A Comparative Study of Media Literacy Education Curriculum in Canada, Iran, and the United States

Zeinab Mohebzadeh[1]
Seyed Mohammad Reza Emamjome[2] (Corresponding author**)**
Alireza Assare[3]
Farideh Hamidi[4]

A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
  	The aim of present study is to compare curriculum of media literacy education in schools in Canada, Iran and the United States in order to benefit from the experiences of pioneer and active countries. The present study is a qualitative and applied research that was conducted by Bereday's Comparative Method. Canada was chosen for being a leader in media literacy education, and the United States because of its diverse approaches. The data were collected and analyzed in an attributive process by referring to authoritative scientific articles and websites of the Ministry of Education and reputable media literacy education societies of selected countries. In order to increase validity of original documents and to increase reliability, self-assessment was performed by the researchers. To indicate similarities and differences among selected countries John Stuart Mill approach was used. The findings reveal most similarities in methods of teaching-learning and most differences in content organization. Curriculum planners in Iran are advised to use media literacy as an essential skill, using a reciprocal and spiral curriculum approach, at all levels of education and more attention to component of the media message production and role of students in the learning process.

[1] PhD student , Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee University, Tehran, Iran , Email : mohebzadehzeinab@gmail.com

[2] Associate Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee University, Tehran, Iran , Email : emamjomeh@sru.ac.ir

[3] Associate Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee University, Tehran, Iran , Email : alireza_assareh@yahoo.com

[4] Associate Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee University, Tehran, Iran , Email : fhamidi@srttu.edu

1. Introduction

Today, families, schools, and various institutions are responsible for preparing young people to live in a society that is increasingly affected by information and communication technologies. As nowadays the media communicates with us using a powerful combination of words, images and sounds, understanding their diverse messages requires creating and strengthening a broader set of literacy. This large collection is called Media Literacy, which can be used to make better decisions (NAMLE, 2020). According to Potter (2008: 25) "media literacy is a set of perspectives that we actively exploit to expose the media to interpret meaning of messages we encounter". In addition , Jolls (2008: 22) highlighted that "Media Literacy is a 21st century approach to education that provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate using messages in a variety of forms". The American Center for Media Literacy introduces five core concepts for media literacy and designs all of its lesson plans based on these concepts and relevant questions. These concepts include:

1. All media messages are constructed (Authorship).
2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules (Format).
3. Different people experience the same media message differently (Audience).
4. Media have embedded values and points of view (Content).
5. Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power (Purpose) (Jolls, 2008, p23).

According to these five concepts, the following five key questions are designed:

- Who created this message?
- What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
- How might different people understand this message differently?
- What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
- Why is this message being sent? (Jolls, 2008, p24)

Existence of media literacy gives people a much clearer view of the boundary between the real world and the world made by the media. People who fail to improve their media literacy are exposed to a mass of messages and formed a false sense of awareness about things in them. Conversely, people with high media literacy understand multiple dimensions of a message (overt

and covert themes) (Potter, 2008). Media literacy also enhances people's ability to enjoy basic human rights, such as right to freedom of opinion and expression. A media-literate society accelerates development of pluralistic, independent, and free media (Wilson, Grizzle, Tuazon, Kwame & Cheung, 2011).

The education system plays an important role in creating media literacy. In this system, the young generation can be equipped with media literacy through academic units in different educational levels. In some developed countries, young literate media literacy is of particular importance. For example, media literacy education in Canada was founded in the late 1980s, and in 1987. Ontario was the first English-speaking region in the world to make media literacy compulsory. Canada has become known as a leading country in this field due to its early achievements in developing and implementing media literacy policies and curricula. In 1998, the World Media Education Council selected the Ontario Media Literacy Association as the most effective media literacy society. The Media Literacy Resources Document, published by the Ontario Ministry of Education, is a major source of guidance for teachers around the world and has been translated into four languages (Wilson, 2019). One of the events supported by the Canadian Teachers' Federation and the Media Smarts: Canada' Center for Digital and Media Literacy is Media Literacy Week. The event is held in November of each year to demonstrate importance of teaching media and digital literacy to children and adolescents (Media Literacy Week, 2020).

In the United States and before the 1960s, John Calkin was one of the pioneering educators who explicitly called for media education in school curricula. In the early 1960s, television channels became widespread and influential in American life. With the spread of television programs, the first experiences with the media in schools were formed. The US education system has been more active since the 1990s, and there are now a variety of organizations to develop and promote media literacy and provide resources and ideas for teachers and students' needs (NAMLE, 2020; CML, 2020b).

In Iran, since the mid-1990s, the issue of media literacy has taken its place among academic communities. The emphasis of academic elites on needs for "media literacy education" to different parts of society has led to meetings held in schools in the country's major cities in recent years. Some concepts of media literacy have been scattered throughout the first year of high school since 2012. Also in 2016, a dedicated curriculum called "Thought and Media Literacy" became mandatory for students of all secondary high schools (Organization for Educational Research and Planning-OERP, 2019). Iranian Media Literacy and Information Association in 2017, as a non-governmental organization in the field of education, research, radio-television and cinema programming,

production of cultural and social content with the theme of media literacy, ranking schools, universities, and educational and research institutes, were established in terms of attention to the issue of media literacy (Supreme National Association for Media Literacy, 2020). Despite these developments, it should be acknowledged that media literacy education in Iran is still a new issue, and examining activities and experiences of other countries can be a source of good ideas, reform and development of media literacy curricula.

In terms of research background, research has been done in this area. For example, Ascort (2018) compared media literacy networks in the United States and Europe in terms of organizational characteristics, teaching skills, and their role in teaching media literacy. He found that thinking skills and interaction were the focus of all networks. He acknowledges that these networks are very active in the field of media literacy education as non-governmental organizations. Rochester (2017) examines the competencies of democratic and critical media in the national curriculum of Australia, United Kingdom, and United States. He highlighted the differences between these three countries in three main indicators: social and cultural challenges and youth issues, personal growth through media production and development of skills, and development of rational thinking and communication skills. Hoechsmann and Poyntz (2017) challenge teaching and learning of media literacy in Canada and point to the role of nonprofits in teaching media literacy in countries such as the United States and United Kingdom, and suggest that formal education organizations and non-governmental organizations act with harmony with each other.

In Iran, research has been done on media literacy education. Recently, Hosseini Pakdehi and Sheberi (2017) compared performance of the Iranian media literacy site with the Smart Media Canadian website and found that most of the content on the Canada website has characteristics of an educational text, but content of the Iranian site is limited to providing general information about media literacy and emphasis on its necessity and importance. In a comparative study, Khazaei et al. (2017) examined the status and necessity of media literacy in curriculum and found that countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia have been included teaching media literacy education in various curricula for several decades. The researchers suggested that more comparative research should be done to model these countries in terms of developing a media literacy curriculum. Kiarsi and Kiarsi (2016) analyzed contents of top documents of the Ministry of Education about media literacy and found that the highest attention was paid to critical understanding and there was no policy to develop communication ability. Falsafi (2014) describes the history of media literacy education approaches and its responsible apparatus in the developed countries of United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, and the United States. Nasiri and Aghili (2012)

compared the history and organizations responsible for media literacy education in Canada and Japan and found that in both countries the Ministry of Education is responsible for training of media literacy and certain curriculum.

Since none of the previous studies have examined the similarities and differences in media literacy education's curriculum in Iran schools with other countries, it is necessary to conduct a comparative study to provide a better picture of decision-making for Iranian policymakers. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is a comparative study of media literacy education curriculum in schools in Iran, Canada, and the United States. In order to achieve research goals, the following questions are asked:

- What are goals, content, teaching methods, learning principles, and evaluation principles and methods of media literacy curriculum in schools in the selected countries?
- What are similarities and differences among different dimensions of media literacy curriculum in schools of the selected countries?

2. Research Method

The present study is qualitative in nature, practical in terms of purpose, and comparative using George Bereday's approach (Madandar Arani & Kakia, 2014). The statistical population of the study is curriculum of media literacy in formal general education of schools in Canada, Iran and the United States. Canada was selected as a leader in media literacy training in the formal curriculum (Falsafi, 2014; Wilson, 2019). The United States, as an advanced and active country in the field of media literacy, with abundant educational resources and a different approach to media literacy, has attracted the attention of researchers (NAMLE, 2020). The method of data collection is documentary. The data were collected by visiting websites of the Ministry of Education and reputable media literacy education associations' homepage in the selected countries. In Canada, as media literacy is part of language skills, the Ontario Language Skills Curriculum and three documents related to the Canadian Media Literacy Association were reviewed. In the United States, three documents related to the Media Literacy Education Program proposed by the Media Literacy Association to Teachers, and three documents about history, educational philosophy, and goals of the American Media Literacy Association and in Iran, the Media Literacy Textbook of Grade 10 of high secondary schools, Teacher Guide Book and a document from the Media Literacy Society of Iran were analyzed. In order to increase validity of the documents, original sources were used. The research analysis method is John Stuart Mill's agreement and difference approach. Descriptive

statistics were also used to determine similarities and differences among curriculum elements of selected countries.

3. Results

3-1- Description and interpretation

3-1-1- Canada

Each of the States and regions of Canada has its own educational system. Since education is responsibility of the states, there are also differences in how each state operates in media literacy education. But their cooperation through a formal protocol has led to expansion of media literacy throughout Canada. (Media Smarts, 2020). In Canada, media literacy is one of the four language skills and is presented as part of the language curriculum at all levels with a cross-curricular approach (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006). One of the main goals of media literacy education in Canada is to acquire critical thinking skills by students, as a digital citizen for the conscious and active use of the media. To this end, the following goals have been considered for the Media Literacy Curriculum:

- Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts;
- Identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning;
- Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques;
- Reflect on and identify their strengths, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in understanding and creating media texts (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p.14).

These goals are repeated at all levels and expanded as students grow. Content is usually presented in a question-oriented way and students produce their personal knowledge with the help and guidance of the teacher. To develop their media literacy skills, students should have opportunities to view, analyse, and discuss a wide variety of media texts and relate them to their own experience. They should also have opportunities to use available technologies to create media texts of different types (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006). On the Canadian Educational Reference website, there are links to related educational media literacy sites that students and

teachers can use (Edselect, 2020). The main elements of the Canadian Media Literacy Training Curriculum are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.
Main Elements of Media Literacy Curriculum in Canadian schools

Elements	Items	
Goals & objectives	goals	Objectives
	Understanding Media Texts	Core concepts and questions of media literacy related to creator of message, purpose of making message, implicit and obvious message, different people's views on message and alternative views
	Understanding Media Forms, Conventions and Techniques	Identify some of the elements and characteristics of a few simple media forms; Identify conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms
	Creating Media Texts	Identify topic, purpose, and audience for media texts they plan to create; Identify an appropriate form to suit purpose and audience for a media text they plan to create; identify conventions and techniques appropriate to form chosen for a media text they plan to create; produce some short media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques
	Reflecting on Media Literacy Skills and Strategies	Meta-cognition: Identify what strategies they found most helpful in making sense of and creating media texts; Interconnected Skills: begin to explain and direction, how their skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing help them to make sense of and produce media texts
Content	Comparing objectives, questions and activities are considered for each grade separately. Therefore, the content can be considered as follows: 1- Concepts include: • Implicit and explicit message and message characteristics • Goal and audience characteristics • Characteristics of message owners • Elements, characteristics, conventions and techniques used to create the message in several familiar media forms. 2- Skills include: • Planning to Creating media texts in several familiar forms • Critical Thinking • Reflecting	
Method of content organization & presentation	Cross-curriculum: Media literacy, as one of the language skills, is officially taught in Language Curriculum in all grades. Spiral: objectives are repeated at all grades and expanded each time, Horizontal organization: The objectives of this course are also pursued in other courses such as art and social studies, Based on the question	

Learning methods and opportunities	Pre-organizer, Metacognition, Discussion, Question and answer, Problem Solving, inquiry, Project, show movies or familiar media, Exploration In the way of Courts, Participatory Learning	Teacher tries to provide an opportunity for the student to activate the previous knowledge and create the knowledge structure and build new knowledge. Student is asked to talk about their learning processes. Teacher tries to guide the students towards discovering new knowledge by asking questions while showing a familiar medium to the students.
Evaluation	Evaluation objectives: improve student learning, Improving the curriculum, improving teaching strategies; Evaluation categories and criteria are determined based on goals and objectives. Evaluation is descriptive.	

Source: Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006

3-1-2- Iran

General education, in Iran, is a 12-year course including first and second three-year elementary school and first and second high school. From 2016 onwards, media literacy education will teach in the form of a course called Thought and Media Literacy, in the tenth grade of the second high school. This course is offered two hours a week for 28 useful educational weeks. Therefore, due to the limited training hours of this course, it is not possible to pay full attention to all components of media literacy, and the authors of the Thought and Media Literacy book have paid more attention to the two components of analysis and evaluation of media messages. The objectives in this book are:

- Ability to cleverly review the message
- Management benefit of Media texts/Media Consumption diet
- Ability to generate messages through the student's available media

Of course, the ability to generate messages is intended only to the extent of using techniques presented in book and using the student's available media (OERP, 2017). Media consumption regime means that in the media space, it is necessary to know how much can be exposed to different media, including visual, audio and written, and what can be taken from them (Potter, 2008). In sum, "Thought and Media Literacy" book includes 6 chapters and 22 lessons such as techniques for creating a Media message, active or passive audience, Media and lifestyle, and Media ethics (OERP, 2019).

The Media Literacy Curriculum of Iran is planned based on the approach of conditional power of media. In this approach, considering interactions between media and the audience, on the one hand, media does not have that much power in which the audience to be merely the aimless acceptor; and on the other hand, the audiences are not that much strong to be purely selective without influence from the media. Rather, the proponents of this approach believe that the audiences have that much power to choose the media and selects messages based on their beliefs, convictions and experiences; but the media also influences the audience by recognizing audience's interest and attitudes using various powerful tools and techniques (OERP, 2017). According to this approach, the main object of book "Thought and Media Literacy" is to create the ability in students to intelligently review messages and to manage media's benefit (OERP, 2019). Media benefit management means how much you need to be exposed to the message of different media, whether visual, audio, or written, and what message should be accepted (Potter, 2008). The main elements of the media literacy curriculum in Iran schools are given in Table 2.

Table 2.
The Main Elements of Media Literacy Curriculum In Iranian schools

Elements	Items	
Goals & objectives	Goals	Objectives
	Help student to become an active audience and actively deal with media	Ability to intelligently analyze and evaluate messages; Ability to create messages by Student-Available Media; To extent of using techniques presented in the book
	Determining media consumption regime	Media use management

Content	Five core concepts of media literacy and related key questions.
	Concepts related to message analysis and creation include:
	    Media, message, text, subtext, hypertext, representation, persuasion techniques, stereotypes, media formats, media owners, news gatekeepers, active and passive audience, audience rights, values and lifestyle, media dependence, media ethics and media consumption regime.
	Skills include:
	    Systematic thinking.
	    Media analysis using five key questions.
	    Planning for project implementation.
	    Planning for optimal media consumption.	

Method of content organization & presentation	Subject-oriented: In the form of a separate course entitled Thinking and Media Literacy in a Grade. Problem-oriented: Paying attention to the issues needed by society and students in content production.	

Learning methods and opportunities	Problem Solving, Questions and Answers, Participatory Learning, Team Members Teaching, show movies, Discussion, Exploration In the way of Courts, Lectures, Project	Before presenting the concept, students are placed in A problem-solving situation in order to discover and rediscover the subject to understand and feel it, and to practice media literacy skills and attitudes. Then the desired knowledge is presented; In other words, by creating a problem in the student's mind and getting an answer from him, the subject is explained by using the students' opinions.
Evaluation	Evaluation objectives: • Provide ongoing feedback to the learner and learner to identify weaknesses and strengths of themselves and the program. • Perform compensatory Actions. • Determine how well the program's performance expectations are met. • Deciding to promote the student to a higher level. Perform process and final evaluation. Quantitative scoring (Scoring system in Iran is from 0 to 20 and the acceptance score is from 10 to above). Perform Evaluation by teacher and self-assessment by student. Data collection tools: teacher checklist, parental checklist, student self-assessment sheet, portfolio, project, functional test, written functional test (message analysis).	

Source: OERP, 2017, 2019

3-1-3- United States of America

In the United States, there is no separate course on media literacy; rather, in different areas of learning and at all levels, the teacher can use media literacy as a research-based learning way. Various institutions are responsible for producing proposed programs for teachers to use in the classroom. These institutions carry out extensive activities in the field of media literacy education. The Sharp Luke Project, for example, is a media literacy project at Ithaca College in New York State, which works for combination and integration of two topics of media literacy and critical thinking at all educational levels (Project Look Sharp, 2020). Media Literacy Now (MLN) is the leading national advocacy organization for the media literacy education policy. This organization is changing the way people think about media and literacy through building public awareness and influencing policy and empowers grassroots groups of parents and concerned individuals in their push to bring classroom curriculum to local schools. Also, it provides policy and advocacy information, expertise, and resources to develop state laws, policies, and educational standards. The mission of MLN is to drive policy change in every state and at the national level to ensure all K-12 students receive comprehensive media literacy education, now and in the future. This organization's strategy is to share ideas and resources on media literacy training (Media Literacy Now, 2020).Also, as a

pioneering institution, the American Center for Media Literacy is a national and international educational organization that provides public education, professional development, and educational resources in the field of media literacy. This center advocates a philosophy of empowerment through education. This philosophy incorporates three intertwining concepts:

- Media literacy is education for life in a global media world.
- The heart of media literacy is informed inquiry. Through a four-step inquiry process of awareness, analysis, reflection and action, media literacy helps young people acquire an empowering set of navigational skills which include the ability to: Access information from a variety of sources; Analyze and explore how messages are constructed whether through social media, print, verbal, visual or multi-media; Evaluate media's explicit and implicit messages against one's own ethical, moral and/or democratic principles; Express or create their own messages using a variety of media tools, digital or not; Participate in a global media culture.
- Media literacy is an alternative to censoring, boycotting or blaming the media (Share, Jolls & Thomson, 2007, p85).

The power of media literacy is its ability to inspire independent thinking and foster critical analysis. The ultimate goal of media education is to make wise choices possible. Embracing this philosophy, the Center for Media Literacy is committed to media education as an essential and empowering life-skill for the 21st century (CML, 2020a). The American Center of Media Literacy has developed a media literacy education package based on the five core concepts of media literacy and related key questions and provided it to teachers. This package is question-oriented and the teacher challenges the students' minds each time by introducing a familiar media and asking relevant questions. The main elements of this curriculum are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3.
The Main Elements of Media Literacy Curriculum in American schools

Elements	Items	
Goals & objectives	Goals	Objectives
	Develop critical thinking and media production skills needed to live fully in the 21st century media culture; The ultimate goal is to make wise choices possible.	Ability to intelligently analyze and evaluate messages using five core concepts and key questions of media literacy; Ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate messages In various forms of print and non-print media; Strengthening the skills to express opinions and communicate
Content	Concepts: The five core concepts of media literacy and key questions related to these concepts; Of course, these questions change according to the characteristics of students at different levels and their vocabulary, and Whatever Students are approaching higher levels of thinking, The questions become more complex. Skills: The five core skills of accessing, using, analyzing, evaluating, producing and Participating messages in a variety of media formats.	
Method of content organization & presentation	Cross-curriculum: in different areas of learning and at all levels, the teacher can use media literacy as a research-based learning way; Question-oriented: To present each concept, questions are designed that student gets the answer with help of his teacher.	
Learning methods and opportunities	Problem Solving, four-step inquiry, Questions and Answers, Discussion, Project, show movies, Exploration In the way of Courts, Participatory Learning	Shift a classroom from a knowledge store into a safe and fluid environment for gathering information so that students can explore, ask questions, experiment, and finally discover; Changing the role of the teacher from knowledge transmitter to facilitator of learning. The empowerment cycle includes four stages of awareness, analysis, reflection and action as the main learning process; Students use a variety of resources to gather information, change their previous knowledge, and update their knowledge structure; Students must use different media to do their homework and report their activities.
Evaluation	Evaluation objectives: • Modify the learning process. • Increase student awareness of their skills. There is more emphasis on learning process skills and less attention is paid to content knowledge; Assessment occurs during the learning process by the teacher and the learner. Of course, the emphasis is more on student self-assessment using a skill checklist; There was no scoring system in the proposed program, mainly due to the unofficial nature of the program, scoring is not the Purpose of evaluation.	

Source: (Namle, 2007; Scheibe & Rogow, 2008; Thoman & Jolls, 2005)

3-2. Juxtaposition and comparison

In this section and according to the findings of previous steps, the elements of curricula of media literacy education in the three countries are put together and the similarities and differences are identified:

3-2-1- Similarities and differences of objectives among the selected countries

The main purpose of media literacy education in all three countries is to help students become critical thinkers and active media audiences. In order to achieve this general goal, minor goals have been developed. In Canada, media literacy is one of the language skills, and in the United States, a new way of learning and communicating with new world. Therefore, in both countries, planning skills for message production are given special attention, while in Iran, this goal has been paid less attention. A goal that is less considered in Canada and Iran and more in United States, which attracted the attention of media literacy educators, is the strengthening spirit of questioning and expressing opinions to communicate effectively, as well as access to and use of the media messages. What is of interest in Iran, but not seen in the goals of the other two countries, is management of media productivity and methods of consumption. Also, reflective thinking about media literacy skills and strategies, i.e., the metacognition and understanding role of interrelated skills, is seen only in Canadian goals. The similarities and differences between objectives of media literacy education curricula in the selected countries are listed in Table 4.

Table 4.
Similarities and differences in the objectives of media literacy curricula in selected countries

Goals & objectives	Canada	Iran	USA
Understanding Media Texts(intelligently analyze)	*	*	*
Evaluate message	*	*	*
Access to messages in various forms of media	*	-	-
Ability to participate messages and express opinions	*	-	-
Create message by Student-Available Media in a very limited way		*	*
Creating Media Texts using a variety of available media forms.	*	-	*
Strengthening the skills to express opinions and communicate	-	-	*
Understanding Media Forms, Conventions and Techniques used in some familiar media forms.	*	-	-
Reflecting on Media Literacy Skills and Strategies	*	-	-
Determining the media consumption regime	-	*	-

In the content of the programs of all three countries, the greatest emphasis is on recognizing media messages and analyzing and evaluating them. In Canada and the United States, the emphasis on message production is more and in Iran very less. What seems to have caught the attention of curriculum planners in Iran is the skill of planning for optimal media consumption and media ethics. In contrast, in Canada the emphasis is on reflecting and recognizing different forms of media.(Table 5).

Table 5.
Similarities and differences in the content of media literacy curricula in selected countries

Content	Canada	Iran	USA
Five core concepts of media literacy and related key questions.	*	*	*
Concepts related to Understanding Media Texts.	*	*	*
The concept of media ethics.	-	*	-
The concept of Elements, characteristics, conventions and techniques used to create the message.	*	-	-
Skill of skills of accessing to media Messages.	-	-	*
Skill of Participating media Messages.	-	-	*
Skill of Systematic thinking/Critical Thinking.	*	*	*
Skill of analyzing & evaluating media Messages.	*	*	*
Skill of Planning for project implementation.(Creating media Messages)	*	*	*
Skill of Reflecting.	*	-	-
Skill of Planning for optimal media consumption	-	*	-

3-2-2- Similarities and differences in the organization of content

In organizing content of media literacy education programs, all three countries are different. In Iran and Canada, media literacy education is part of formal education offered through English language courses. In Iran, students are also given necessary training through media literacy. While the Media Literacy Education Program in the United States is a proposed and optional program, teachers have been asked to implement it as a new way of learning in their various classrooms. The content organization approach in Canada and the United States is a reciprocal curriculum, while in Iran it is a thematic course. In Canada and the United States, content is mostly organized as question-oriented and designed to teach purposeful skills, questions, and activities, while in Iran, much of the content is presented to students in the form of text. In the United States and Canada, the goals of media literacy are being repeated at all levels and are expanding as students grow. But in Iran, this course is taught mainly in high secondary schools. The similarities and differences in

the organization of content of media literacy education curricula in the selected countries are listed in Table 6.

Table 6.
Similarities and differences in the content of media literacy curricula in selected countries

Method of content organization & presentation	Canada	Iran	USA
Prescribed and required curriculum	*	*	
Cross Curriculum	*	-	*
(Spiral (repetition at all grades and expansion of learning objectives	*	-	*
Horizontal organization	*	-	*
Based on the question	*	-	*
Media literacy is part of language skills	*	-	-
.Media literacy is a research-oriented way of learning	-	-	*
Subject-oriented: (In the form of a separate course entitled Media Thinking and.Literacy in a Grade).	-	*	-

3-2-3- Similarities and differences between teaching and learning methods

Learning methods are very similar in the three countries. In these countries, problem-solving, exploration, film screening, question-and-answer, discussion, and enforcement are used in the form of judicial courts and projects. Emphasis is also placed on group learning and critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. But there are also differences among these countries. In Canada, students are asked to use metacognitive methods to express their mental processes and interaction of each language skill in understanding and creating meaning. Also, a using pre-organization method, students are helped to activate their previous knowledge and produce new knowledge by changing structure of their mind knowledge. However, in the United States, the emphasis is on the use of media literacy as a new way of learning, and students must be able to gather information from a variety of sources and create the knowledge. Thus, in the US curriculum, the teacher is more likely to facilitate learning, and students report using different forms of multimedia on their learning activities in an empowerment cycle and gathering information from various sources. In Iran, education is more teacher-centered than student-centered, and even some of the content is presented to students through lecturing (Table 7).

Table 7.
Similarities and Differences in Learning Methods of media literacy curricula in selected countries

Learning methods and opportunities	Canada	Iran	USA
Pre-organizer	*	-	-
Metacognition	*	-	-
Discussion	*	*	*
Participatory Learning	*	-	*
question and answer	*	*	*
Project	*	*	*
Inquiry	*	*	*
show movies or familiar media	*	*	*
Exploration In the way of Courts	*	*	*
Problem Solving	*	*	*
Collect Required information from a variety of sources	-	-	*
four-step inquiry(Empowerment Spiral)	-	-	*
team members Teaching	-	*	-
Lecture	-	*	-

3-2-4- Similarities and differences in evaluation methods

In all three countries, the main purpose of evaluation is to provide feedback to the learner to improve the learning process. In Iran and the United States, self-assessment is emphasized. In Iran and Canada, various sources are used to gather information for evaluation. In Canada, one of the goals of curriculum is to evaluate the curriculum, but this goal is not seen in the curricula of Iran and the United States. In the United States, process skills are emphasized and content knowledge is given less attention, and because the program is informal, the goal is not to evaluate the score. While in Iran and Canada, one of the goals of evaluation is to score. In addition, in Canada, evaluation is qualitative and in Iran, quantitative. In Canada, more evaluation is done by the teacher, in the United States by the student, and in Iran by the teacher and the student (Table 8).

Table 8.
Similarities and differences between objectives and methods of evaluating of media literacy curricula in selected countries

Objectives and tools and methods of evaluation	Canada	Iran	USA
The main goal is to provide feedback to the learner and improve the learning process.	*	*	*
Emphasis on process evaluation	*	*	*
Improving the curriculum as one of the goals of evaluation	*	-	-
Collect Evaluation required information From various sources	*	*	-
Evaluation of content knowledge	*	*	-
Evaluation scale	qualitative	quantitative	-
Self-assessment by the learner		*	*
Evaluation by the teacher	*	*	-

4. Conclusion

The aim of present study was to compare experiences of leading and active countries in media literacy education to students, comparing programs of the three countries of Canada, Iran and the United States. The findings show that in Canada, media literacy is taught along with English and as one of the language skills and as a formal and interactive curriculum. In the United States, there is no separate subject in school curricula for media literacy education; instead, various centers provide a Media Literacy Kit to teachers. The educational approach in this package is a reciprocal curriculum and a research-based approach, and at the same time media literacy is considered as a new way of learning. The main goal of media literacy in the United States is to equip students with the ability to search and discover critical information and thinking. In Iran, since 2016, media literacy education with a special curriculum entitled "Thought and Media Literacy" has officially entered in all fields of high secondary schools.

In the educational goals of all three countries, message analysis and evaluation component has received most attention. Also, in Iran, less attention has been paid to message production and more attention to media consumption. In Canada, more attention has been paid to metacognition and the relationship between skills. U.S. media literacy educators have focused on the components of message use, questioning, and critical expression, while they are not part of the educational goals of the two countries.

In all the three countries, content of media literacy education is tailored to goals, but the way content is presented and organized is very different. In Iran, some part of content is provided to students in writing, while in the two other countries the presentation method is more question-oriented and activity-oriented. In Iran, this subject is mainly offered on a thematic basis, but the use of a reciprocal curriculum approach and repetition of grades in other two countries has provided a sufficient opportunity to address all objectives and deep learning and a sense for students to be able to their media literacy skills in the process of learning other subjects.

There are also many similarities between teaching and learning methods among the three countries. In Canada, pre-organizational and metacognitive methods are emphasized, and in the United States, the cycle of empowering and gathering information from a variety of sources is emphasized. Student-centered learning in Iran is less important than in the other two countries, and the teacher is often the transmitter of knowledge, while curricula of the other two countries considered the teacher as a guide and facilitator of learning. In addition, similarities and differences

in evaluation were observed among the three countries. In Canada, teachers evaluate more accurately and completely than in the other two countries, while in the United States, the evaluation is made only by students without any grade rating. In Iran, efforts have been made to involve students and parents in evaluation. In the three countries, the teacher's emphasis is on skills assessment. In general, it can be said that most similarities among the selected countries were observed in learning methods and most of differences were found in the organization of content.

Some of the findings of this study are consistent with previous research findings. For example, the finding that there is a regular and targeted program for teaching media literacy in Canada in the formal curriculum is similar to findings of Nasiri and Aghili (2012) and Khazaei et al. (2017). The second similarity is about this finding that there is no formal curriculum for media literacy education in schools of the United States. This finding is confirmed by Falsafi (2014), Hochmann and Pointz (2017) and Escort (2018) who also found that nonprofits play an important role in teaching media literacy in the United States.

The finding that in the three countries more attention is paid to the component of message analysis is also confirmed by Falsafi (2014) and Hochmann and Pointz (2017). It seems this is because of the propaganda of media and need for correct and conscious recognition to preserve national identity. The finding that less attention is to message production in Iran is consistent with Kiarsi's findings (2016). The reason is time shortage for training of this subject. On the one hand, attention to media literacy in the United States as a new way of learning is quite logical; because the current world is constantly changing, and at this era, people need to learn lifelong learning methods, because the purpose of learning is not to maintain "changing knowledge." In both Canada and the United States, the ability to read (understand media) is as important as the ability to write it, but in Iran, because the media literacy education is taught as a subject and in a limited time, there is not enough time to pay attention to production of media content.

On the other hand, children and adolescents interacting with media start doing this from early years of life, and therefore secondary education is too late to teach media literacy. Also, deep and meaningful learning of media literacy and its four skills requires constant learning at different educational levels. In Iran, media literacy courses are offered on a disciplinary basis, whereas in the other two countries, the interdisciplinary curriculum approach and media literacy are considered to be intertwined with other language skills and thinking skills. Separating media literacy makes it impossible for students to understand its connection and integration with other skills. Therefore, according to research findings, the following are suggested to policymakers of the Iranian educational system**:**

- Media literacy education, like reading and writing skills, should be a continuous and gradual process from an early age and continue at a higher level,
- To nurture a creative, dynamic, and e-citizen generation, special attention should be paid to the skill of media messages production in various forms,
- The process of teaching media literacy with a reciprocal curriculum approach should be developed in different curricular topics in a spiral manner and at different educational levels according to the mental development of learners,
- Pay more attention to the creative role of learners in teaching methods than ever before,
- In media literacy education, more attention should be paid to mental processes and skills, and evaluation from related skills should be increased.

References

CML. (2020a), About-CML, *Center for Media Literacy*, USA, Retrieved March 1, from: http://www.medialit.org/about-cml

CML (2020b), *Media Literacy in the USA*, Center for Media Literacy, USA, Retrieved March 1, from: https://www.medialit.org/reading-room/media-literacy-usa

Edselect, (2020). Site Information, *Edselect: Educational Web Resoursec*, Retrieved March 1, from: edselect.com/site-information.

Hoechsmann, M. & Poyntz, S. (2017). Learning and Teaching Media Literacy in Canada: Embracing and Transcending Eclecticism. *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education, 12* (1), 4-16. Available at: . https://doi.org/10.31390/taboo.12.1.04

Hoseyni Pakdehi, Alireza; Shobeyri, Hosnieh Al-sadat (2017). Media Literacy Education in Cyberspace A case study of Canadian website "Media Smarts" and Iranian website "Media Literacy", *Quarterly Journal of New Media Studies*, 3(9), 31-76, [in Persian].

Iran's National Association for Media Literacy. (2018, May 21). Iranian Media Literacy Association Introduction, *Iran's National Association for Media Literacy,* Retrieved March 1, from: http://mliteracy.ir , [in Persian].

Iskurt, P. (2018). *Comparative Analysis of Media Literacy Networks in Europe and in the United States*, *Master Thesis* for New media and society in Europe, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium

Jolls, T. (2008).*Literacy for the 21st Century*, CML MediaLit Kit, Center for Media Literacy: USA.

Khazaei, F; Saeedi, Z & Khazaei, U .A. (2017). *Comparative Study of Status and Necessity of Media Literacy in the Curriculum; a Qualitative Study*, Paper Presented at the First Global Conference on Iran and World New Researches in Psychology and Educational Sciences, Law and Social Sciences, Shiraz, Iran,18 May 2017, Available at: https://www.civilica.com/Paper-PESLSBTM04-PESLSBTM04_401.html , [in Persian].

Kiyarsi, S & Kiyarsi, A. (2016). Investigating the Position of Critical Media Literacy in the Iranian Education System, *Journal of New Advances in Behavioral Sciences*, 2(11), 17-37, [in Persian].

Media Literacy Now.(2020), Who We Are, *Media Literacy Now*, Retrieved March 1, from: https://medialiteracynow.org/about-us/

Madandar Arani, A., & Kakia, L. (2014). *Comparative Education: New Perspectives*, Tehran: Aieezh, [in Persian].

Medialiteracyweek, (2020).What is Media Literacy Week, *Medial Iteracy Week,* Retrieved March 1, from: https://www.medialiteracyweek.ca/about/what-is-media-literacy-week.

MediaSmarts.(2020). Our Mission & Beliefs, *Canada's center for digital and media literacy*, Retrieved March 1, from: http://mediasmarts.ca/about-us/our-mission-beliefs

NAMLE, (2007). Core Principles of Media Literacy Education in the United States, *National Association for Media Literacy Education*, Retrieved March 1, from: https://namle.net/publications/core-principles

NAMLE, (2019).SNAPSHOT 2019: The State of Media Literacy Education in the U.S., *National Association for Media Literacy Education*, Retrieved March 1, from: https://namle.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SOML_FINAL.pdf

NAMLE, (2020), Media Literacy Defined, *National Association for Media Literacy Education*, Retrieved March 1, from: https://namle.net/publications/media-literacy-definitions/

Nasiri, Bahareh & Aghili, Seyed Vahid (2012). A study on media literacy education in Canada & Japan, *Journal of Educational Innovation*, 11(1), 137-160, [in Persian]

OERP (2017). *Teacher's guidebook of Thinking and Media Literacy*, Tehran: General Office for Supervision of Educational Material Publishing and Distribution. Available at: http://www.darsiran.ir/pdf/teacherguid-thinking10-96.pdf, [in Persian].

OERP (2019). *Thinking and Media Literacy*, Tehran: General Office for Supervision of Educational Material Publishing and Distribution, [in Persian].

Ontario Ministry of Education, (2006). The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Language, *Ontario Ministry of Education*, Retrieved March 1 , from: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca.

Phalsaphy, G. (2014). Comparative Approach to Media Literacy in Developing Countries, *Journal of Media Studies*, 9(24), 159-174, [in Persian]

Potter, W.J. (2008). *Media Literacy*: Thousand Oaks: U.S.

Project Look Sharp.(2020), Our Mission, *Project Look Sharp*, Ithaca College, USA, Retrieved March 1, from: https://www.projectlooksharp.org/about-us.php

Rochester, Ramonia .R.(2017). *A Critical Comparative Study of Media Literacy in Australia, England, and the United States*, Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Florida Atlantic University, Available at: https://fau.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fau 3A39789.

Share, J. & Jolls, T. & Thoman, E. (2007). *Five Key Questions That Can Change the World: Lesson Plans for Media Literacy*, CML MediaLit Kit, Center for Media Literacy, USA.

Scheibe, C. & Rogow, F. (2008). *Basic Ways to Integrate Media Literacy and Critical Thinking into Any Curriculum*, 3rd Ed, Project Look Sharp, Ithaca College: Williams Hall, Available at: https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Resources 202/12BasicWaysBooklet.pdf

Thoman, E. & Jolls, T.(2005).Literacy For the 21 Century, An Overview & Orientation Guide To Media Literacy Education, *Center for Media Literacy*, Retrieved March 1, from: www.medialit.org/medialitkit.

Wilson, C. (2019), *Media and Information Literacy: Challenges and Opportunities for the World of Education*, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's IdeaLab, Available at: https://en.ccunesco.ca/-/media/Files/Unesco/Resources/2019/11/MediaAndInformationLiteracy.pdf.

Wilson, C; Grizzle, A; Tuazon, R; Akyempong, K& Cheung, C. (2011). *Media and information literacy curriculum for teachers*, UNESCO: Printed in France.