled human resources to adeptly address their material challenges (Hastings et al., 2013). The educational systems of different countries serve various functions, with economics being a fundamental and significant component in the educational frameworks of many nations. The significance of this function lies in the substantial impact of the economy on fostering constructive attributes like accountability, self-assurance, and the enhancement of decision-making abilities (Schafer & Khan, 2017). The profound importance of economics in human life and destiny is underscored by Islam, which views its diverse facets as educational objectives and foundational elements for broader educational pursuits encompassing intellectual, cultural, social, and moral dimensions (Thompson, 2012).

The acquisition of skilled workforce involves both informal and formal education and training aimed at achieving economic and professional objectives (Basirati Barzaki et al., 2015). Economic education plays a crucial role in the educational system of every nation and in the context of the modern world (Leiser et al., 2016). The complexities of contemporary life necessitate that the forthcoming generation be equipped with knowledge based on various elements to effectively tackle challenges (Semenov, 2017). From early childhood education, children should grasp the

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value of work, its significance, and the financial rewards it brings for a successful future (Cseh-Papp & Varga, 2017). Establishing a solid foundation of economic education in each generation during their formative years is essential for achieving optimal performance in this domain towards the end of their educational journey (Rakhimov, 2018).

Today, the incorporation of economic education is fundamental across educational institutions. The significance of this education lies in the enduring concerns regarding economy and livelihood throughout human social and individual life, along with the increased focus on educational dimensions in recent decades (Grimes et al., 2021). Lack of economic training among students, who are the future pillars of society, may lead to an inability to manage personal finances, comprehend economic events, and make informed decisions based on national culture and needs. Consequently, this impedes their functionality, impacting the economic growth and holistic development of the nation (Becker Jr & Walstad, 2012). Economic education equips students to navigate present and future challenges successfully, enhancing decision-making abilities and fostering rational economic behavior (Suciu & Staiculescu, 2010). Understanding the world in which they reside is vital for young individuals. By providing a decision-making framework, economic education benefits students and the nation, serving as a cornerstone competency essential for life success, particularly due to its role in enhancing individual and social life understanding, and facilitating comprehension of current events and public policies. The initial phase of economic education commences within the family and school environment, where children acquire economic skills and behaviors (Greenspan, 2003). Hence, the education system must aim to achieve this objective, with the curriculum being a crucial tool in this endeavor.

Curricula serve as the cornerstone of the educational framework and a mechanism for realizing the objectives of education. The curriculum encompasses educational opportunities and experiences meticulously crafted and executed within the educational system's oversight to engender a positive transformation in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of learners (Miller, 2015). Regrettably, contemporary educational institutions in our nation seem to overlook the incorporation of family economics within the secondary school curriculum (Mosazadeh & Sanati, 2017). Narmaditya and Wibowo (2021) highlight the existence of economic education curricula in various countries. Furthermore, Hastings et al. (2013) affirm the crucial significance of economic education in

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secondary schools, emphasizing the complementary nature of education in primary, first, and secondary levels.

Upon scrutinizing literature both domestically and internationally pertaining to this subject matter, it becomes apparent that a comprehensive study delineating the current and desired state model of the family economics curriculum in Iranian second secondary schools is conspicuously absent. Existing research merely touches on tangentially related issues, as evidenced by studies conducted by Ghandhaari et al. (2019) and Mirarab et al. (2019) which expound upon the significance and role of the family economics curriculum.

When discussing the significance and necessity of research, it is crucial to emphasize that the realm of economy stands out as a paramount facet of human existence, intricately intertwined with various aspects of life. Economy essentially encompasses the methodologies and instruments geared towards optimizing production, distribution, and consumption while minimizing expenditure. Within the context of Iran, addressing economic matters is instrumental in bridging societal divides and enhancing informed decision-making processes, underscoring the imperative for economic literacy among the populace to ameliorate disparities and enhance the economic dynamics of the community. Such endeavors are poised to catalyze economic progress and elevate the overall welfare of individuals within the society. Presently, educational authorities worldwide are deeply invested in seeking novel and effective strategies and frameworks to refine and enhance educational curricula, recognizing it as a fundamental instrument for fostering efficient and impactful educational systems. It is evident that the formulation of a comprehensive and pertinent curriculum is pivotal in ensuring the efficacy and potency of any educational framework. Consequently, the focus of this study is on elucidating the configuration of the existing and optimal model of the family economics curriculum in Iran's secondary school system.

Materials and Methods

The present research employs a mixed exploratory approach encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative segment is underpinned by foundational data theory, while the quantitative phase adopts a descriptive survey approach. The research participants consist of experts in various fields such as educational planning, management, research, and economics. In

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the qualitative section, participant selection was non-random, employing the snowball technique. The qualitative data analysis utilized the Strauss and Corbin method alongside a three-stage coding process (open, axial, selective). During open coding, concepts, characteristics, and dimensions were delineated, focusing on terms relevant to the research questions. Axial coding involved compiling categories and dimensions derived from open coding to enhance understanding of relationships. In the subsequent selective coding stage, the researcher sought cases to elucidate issues and conducted comparisons. By integrating categories and concepts, the study determined the role of key activities and support in the family economics curriculum, culminating in the presentation of a model for said curriculum. Moving to the quantitative phase, a researcher-designed questionnaire evaluated the existing and desired states of the family economics curriculum model. Sampling in this phase employed a simple random method among specialists from various fields, resulting in a sample of 118 participants.

Ethical considerations were addressed by assuring subjects of the research nature of the questions and the anonymity of their responses. Data analysis from the questionnaire implemented SPSS-21 software, encompassing descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

Results

In the qualitative part, the researcher coded the extracted and replaced concepts related to the teaching methods in the curriculum and using the open coding stage and specifying the main concepts and the axial coding of the main categories, it was presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Selective coding and relationship between core categories

Causal conditions	Axial phenomena	Outputs	Strategies	Methods
Teaching the family	Increasing students' awareness of economic issues	Prosperity of family economy through education to children	Use of media and new educational technologies	Participation in household chores
The importance of teaching family economics to students		Individual and financial independence of students	Characteristics of teachers	Familiarity with jobs
Family consumption pattern		A sense of responsibility and gratitude in children	Time Management	Ability to use tools and learn skills
Cultivating and strengthening healthy personal, religious and social values to students		Increasing understanding of macroeconomic events	Curriculum localization	Cultivating entrepreneurial spirit

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		Strengthening critical and creative thinking in students		Active and interactive learning methods including group discussion
		Scientific activities		Familiarity with production centers and entrepreneurs

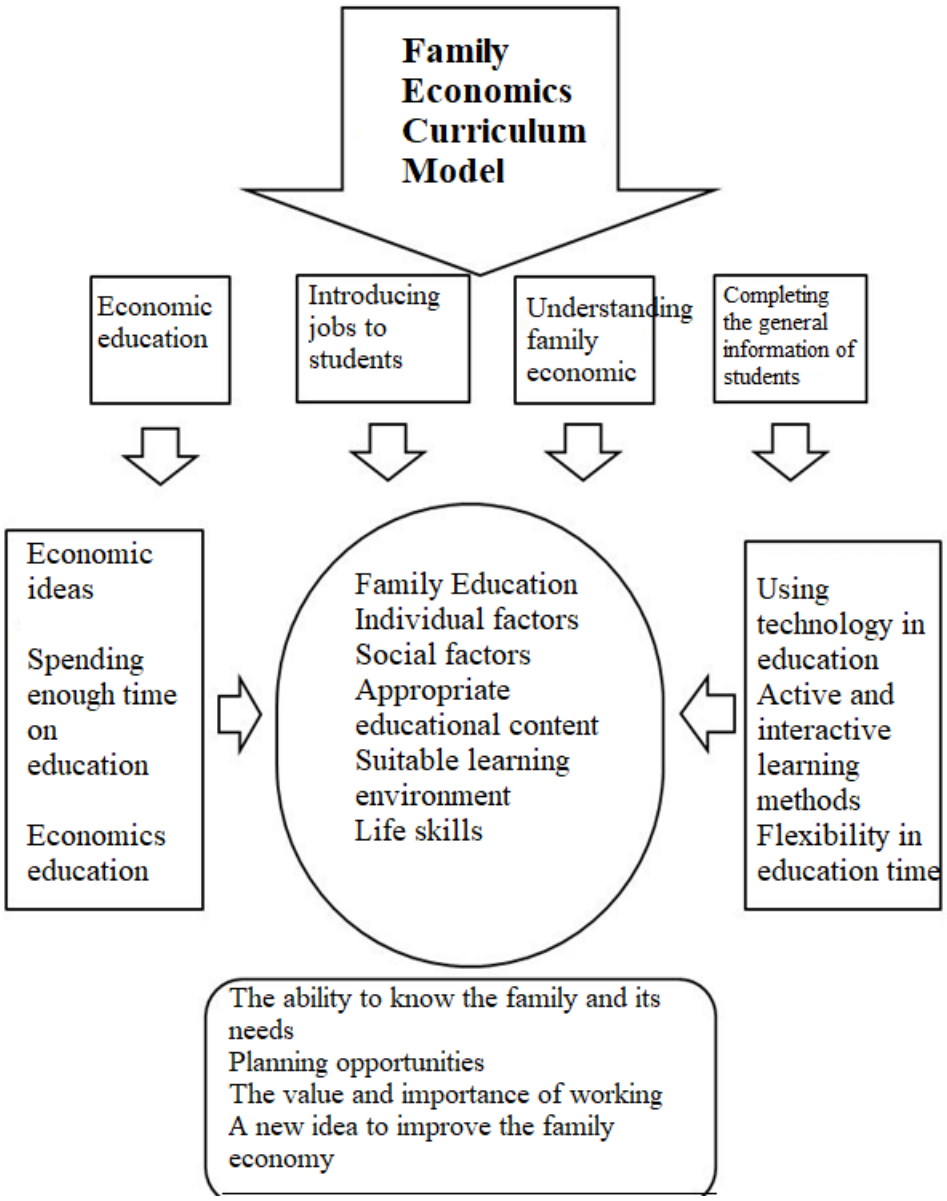


Fig. 1. The Family Economics Curriculum Model

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Table 2. The current and desirable state of the family economics curriculum in Iran's second secondary school

Dimensions	Status	Mean	SD	T value	p
family Education	Current	2.79	1.57	37.36	0.001
	Desirable	3.83			
Individual factors	Current	2.29	1.03	53.18	0.001
	Desirable	3.42			
social factors	Current	2.52	0.94	68.68	0.001
	Desirable	3.71			
Appropriate educational content for a better understanding of economic concepts	Current	2.39	1.17	54.16	0.001
	Desirable	3.20			
Suitable learning environment	Current	2.96	1.24	51.89	0.001
	Desirable	3.83			
life skills	Current	2.87	1.11	58.69	0.001
	Desirable	3.93			
Teaching economic concepts	Current	2.85	1.06	60.72	0.001
	Desirable	3.66			

According to the results of Table 2, it can be said that the current and desirable state of the family economics curriculum in the second period of high school is in a favorable state (p-value < 0.05). The average of all dimensions and components has been measured above the average; In other words, it can be said that the current and favorable situation of the family economics curriculum in the second period of high school in Iran is in a favorable situation. In the quantitative section, Friedman's test was used to rank the items, which is reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Ranking of family economics curriculum of the second secondary school in Iran

Rank	Item	Rank value	Chi Square	DF	p
1	Teaching economic concepts	9.62	68.33	7	0.05
2	life skills	9.38			
3	Appropriate content for a better understanding of economic concepts	8.87			
4	family Education	8.26			
5	Individual factors	7.14			
6	social factors	6.33			
7	Suitable learning environment	5.09			

According to Table 2, $X^2 = 68.33$ with 7 degrees of freedom is significant at the level ($p<0.05$). As can be seen, six items are ranked in terms of priority and importance, as it can be seen that the item "teaching economic concepts" has the first rank, and the item "suitable educational environment" has the seventh rank.

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Discussion

The purpose of this research was to provide a model of the current and desirable state of the family economics curriculum in the second year of high school in Iran. The results showed that the average of all dimensions and components of family economics education for students include: family education, individual factors, economic approach of society, social factors, suitable educational content for better understanding of economic concepts, suitable educational environment, life skills and education of higher economic concepts. In other words, the current status of the family economics curriculum in the second period of high school in Iran is favorable. The findings of the quantitative part of the research using the chi-square test also showed that the components and items extracted in the qualitative part were of medium to high importance and all the sample people had a positive opinion about the model.

The mentioned results are in agreement with the findings of Ghandhaari et al. (2019) and Narmaditya and Wibowo (2021). In response to the aforementioned inquiry, it is pertinent to note that the family encompasses natural, emotional, educational, social, moral, and economic functions, all of which hold significant value. The family is widely regarded as the primary and most crucial environment for human development. Throughout history, the family has remained the cornerstone in the upbringing and initial socialization of children. Following a child's birth, the family stands as the singular entity that interacts extensively with the child for a considerable duration. Consequently, the family assumes a central role in molding the child's beliefs and values. The process of nurturing and socializing children primarily occurs through a combination of direct and indirect educational methods, enabling them to assimilate effectively into their societal environment. Aligning the course content with the economic requisites of the society, local resources, cultural nuances, problem-solving approaches, and comprehending the economic dynamics within families forms a crucial component of the curriculum. Furthermore, the identification of learners' potential and fostering entrepreneurial mindsets are aspects that merit careful consideration in the context of middle school curricula. Through innovative exercises, curriculum design, and the development of practical economic models, students can gain a deeper understanding of economic principles, school-related economic activities, and scientific production. Emphasizing knowledge-based metrics such as debates, lectures, and demonstrations

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during course delivery is imperative for enhancing learning outcomes, alongside employing effective strategies to promote problem-solving skills, practical engagement, and the acquisition of tangible competencies among students.

Considering the significance of evaluation in educational settings, students' learning outcomes can be greatly enhanced through the correct implementation of observation of checklists and work folders, alongside the thorough examination of the students' developmental progress and the implementation of effective remedial activities. Self-evaluation and self-assessment should primarily focus on performance, instruction, scientific projects, skill projects, as well as the learning skills and performance of students in natural settings, serving as crucial benchmarks for students' academic progress. The incorporation of family economy knowledge and skills into the middle school curriculum is most effective when combined with practical activities, experiential learning, and real-world application, enabling students to apply their knowledge in a practical and skill-oriented manner, thereby fostering a conducive environment for their academic growth. In preparation for future social responsibilities, today's students must possess a solid foundation of basic economic concepts, principles, and analytical skills to comprehend economic issues and developments. Both formal and informal educational settings should encompass economic topics to ensure a comprehensive understanding among students. Neglecting the importance of economic literacy in educational plans could lead to severe consequences for individuals and society at large. Thus, the family economics curriculum, although a longstanding necessity, should evolve to address the complex nature of contemporary economic challenges, serving as a fundamental tool in shaping learners' knowledge, attitudes, and value-oriented behaviors towards proactive engagement in economic matters. While education alone cannot resolve all societal issues, it does play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' global understanding, and by designing relevant educational content, individuals can lead balanced lives aligned with prevailing economic conditions, effectively confronting the challenges posed by the globalization of knowledge, new technologies, and associated phenomena.

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Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of Islamic Azad University.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. The author contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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