



**Social Desk**

In today's Iranian society, there is a growing emphasis on the importance of critical dialogue and constructive criticism. Criticism is defined as the act of pointing out negative characteristics, weaknesses, and drawbacks of someone or something in order to distinguish right from wrong. It is important to note that criticism should not be confused with slander or nagging. Criticism plays a vital role in the development of society. A critical society is a society that progresses towards development, and criticism is considered one of the essential characteristics of a society that has experienced growth. Criticism aids in social, economic, political, and cultural reforms, and provides the means for progress and mental peace within a society. However, it is essential to remember that criticism must be conducted with etiquette and manners that many prominent thinkers have spoken about and written books on.

Mahmood Sariolqalam, a development researcher and a faculty member of Shahid Beheshti University, has written about some of the characteristics of constructive criticism. According to him, the purpose of criticism is to better understand and accurately comprehend a subject. Commenting, on the other hand, does not have a specific audience, whereas criticism is intended for correcting the thoughts, words, and actions of others. A critic must criticize a person's text, words, and thoughts, not their character. They should raise questions and new angles in their critical text as much as possible. A critic must express themselves without being emotional or angry in tone. Politeness and honesty should precede criticisms. Intellectual and scientific criticism should be written and made public, but behavior criticism should be conveyed privately to individuals. Sariolqalam emphasizes that having a different point of view is not criti-

cism. Rather, documents and facts are the basis of criticism. Criticism gains credibility in a society where people who are experts in their field engage in it. The basis of scientific and critical work is also in dealing with details, and to the extent that criticisms are general, their credibility is reduced. A person who does not specialize in a subject and has not produced and published texts cannot criticize scientifically, and a person who becomes a scientific critic has a civic duty to respond to criticism. According to him, the critic uses phrases such as "I guess," "I imagine," "It seems to me," "The evidence shows that," and "Statistics confirm this." In criticism and debate, the basis of argument is scientific research. Despite this rich cultural heritage, there are many criticisms towards our society today, both from officials and people, including experts, regarding the lack of proper critical atmosphere and constructive criticism.

A clear example of this situation can be found in social networks and virtual pages. In many cases, everyone speaks their own words and rarely listens to others' opinions. When it comes to expressing shortcomings and weaknesses and criticizing, the speech is often laced with sarcasm and insults or emotional and superficial words. The response to such statements is usually negative, such as blocking or deleting the speaker or stigmatizing and accusing those with opposing opinions. According to many experts, these virtual networks are an extension of real life in Iran. Therefore, it is crucial to cultivate a culture of constructive criticism and create an environment where criticism is encouraged but conducted with respect and professionalism. Opening the gates of criticism in any society is a vanguard that will expand social and political movements and bring more colorful and wider spectrums of different social and political groups into the game of determining their own

destiny. As Mohammad Aminian, a researcher in the field of social sciences, notes, "A society that does not consider itself in need of criticism and claims unquestionable welfare in its current state, its downfall has already begun, and it will fall into the valleys of banality and stagnation." Abbas Taqizadeh, a researcher, journalist, and communication expert, suggests that creating a suitable critical atmosphere is easier in some classes through using diverse and new teaching methods such as cooperation, grouping, and teamwork. This encourages students to express their opinions and try different solutions while facilitating tolerance for listening to opposing opinions. He stresses that development and progress cannot be achieved without constructive criticism, which reduces the cost of development, eliminates trial and error, and promotes public cooperation and participation in the development processes.

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\*This article is excerpted and translated from a longer piece published in *Ettela'at Newspaper* on Thursday, April 4, 2023.

# Iran faces demographic shift as it rapidly ages

**EXCLUSIVE**

However, given the sensitivity of the issue, the presence of higher officials at the ministerial level is imperative. Without their participation in the primary meeting, nothing substantive can be accomplished. Abdollahzadeh believes that the National Document for the Elderly has ambitious goals. The document defines six primary objectives, 17 strategies, and 130 executive policies that institutions must execute. However, the implementation of each policy and strategy requires money. Since the secretariat is based in the

country's welfare organization, it lacks an independent budget, and no credit line has been considered for it. Iran's aging population presents significant challenges for the country including increased healthcare demand, social services, and a reduced workforce. The government must take measures to support this population and ensure that they receive the necessary care and services. However, this requires a national effort that extends beyond the SNCE. All organizations must be involved and provide the necessary budget and resources to implement the policies and strategies out-

lined in the National Document for the Elderly. Abdollahzadeh says working in the field of aging and even adapting to aging requires cultural development. People should accept that they will most likely spend a decade of their life being old and senile, and this is an inescapable reality. Therefore, every element of society must be prepared for some of its members to get old because old age is a time for rest for individuals. To lay

the groundwork in various areas of society, it is suggested to seek the valuable counsel of the elderly. It is worth remembering that an individual who has typically labored for 30 years and is over 60 years old can no longer engage in highly productive or strenuous activities. In old age, individuals want to see the fruit of their years of labor, and the only way to achieve this is by strengthening the country's social welfare system. All citizens should learn from a young age to save and purchase various insurances,

as they can later utilize supplementary and disability insurances in their old age. Iran's aging population is an urgent issue that demands immediate attention. The government must act to address the needs of this population and guarantee that they receive the necessary care and services. By doing so, the country can ensure that its elderly citizens receive the respect and dignity they deserve in their old age. Moreover, it is essential to raise awareness and educate the public about the challenges facing the elderly and the need for a cultural change in the way we view aging. The stigma-

tization of aging and the elderly is a global problem, and Iran is no exception. Ageism is a pervasive issue that can have serious consequences for the health and well-being of older adults. By promoting a culture of respect and inclusion for the elderly, Iran can set an example for other nations and contribute to a more equitable and compassionate world. The challenges facing Iran's aging population are complex and multifaceted, but by working together and taking proactive steps to address them, the country can ensure that its elderly citizens can live their later years feeling dignified, secure, and fulfilled.



**IRAN READS**

## Finland is still the happiest country



**SCIENCE ALERT** - Finland has been the happiest country on Earth for the past six years, according to the World Happiness Survey. Finland comes out top, followed by Denmark and Iceland. Just why Finns are happier than others comes down to a number of factors including lower income inequality (most importantly, the difference between the highest paid and the lowest paid), high social support, freedom to make decisions, and low levels of corruption. Finland also has other attributes that may help people feel happier. It has a highly decentralized publicly funded health-care system and only a very small private health sector. This is far more effective and efficient than some alternatives used in other countries. Public transport is reliable and affordable, and Helsinki airport is ranked as the best in northern Europe.

## British 12-year-old charged with murder of a social worker



**THE GUARDIAN** - A 12-year-old boy has been charged with the murder of a "warm, loving and dedicated" social worker who was run over by her own car in Sheffield. Marcia Grant, 60, was killed when she was hit by the vehicle outside her home in the Greenhill area of the city at about 7.10pm on Wednesday. The boy, who cannot be identified because of his age, was found by police a short time later and arrested on suspicion of murder and possession of a bladed article. On Friday, South Yorkshire police announced that the boy had been charged with murder. He will appear before Sheffield youth court on Saturday.