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NURSING AND MIDWIFERY IN IRAN*

I. INTRODUCTION

The changing pattern of patient care coupled with scientific advances in medicine and technology demands a new thinking and planning. With the increase of curative and preventive health facilities the demands of the public for the use of these services is increasing. Therefore the burden of nursing services both in the hospitals and other health fields are also increasing.

The shortage of medical and nursing personnel with the improvement of medical and public health care has created a great problem in all fields of nursing education and nursing services.

Hitherto in order to acquaint the reader with the nursing and midwifery history in Iran a brief summary is given.

II. BRIEF HISTORY OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY IN IRAN

The existence of nursing and midwifery is not more than half a century in Iran. The establishment of nursing education in Iran was the work of an American Missionary Hospital in 1915. In 1916 this Mission established the

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first nursing school with a three-year course of study in the city of Tabriz. The late development of nursing education in Iran, was mostly due to the status of women, whose position as in many other countries, was mostly confined to the home and also lack of freedom.

In 1935 the women of Iran with the special attention of the Royal family were unveiled by government order, and gradually improvement in the status of women resulted in an insatiable desire to receive higher education. As a result, at the end of World War two, the nursing school of Reza-Shah-Kabir and the Royal Ashraf Nursing School were established, and gradually with the return of the Iranian nurses graduated abroad, the nursing profession was recognized.

In 1942 a nursing section charged with responsibility for developing a public health nursing program for the country was established in the department of public health of the Ministry of Health. To provide a general program, and in order to meet the demands for nursing education and services on a national level, the nursing section in 1955 was reorganized into a Division of Nursing in the Ministry of Health. In order to present a sound program of action for the ultimate purpose of improving and safeguarding the care of sick, the nurses in Iran held a grand Nursing Conference in 1956 with the representation of nurses from most countries. In its discussions it was recommended that all candidates entering nursing schools must have 12th grade diploma. With this step a raise in the standard of nursing education and simultaneously nursing services was foreseen. To present reporting 15⁽¹⁾ schools of nursing with a 3-year program and 41 schools of Behyari with a two-year program and 3 midwifery schools have been established. In addition, Iran at present has two Colleges

(1) Details of the statistics in regards to number, location, capacity and other details are included in the annexes II, III and IV.

of Nursing which have been established in 1965 and 1968 in Teheran and Shiraz respectively and which offer a B.S. degree.

III. THE NEEDS IN NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

At the national level the country is faced with the shortage of nurses and midwives. A recent survey shows that 2906 nurses and 4531 Behyars are needed to cover the 45000 bed capacity by 1970 alone, in health institutions belonging to the Ministry of Health. This shortage of nurse power can be seen throughout the country in private, semi-private and governmental health activities.

In order to overcome this shortage, establishment of more nursing schools and recruitment of more candidates for nursing is recommended. No doubt, in increasing the number of schools of nursing we are faced with the shortage of qualified personnel, such as teachers, directors and supervisors.

IV PROBLEMS; PRESENT AND ENVISAGED

An evaluation of the nursing situation in Iran shows the significant progress which nursing education has made in the past 20 years. While this outstanding progress is encouraging, there remain many more problems to be solved. They could be summarized as follows:

1. There is a shortage of qualified teaching staff in professional and practical schools of nursing all over the country, and the few nurse teachers who are prepared each year cannot meet the great need of schools for teachers.
2. Clinical areas of practice for nursing students are not always satisfactory in regard to the quality of nursing services personnel, and facilities.

3. Nursing text books in the language of the country are very few and the students' knowledge of foreign languages such as English is not sufficient for them to use nursing and scientific text books in other languages.

4. Graduate nurses not infrequently are used for other services than nursing. This hinders the improvement of the nursing services and affects the education of nursing students.

5. Nursing registration and licensing by law is non-existent.

6. Refresher courses and in-service education programmes for nurses in various organizations are given very rarely. This means that nursing students often have to be supervised by those whose knowledge of nursing techniques is outdated.

7. The government salary scale for nurses compared with other professions considering the working hours of a nurse and a teacher is low, consequently most nurses are forced to have two jobs in order to keep up an adequate standard of living. This affects the quality of nursing service which in turn affects nursing education.

V NEW PROGRAMMES

Although tremendous feats in nursing and midwifery have been accomplished, there is still a long way to go in order to meet the increasing demands.

VI WAYS AND MEANS TO MEET THE NEEDS

In order to meet the needs, the Ministry of Health has encouraged other organizations whether private or semi-private in training of nursing and auxiliary personnel. The goal is to extend the health services to the rural area. Although with the establishment of health corps these services in the

past several years the rural areas have been covered in some extent, the Nursing Department has also worked towards the problem by short and long term plans for the improvement of nursing quality and quantity.

1. The Short-Term Program

i) To divert some of the auxiliary nursing schools to midwifery in order to cover the need of maternal and child health services specially in rural areas.

ii) Along with this also the program of training for 6th grade girls from the rural area has been developed and the duration of training is six months.

iii) In-service education for nurses, midwives and auxiliary personnel in public health and family planning.

iv) In-service education for instructors of the schools of nursing and auxiliaries.

v) In-service education for nurses working in psychiatric hospitals.

vi) In-service education for working in rehabilitation centres.

2. Long-Term Programmes and Plans

The existing educational and training programmes and plans have been arranged for the improvement of the quality of nursing care, as well as increasing the number of trained nurses and midwives.

The following are related activities in this regard:

i) The establishment of a degree programme in nursing (High Institute of Nursing) in an attempt to prepare nurse instructors, as well as those qualified for responsible positions in nursing.

ii) The establishment of a post-basic nursing education programme is to give three year graduate nurses the opportunity to further their education towards a degree in nursing, in the area of nursing administration, supervision and Public Health Nursing.

iii) In an attempt to attract more nurses to function as bed side nurses, there has been a rise in salary for those working as bed side nurses. This includes both nurses working for the Ministry of Health as well as those working in the University hospitals.

iv) The establishment of a new midwifery school for the improvement of maternal and child care and family planning.

3. Future Programmes and Plans

i) Planning and research in different aspects of nursing for the purpose of recognizing nursing needs and problems in this country.

ii) Establishment of a Public Health Nursing programme in the school of public health in the University of Teheran.

iii) To study the possibilities within the country for setting up short-term Post-Basic courses in different aspects of nursing within the country, as a means of preventing the loss of nursing personnel who may not return when sent abroad on scholarships.

iv) To get an approval for nurse registration laws for professional safety and security of nurses.

v) To add an additional short-term course at the end of the degree programme in order to prepare interested as well as capable graduates for teaching and administrative and public health nursing positions.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

1. The improvement and raise of salaries for nurses and midwives in all organizations throughout the country.
2. Establishing a publishing committee in the Division of Nursing or in the Iranian Nurses Association for writing as well as translating books and articles.
3. Awarding grants and scholarships to nurses interested in journalism and book writing.
4. Continued effort on getting the approval for nurse registration law.
5. To allocate government grants as well as grants by WHO for research in nursing in Iran.
6. To omit the Michigan English test for candidates who are sent abroad.
7. Establishment of other services in the hospitals, in order to save nurses time and energy for the improvement of the quality of nursing care.

ANNEX I

Definitions

- Nurse - A nurse is a person who is a graduate from a three-year recognized school of nursing (In Iran or outside of country)
- Nurse - Midwife - is a person who is a graduate from a three-year recognized school of nursing and 12 months to 18 months of midwifery training
- Midwife - Is a person who is graduate from a recognized school of midwifery (In Iran or outside of this country)
- Behyar - Is a person who is a graduate of a two-year recognized Behyari school
- Behyar Midwife - is a person who is a graduate of a two-year recognized Behyar Midwifery school
- Rural Midwife - is a person who has completed minimum six months of training

ANNEX II

Existing Nursing Schools in Iran
Year 1970

| No. | Names of Schools | Location |
|-----|---------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Reza-Shah-Kabir | Teheran |
| 2 | Ashraf Pahlavi | Teheran |
| 3 | High Institute of Nursing | Tcheran |
| 4 | National University | Teheran |
| 5 | American Mission | Tabriz |
| 6 | Jorjani | Meshed |
| 7 | Namazi | Shiraz |
| 8 | National Iranian Oil Co. | Abadan |
| 9 | Razi | Kerman |
| 10 | 25th Shahrivar | Rasht |
| 11 | 25th Shahrivar | Kermanshah |
| 12 | University of Tabriz | Tabriz |
| 13 | Esphahan University | Esphahan |
| 14 | Mehraiene | Esphahan |
| 15 | Jondishahpour | Ahwaz |
| 16 | Meshed University | Meshed |

ANNEX III

Existing Pehyari Schools in Iran
Year 1970

| No. | Names of the Schools | Location |
|-----|----------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Apadana | Shiraz |
| 2 | Army | Teheran |
| 3 | Esphahan | Esphahan |
| 4 | Queen Phalavi Foundation | Teheran |
| 5 | Buyeh | Gorgan |
| 6 | 25th Shahrivar | Abadan |
| 7 | 25th Shahrivar | Esphahan |
| 8 | 25th Shahrivar (midwifery) | Babol |
| 9 | 25th Shahrivar | Khoramabad |
| 10 | 25th Shahrivar | Rasht |
| 11 | 25th Shahrivar (midwifery) | Zahedan |
| 12 | 25th Shahrivar | Rezaieh |
| 13 | 25th Shahrivar | Hamedan |
| 14 | Mission Hospital | Esphahan |
| 15 | Reza Pahlavi Hospital | Teheran |
| 16 | Tabriz | Tabriz |
| 17 | Pahlavi University | Shiraz |
| 18 | National University | Teheran |

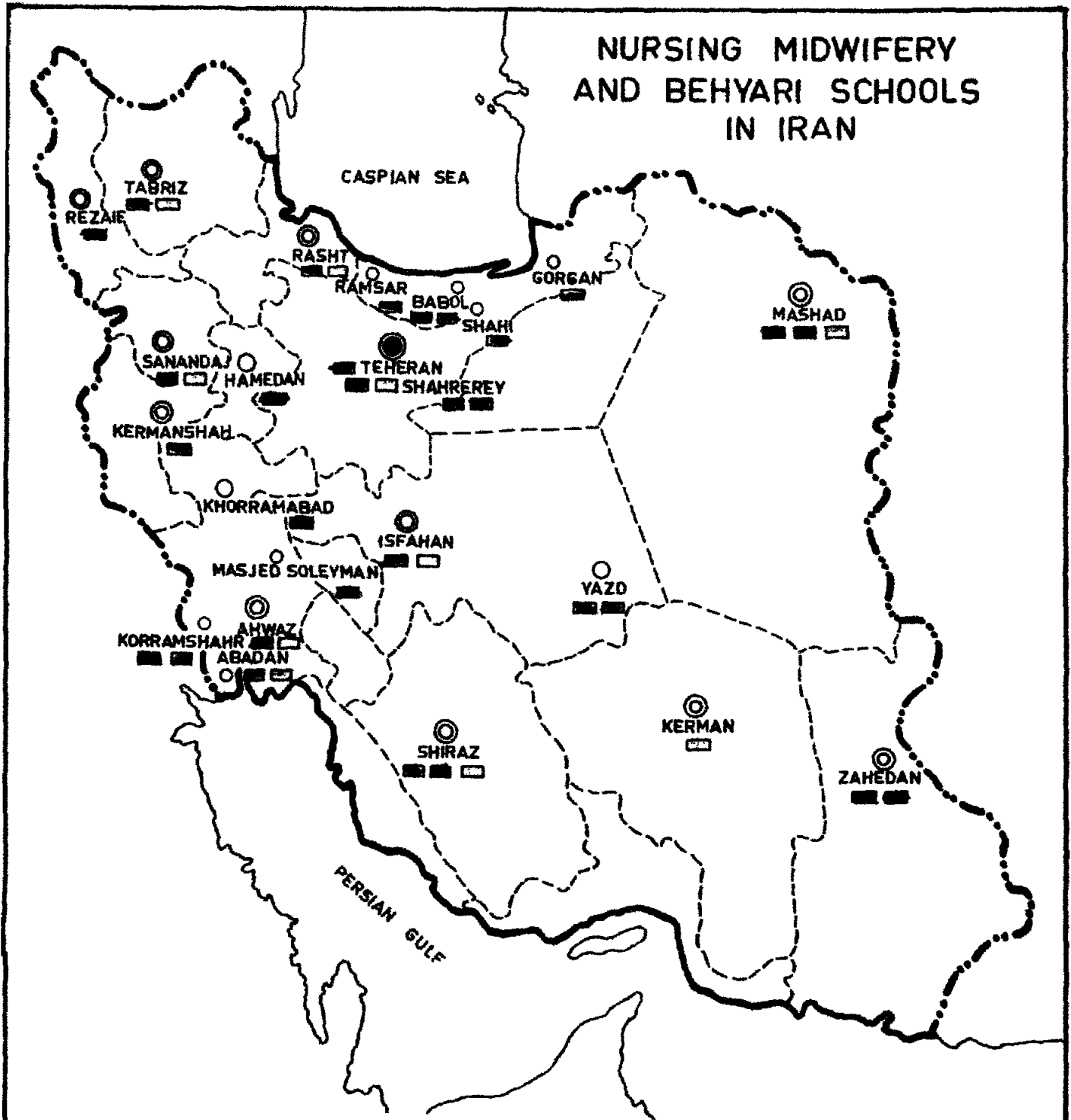
| No. | Names of Schools | Location |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 19 | Razi | Teheran |
| 20 | Reza Pahlavi | Esphahan |
| 21 | Mashed University | Meshed |
| 22 | Teheran University | Teheran |
| 23 | Ali-Reza Pahlavi (midwifery) | Rey-Teheran |
| 24 | Borzouieh | Tcheran |
| 25 | Reza Phalavi | Shahi |
| 26 | Shiraz (midwifery & Hospital) | Shiraz |
| 27 | National Iranian Oil Co. | Masjed-Soleiman |
| 28 | Farah | Tehoran |
| 29 | Farah Pahlavi | Ramsar |
| 30 | Farahnaz Pahlavi | Teheran |
| 31 | Firouzgar | Teheran |
| 32 | Karoun | Ahwaz |
| 33 | American Joint | Teheran |
| 34 | Kordestan (midwifery) | Sanandaj |
| 35 | Kian (midwifery) | Khoramsnahr |
| 36 | Ferdousi | Meshed |
| 37 | Mehre | Teheran |
| 38 | Micaghieh | Teheran |
| 39 | Nourbakhsh | Meshed |
| 40 | Yazadfar (midwifery) | Yazd |
| 41 | Honarestan Dokhtaran | Teheran |

ANNEX IV

Existing School of Midwifery & Rural Training
Year 1970

| No. | Name of School | Type of school | Location |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1 | University of Teheran | Post graduate | Teheran |
| 2 | University of Meshed | Post graduate | Meshed |
| 1 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Rey, Teheran |
| 2 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Kerman |
| 3 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Zahedan |
| 4 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Meshed |
| 5 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Shiraz |
| 6 | Rural Midwifery | Rural | Western Azarbayajan |






NURSING MIDWIFERY AND BEHYARI SCHOOLS IN IRAN



LEGEND

- CAPITAL
- CENTER OF PROVINCE
- GOVERNORATE GENERAL
- CENTER OF COUNTY

LEGEND

-  SCHOOL OF NURSING
-  SCHOOL OF MIDWIFERY
-  SCHOOL OF BEHYARI
-  SCHOOL FOR BEHYAR MIDWIVES
-  SCHOOL FOR RURAL MIDWIVES