A REVIEW OF THE EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF WESTERN SCHOOLS

Mahdi Mahdvipanah,
Member of Scientific Board of Islamic Education Department of Iran University of Medical Sciences

Mohammad Ali Ghaderi,
Faculty member of Islamic studies department, Iran-Zahedan University of Medical Science

Abstract. Humanistic schools of thought set different educational objectives for human beings since they offer specific depiction of human, world and even God. Except from the fact that these schools deprive their followers’ talents from flourishing, they may lead their followers in adopting a kind of view that tends to manipulate or exploit other humans or the whole world due to the lack of liable belief in God and afterlife. They may tend to manipulate the nature and human beings to the extent that causes the destruction of them both. In addition to review the educational objectives of western schools of thought, the paper presented here finds that these schools of thought mostly educate their followers to be liable to the society, conscience, law and themselves though comparing these schools of thought with monotheistic religions’ approach can make one think that these kind of schools can potentially be harmful to human beings.

Keywords: humanistic schools, western schools, thinking, educational goals.

Introduction. The monotheistic religions by placing God as the center of human efforts and defining the relationship between God and mankind, direct the educational objectives in order to satisfy God and seek to satisfy the material needs of human beings as well this way; this way of thinking value human beings and even animals as God’s creatures and they should be respected due to this fact.

In this approach, God forbids exploiting a group of humans by the others to satisfy their needs or greed because all human beings are God’s creature and one is bound to respect one’s own kind due to this. In contrary, humanistic schools of thought would not suggest a reasonable motivation to respect other humans or animals due to their lack of belief in God and resurrection; they respect the others only because of their manipulative view and to gain social or personal advantages. This thinking can ultimately increase the likelihood of violating the rights of other humans and communities.

Another feature of monotheistic schools is that, based on its universal definition of human being, they try to meet all human being’s needs and cultivate all human being’s dimensions and capacities.

However, humanistic educational schools are incapable of understanding all the human potentialities and dimensions for various reasons such as the limitation of science and knowledge about man and the world, personal and personality traits, and the cultural features of the founders of these schools; and thus each one of these schools has adopted a specific view towards human beings and they suggest different methods and ideas for educating them.

Further, the views of a number of Western schools in the field of education and its objectives will be studied.

1. The Idealism School. The idealism is the oldest school in Western culture and historically dates back to Plato’s time in ancient Greece. The idealism is sometimes called conceptualism and the originality of imagination. It justifies and interprets phenomena based on what is attributed to the spirit and the imagination and considers wisdom or mind or spirit prior to matter (Osman, 2000, p. P. 29). They believe that thoughts are the only reality, they generally do not believe in what is perceived or felt via senses, and they think of the whole world as a fantasy, and they say that we believe in nothing else but our existing reality and a series of mental images. (Amoozgar, 2000, p. 90). Today, the school of idealism has several branches which can be named as platonic idealism, religious idealism and neo-idealism. Some of the most famous scholars in the field of idealism are Socrates, Plato, Augustine and Descartes (Ozman, 2000, p.30). The idealism’s suggested education involves several goals, the most important of which are the followings:

A: self-actualization

Education in this school first of all deals with self-actualization and idealism basically emphasizes on the importance of self-affirmation in education, they believe that real education is only realized by the individual himself. Therefore, self-actualization is the ultimate goal of idealism’s education (Shariatmadari, 1996, p. 175).

B: moral character development

One of the other educational objectives of idealism is moral character development, it generally agrees that education objectives should not only emphasize on mental development, but also encourage scholars to concentrate on what is relevant to sustainable values.

From the religious idealism point of view, education is the process of revealing truth, and thus a lot of truths are related to God indirectly, education is the path to salvation. Many idealism scholars believe that moral character development is a sign of the growth of thinking and profound activities. The idealism scholars say that moving toward the essence of God is the result of morality, as Augustus believed in wisdom and to move to wisdom (God) in his opinion was the highest moral principle (Ozman, 2000, p. 50).

Thus idealism emphasizes strongly on moral character development as one of the requirement of an appropriate education.

C: finding truth

One of the main emphases of the school of idealism is the search for the truth. To search for the truth and living according to this way means that humankind must first of all be interested in truth; then he would want to study and study to find it. In Plato’s opinion, the philosophical wisdom or the perception of truthful ideas is the ultimate goal
of education. Augustine, who is himself a Neo-Platonist, says that the highest goal is to seek the truth, to seek the truth is to seek the God. The truthful education lead human beings to God. Because God is sheer perception, one can only reach him via deep thinking and perception. Therefore, the truthful education is that the one that deals with perceptions and thoughts than matters (Ozman, 2000, p. 50; Shariatmadari, 1375, p. 174).

2. School of Realism. Like idealism, the school of Realism is one of the oldest schools in Western culture, dating back to ancient Greece (Ozman, 2000, p. 85). Realism is the opposite school of idealism. Realism believes that the objects independent of our conceptual scheme do exist. From the point of view of this school wood, stones and trees exist in the real world whether human’s mind can understand them or not. In a sense, it can be said that realism is only based on real matter (Shaarainejad, 1997, p. 336). Among the thinkers of this school are Milton, Montaigne, and Francis Bacon.

Education in Realism School has several goals including: 1. Formation of the power of wisdom that is the highest human being power and shall be achieved through the study of various fields of science. 2. helping people achieve happiness by cultivating their talents to make them able to maximize their full potential. (Shariatmadari, 1997, p. 180) 3. To strive to make people face with the realities of life and to educate people to enjoy a happy life and to live healthy, to have good ethics and healthy body (Shaari Nezhad, 1997, p. 357)

3. Pragmatism School Another Western school of though is the school of pragmatism or empiricism. The origin of this school was in the United States (Ozman, 2000, p. 230). From this school’s point of view the source for making any decision is based on thought, thus it believes that the value of thoughts or conceptions depends on their practical merits. In Pragmatism’s opinion thought and conceptions are tools and means to solve humans’ problems, till the time that these means are effective they are real and appropriate and after that they would be inappropriate and faulty. So, a certain belief can be of use for a while till the time that it works and it remains real but when it loses its functions it cannot be considered real anymore, and then it will be nullified. (Shariatmadari, 1996, p. 198)

The founders of this school include Mead, James, Dewey, etc. (Shariatmadari, 1996, p. 198). In the vision of the pragmatists education is a necessity of life. From the point of view of this school, the purpose of education is human development and there is no end to development and growth. They believe that education should liberate our activities because only this method is proper for growth in Democratic life. Democratic society’s ideals determine the direction wherein the growth takes place; intelligence is important because it enables the human being to break the rules of the habit, as well as to develop more satisfactory and desirable alternatives. Therefore, from the perspective of this school, democracy and intelligence are comprehensive goals and are relevant to educational goals. (Uzman, 2000, p. 235).

4. School of Existentialism. This school is one of the most recent Western schools, and has recently become widely used in educational theories and educational issues; the roots of this school date back to the sophists. The followers of this school believe that existence precedes essence; first the individual is created and then he inventes thoughts; thoughts about paradise, hell, and God are all human inventions. Among the pioneers of this school are Soren Kegaard, Martin Heidegger... (ditto, 2000, p. 236). This school regards education as a mean to serve humanity and human self-consciousness. In their view, education should help human beings to learn the right and proper knowledge about themselves; in this school, the development of awareness, providing opportunities for free and responsible choices by the proper up-bringing are the most important goals of education. (Sadat, 1981, p. 100).

5. Marxism School. The socio-economic school that was founded and influenced by the ideas of Karl Marx in the late nineteenth century. The school of Marxism always deals with the real world, and claims that the only tangible world is the ultimate truth and bases itself on the principle of the authenticity of matter and denial of God and metaphysics (Sadat, 1981, p. 74). As already mentioned, Marxism is a material and materialist school, summarizing all the factual features in mere matter. This school does not only approve of immaterial needs, but all the immaterial needs, strivings and intangibles are all of the works and reflections of the material needs, tendencies or desires are regarded as reflections and effects of human materialistic needs, and among the materialistic needs, the individual’s economic necessity is the source of all actions; therefore, the economy forms the basis of humans’ thoughts and actions and their social and political relations. Therefore, this school is an economic school, and education must provide the proper grounding for people's economic development. (Sadat, 1981, p. 118).

Conclusion. 1. Since each school of education is based on a particular system of thought and ideology, according to the extent of incompetency of the definition of human beings and the world presenting by a school of thought, the educational goals of that school cannot understand all the talents of mankind and then Plan for it. 2. The second prominent point is that many human talents merely gain the prospect of achieving their full potential via believing in God and resurrection or monotheistic beliefs and thoughts, and materialistic beliefs are basically devoid of grounds for creating some human virtues, such as humility and devotion.

3. Although humanistic schools via using scientific methods in educational sciences, can somewhat achieve their goals in educating human beings, but the lack of faith in God in a way human beings feel like they owe their whole existence to God, and therefore consider themselves responsible for other creatures causes that any effort for making progress in these educational systems potentially be a step towards violating the rights of some people and even of nature, and this may lead to destruction of human civilization.
Introduction. The world has considered women's employment, household jobs, marital and maternal responsibilities of women as a marginal issue. Ultimately some solutions have been recommended for these issues such as free and uncommitted sexual relationships instead of marriage and limiting oneself, etc. Accordingly, the first barrier for women’s employment is their family and the issues related to it. If this process was unnatural, the vision for the improvement of the condition of women in social areas would not be clear; because none of these solutions are compatible with the mental and spiritual tendencies of women. Inefficiency of these solutions is quite evident in the current conditions of women (Zibayinejad, 2009: 154). In today’s world, women are faced with countless challenges. They feel unsafe, frustrated and absurd. The increase in the number of mental, physical and spiritual diseases in women are among problems that women today are faced with in the respect of surviving in the society. Due to these factors, developing a proper social policy pattern by considering the physical and mental characteristics and emotional conflicts of women in the families and societies and accepting women’s roles and responsibilities in the family and society, the number of challenges and issues women encounter can be considerably reduced. One of the most important factors in these policy makings is taking women’s employment in a society filled with gender inequality into consideration (Yaseri, 2013: 9). The current process of industrialization has significantly enhanced the rate of women’s employment in places other than their house. Nowadays, in most of the Western countries, about 50% of the women of 16 to 60 years occupy these types of jobs. For instance, 70% of the women in the UK are employed. In a number of countries in the eastern Europe, the rate of women’s employment is way higher than it is in western countries. For example, in Czech and Slovakia, 80% of women with children younger than 6 years are regarded as the workforce of the country (Giddens, 2013: 184-194). All societies have various welfare plans and policies which are quite different in terms of their intellectual and theoretical principles and approaches. The differences between various plans are rather evident. Therefore, when conducting any kind of comparative study on the welfare policies and plans of other countries to utilize their experiences, these differences must be taken into account (Taj Mazinani, 2011: 204).

The present study has aimed to review and classify the policies of conservative, social-democratic and Islamic Republic of Iran welfare systems in the field of women’s employment in these societies. Nowadays in Iran, thirty years after the Islamic Revolution, there is a large number of policies, rules and regulations which have been adopted over the years. Many institutions, organizations and institutes related to women have been established as well. However, women still do not possess an acceptable and desirable status given their abilities and capacities. Although women are tangibly present in today’s society in terms of quantity, but their jobs are not as high-quality as men’s. Women also have many

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COMPARING POLITICAL INTERVENTIONS AND ORIENTATIONS REGARDING WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN CONSERVATIVE, SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN WELFARE SYSTEMS

Zeynab Jahanipour, Sohez Abadi, 
Master of Social Sciences, Welfare Planning, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran

Abstract. One of the important issues about women is the women’s employment and rules developed by different welfare regimes and governments in this issue. The present study has aimed to investigate the policy makings in three welfare systems, i.e. social-democratic welfare system, conservative welfare system and the welfare system of Islamic Republic of Iran, in regards with women’s employment. In this article, the policies made in the domain of women’s employment have been divided into support and promotional policies.

The research method of the present study is an analysis of the qualitative content of all policies and laws in the Islamic Republic of Iran and a secondary and overview analysis for reviewing the laws respecting women’s employment in two different welfare systems, i.e. conservative and social-democratic.

The findings suggest that laws and policies regarding women’s employment in the Islamic Republic of Iran have always lacked the sufficient resources to be practically implemented.

Keywords: Employment Policy Making, Women’s Employment, Women’s Welfare, Social Policy Making, Labor Market.