



## A Comparative Study of Reason in Islamic Education with Emphasis on Imami and Sunni Jurisprudence

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: 02 June 2020 Revised: 13 December 2020 Accepted: 07 February 2021 Online: 16 March 2021</p>	<p>Although Iran is a religiously pluralistic society, but given the sovereignty of the political system of the Islamic Republic, it seems there is a need to know principles of Islamic education. One of the important issues that has a long history among the philosophers of the Islamic world is the concept and role of reason in jurisprudential sources and its impact on education of young generation. The purpose of this research was to explain the role and position of reason in Islamic education with emphasis on comparing Imami and Sunni jurisprudence. In terms of method, the present study is a hermeneutical research using author-centered type. Researchers have used the documentary and sequential analysis methods for collection and analysis of data respectively. Findings show that Imami and Sunni jurisprudence are similar in accepting reason as one of the most important means for understanding religious subjects, while there is disagreement between these two schools of thought about the scope and position of reason. Also, the findings of research indicated that in Sunni jurisprudence, there were jurists who believed in the role of reason, although Imami jurists mainly reject both extremist and extremist rationalism. In addition, the research findings showed that while Imami jurisprudence places special emphasis on the role of reason, the prevailing atmosphere in the Iran's educational system and the current interpretation of Islamic education is mainly based on the following principles such as ignoring individual differences of learners, emphasizing imitation, denial of questioning and lack of a creative and rational role in the process of teaching and learning. Given these findings, the need for educational policymakers to coordinate the process of Islamic education with Imami jurisprudence - with a focus on the role of reason - seems necessary.</p>
<p><b>KEYWORDS</b></p> <p>Imami Jurisprudence Islamic Education Reason Sunni Jurisprudence</p>	

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## **1. Introduction**

The victory of the Islamic Revolution in the late 1970s did not merely mark the beginning of a new political system in Iran. The establishment of the Islamic Republic showed that in addition to the political system, the educational system must also undergo a fundamental change. To explain this issue, two points should be considered: First, the victory of the Islamic Revolution caused Shiite jurists to become more aware of the difference between Imami jurisprudence and Sunni jurisprudence due to the emergence of new social, political and educational issues (Badawi, 2009). In fact, the rule of Shiite clerics at the helm of their power and responsibility to explain new issues of life from the perspective of religion led them to consider expanding the circle of jurisprudential rulings (Rad Goudarzi & Najafinejad, 2019). In other words, the fundamental question that arose was "Can a religious answer to the challenges of modern life be provided by relying on the views of traditional jurists, especially Sunni jurisprudence, who only believe in extracting religious rules from the Qur'an, hadith and analogy?". The answer to this question is negative from politicians' view of the Islamic Republic, considering their adherence to Imami jurisprudence. In this situation, recourse to reason as the fourth reference for determining and inferring religious rulings becomes inevitable. The consequence of this answer is the emergence of a conflict between Shiite and Sunni jurisprudences. A problem that is not new in the history of Islam (Cilardo, 2014). In fact, one of the most important differences between Sunni jurisprudence and Imami jurisprudence is their different approach to the sources of religious rulings (Goerji, 2000). Sunni jurists generally do not allow the involvement of sources outside the religious scriptures in deriving religious rulings. They consider the arguments of the rulings to be limited to the Qur'an and Hadith and believe in a superficial and literal reading of these sources. On the contrary, Imami jurists, in addition to narrated sources, believe in the authority of reason and are not very committed to the appearance of texts.

The second point refers to the fact that during the last four decades, the political system of Islamic Republic of Iran has tried to form the principles and foundations of the educational system based on the foundations governing the Shiite school. This effort was not unexpected and is not, because the majority of the people of this country are religiously Shiite and believe in its principles and intellectual foundations. However, there is another fact. Although the majority of the population is Shiite, Iran is a religiously diverse society. The demographic structure shows that about 90% of the people are Shiites and 10% are Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Sunnis. Also,

the Shiite majority does not necessarily mean unity in the belief in Imami jurisprudence, and again we can see the existence of Shiite sects and also disagreement among Shiite jurists in deriving religious rulings (Khosropanah, 2004). Thus, the Islamic Republic in general and its educational system in particular are faced with two serious questions: First, what is the position of reason in the jurisprudential system of Iran according to the behavioral and educational challenges of modern life and, Second, can the proposed solutions of Imami jurisprudence on these issues and challenges provide answers for all Iranian students - given their religious diversity. In the following sections, the theoretical framework, problem statement and research literature are mentioned to determine the space to explain the main goal and sub-goals of research.

## **2. Theoretical Framework and Research Literature**

The theoretical framework of the present article has been formed according to the research problem. The research questions are “what is the position of reason in the two main jurisprudential traditions of the Islamic world and how this position can affect social systems such as the political and educational system”. The purpose of this research is not to determine impact of jurisprudential system on political system, but as mentioned in the previous section, the establishment of the Islamic government provided a new opportunity for the active presence of jurisprudential system in various areas of Iranians life (Abrahamian 2008). The requirement for the dynamic activity of the jurisprudential system in social affairs is its ability to solve various challenges and issues. The history of jurisprudence in the Islamic world indicates the existence of two intellectual schools for solving life problems and inferring and extracting religious rules (Mousavi Bojnourdi 2001). The first school of thought belongs to Sunni jurists who have made the Qur'an, the Prophetic tradition, and analogy the main sources of understanding religion. The second category belongs to Shiite jurists who have added reason to previous sources (Alavi Mehr, 2005). This theoretical confrontation has existed in various forms throughout the history of religious thought. For example, during the first century of the rise of Islam, there was disagreement between those companions of the Prophet Mohammad who preferred the appearance of the words of the Qur'an and those who believed in the interpretation of the meanings of the verses (Jamali, 2012). In later centuries, this theoretical gap manifested itself in the form of differences between the followers of hadith and ijihad. These differences have been shown in recent periods in the form of Akhbaryons - Osulions duality (Babaei, 2002). Of course, it must be acknowledged that rationalism and narration are two spectrums of a continuum, because some jurists give more priority to the appearance of verses and hadiths, and others to its rational interpretations and the higher purposes of Shari'a (Eftekhari

2009). Meanwhile, the politicians of the Islamic Republic in Iran and the Shiite clerics believe that there is a connection between rationalism in deriving religious rulings and being a leader in political and social affairs. According to this group, the narrators, due to their literal reading of the verses and narrations of the Qur'an, reach rigid opinions and rulings without flexibility and disregard for the developments of modern life. While rationalists can achieve rulings appropriate to the conditions of the day by interfering with the requirements of time and place and the purposes of Shari'a (Shaker, 2003). Therefore, both among Sunnis and Shiites, many leading and modern thinkers have diligently taken steps to strengthen the position of reason in the jurisprudence system in order to reconcile modern phenomena and issues with jurisprudence (Baranjian, 2011).

In terms of research literature, we can first point out that in recent decades, mainly due to unpleasant political events such as the terrorist attacks, the rise of al-Qaeda, the 9/11 attacks on New York, the rise of ISIS, the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen – all rooted in religious differences - numerous studies have been published about Islam and its various sects (Gilliat-Ray, 2010; Lipka, 2014; Mabon, 2013; Maréchal, & Zemni, 2013; Vikor, 2005; Waines, 2003). Also, some of these works have tried to compare the views of two main schools of thought in the Islamic world, namely Sunni jurisprudence and Imami jurisprudence on issues such as interpretation of the Qur'an, Sunnah, reason, jihad, taqiyyah, retribution, etc. (Abdur Rahman, 1984; Hallaq, 2008; Hamza, 2016; McLean, 2000; Nyazee, 2003). One of the most common researches has been done on the principles and foundations of jurisprudence. For example, in recent studies, Moran (2020) claims "When comparing religious jurisprudence, like Jewish, Zoroastrian, Christian, and Muslim, with a secular one, it is essential to keep in mind that all of them are rooted in divine law. They are theocratic legal systems because their ultimate submission is to the supreme ruling of God; so, legal reasoning is always theologically limited by the absolute divine rules, and the interpretation of the relationship between human and divine law is as intricate as multifaceted (p. 145). Hallaq (1984) emphasizes that since the tenth century, many Sunni jurists have rejected the use of creative and subjective interpretations in religious affairs. Hilal and Al-Beirawi (2007) in explaining the principles of jurisprudence believes that "Any law or ruling must have a Daleel, which can be from Qur'an, Sunnah, or a source, which Qur'an and Sunnah directed us to adopt. These sources will be discussed later in the book. Any ruling from the text of either the Qur'an or Sunnah is considered a Daleel." (p.16). In his article, Malaysian scholar Mohammad Yusuf Saleem (2010) has tried to examine the methodology of jurisprudence in economic principles. He argues that the methods of reasoning in Islamic jurisprudence and economics are not necessarily the same. According to

Yusoff, & Kamdari (2017) "The Islamic scholars have unanimously agreed that, when examining any new subject that has no rule or legal value, the provisions of the primary bases of Islamic Law must be referred to. These are the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah that includes the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) words, deeds and tacit approvals. In the case where there is no equivalent provided by these two non-arguable sources, usually Islamic Scholars will subsequently resort to secondary sources of law, that's the Ijma' (general scholar consensus), the Qiyas (reasoning by analogy), the Maslahah or Istislah (reasoning by public interest), the Istihsan (preference), the Urf (customs or common practice) and Saad al-dhara'i (blocking the means) (p. 150).

In Iran, many researches have been done on Imami jurisprudence and its comparison with other branches of jurisprudence. For example, Hosseini (201) by studying Sunni jurisprudential sources believes that the Ash'arites were rational in practice. Raghebi, Gramipour, & Taki (2020) in examining the role of reason in understanding the Shari'a and legislation believe that the reason in understanding the Shari'a, is subject to the norms and rules governing language and has no independent nature. Mazaheri Kouhestani and Niazi (2015) by comparative study of the rule of association between rational rules and religious rules in Imami jurisprudence and general jurisprudence came to the conclusion that most Imami jurists have accepted the connection between the rule of reason and the rule of Shari'a. Aslani (2010) believes that Imam Khomeini considered belief in reason as a prelude to the realization of faith in the principles of religion. Kalbandi (2010) found that one of the most important sources for inferring religious rules in Imami jurisprudence is reason. Zarqani and Hosseinpour (2009) pointed out that the followers of Sufism although considered the function of reason to be limited in understanding mystical meanings, but used the help of reason to prove their words. Jabbari & Sajjadi, (2009) in their critique of orthodox religious education believe that the orthodox current seeks to educate the devotees of the students and their unequivocal acceptance of religious texts, while the rationalist current insists on a religiosity based on cognition. Zarqani and Hosseinpour, (2009) pointed out that although the followers of Sufism consider the function of reason to be limited in understanding mystical meanings, they have used the help of reason to prove their claim. Jabbari and Sajjadi (2009) in the critique of orthodoxists believe that this school seeks to impose an unconditional acceptance of religious texts by students, while rationalists insist on religiosity based on knowledge. According to Marzooqi and Safari (2007), the only tool that prevents superstitions from entering religion is reason. In the overview of the above-mentioned researches, it can be inferred that most of them accepted the role of reason as one of the sources for extracting religious rulings. Also, many

religious scholars have not paid more attention to the role of reason in terms of influencing other social systems - such as education.

Considering this brief introduction, the main purpose of the present study is to explain the impact of two major jurisprudential schools on educational system by considering two basic facts: First, the occurrence of modern life phenomena and challenges and Second, the religious composition of Iran's society. On the one hand, the education system is facing new phenomena such as cyberspace, the expansion of free relations between the opposite sex, the age of puberty and marriage, inheritance, retribution, marriage with non-Muslims, rented womb, citizenship rights, etc. The ancient jurists do not convince the minds of the young generation about these phenomena, or the jurists have not had the opportunity to think about these phenomena of modern life (Babaei, 2005; Fahrasti, 2007; Peyvandi & Ahmadvand, 2016; Samani 2012; Shakeri, 2017). On the other hand, there are different religions and sects in Iran, while the education system is centralized and the Ministry of Education - regardless of religious, ethnic and linguistic differences of students - determinates same curricula for all parts of the country. According to these facts, the main purpose of research is to examine the role of reason in Islamic education with emphasis on Imami and Sunni jurisprudence from a comparative perspective. The sub-objectives of the research are:

- Identifying the similarities between Imami and Sunni jurisprudence regarding the role and position of reason
- Identifying the differences between Imami and Sunni jurisprudence regarding the role and position of reason
- Explaining the educational effects of two schools of thought

### **3. Research Method**

In terms of method, the present study is one of the hermeneutical researches of the author-centered type. In hermeneutic research, which is mainly used to understand and interpret any type of text, including religious texts, the criterion for understanding the text can be the content of the work, attention to the opinion of the author or the interpretation of the reader (Nasri, 2011). The criterion of the present researchers to understand the sources is to pay attention to the views of the authors based on two Sunni jurisprudences and Imami jurisprudence. Researchers have used the library method to collect information and the sequential analysis method to analyze the data. Sequential analysis is the most common form of objective hermeneutic analysis that seeks to understand a general concept of the text under study (Reichertz, 2004).

#### **4. Results**

The results section consists of four parts: A brief look at the concept of reason and its dimensions, description of reason in two jurisprudential perspectives, determining the similarities and differences between Imami and Sunni jurisprudence regarding the position of reason and explaining the educational effects of the two schools of thought.

##### *A) Concept of Reason*

Since religion has three components of beliefs, ethics and rules, the first step to explain the concept and position of reason is to determine its relationship with the three components of religion. There is no doubt that the reason can be an independent source for proving religious beliefs such as existence of God, divine justice, and prophecy, and there is no difference of opinion among the jurists of different sects of Islam in this regard (Jafari, 1981). In the field of ethics, there are a series of definite principles that can only be proved by the reason, but in the case of religious rulings, differences between jurists have generally arisen in response to the question of "whether the reason can be one of the sources of *ijtihad*." Although the validity of reason has long been considered as one of the bases for understanding the religious rules among Shiite and Sunni jurists, however, it is not possible to determine the exact time for their differences regarding the role of reason (Rabbani Golpayegani, 2014). However, recognizing the true nature of reason is very difficult and scrutinizing its various dimensions is much more difficult, so it is necessary to recognize its effects and consequences in different dimensions. The reason is one of the powers of the human soul and according to the text of the narrations of Islam; this is the hidden power of God, while the prophets and infallible Imams (as) are the obvious proof of God on earth. (Ibrahim Najafabadi & Shanzari 2016). In the thoughts of Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina, Farabi, and Mulla Sadra, man is a being composed of body and soul. Reason is also divided into theoretical and practical reason (Ismaeili, & Seifi, 2018). In addition to sources such as revelation and tradition, some religious scholars use "jurisprudential wisdom" in the process of acquiring religious knowledge and discovering the rules. The use of reason in inferring judgment can be considered in two ways: First, reason as a source independent of narrated sources and; Second, reason as a tool that can be used to extract religious law from primary sources (Quran and Hadith). Therefore, reason is used when there is no text in the Qur'an and Sunnah to issue a ruling (Gholami & Purkiani 2015). In a nutshell, in the case of reason, there have always been two orientations of dispersion between Sunni and Shiite jurists.



### *B) Function of Reason from Two Groups of Proponents and Opponents' Viewpoints*

Extremist orientation has highly valued reason and considers it as a valid tool for obtaining Shari'a law. The first person to propose this view was "Abu Hanifa" who died in 767 (Rastegar Jazi & Rahmatpanah, 2013). The adherents of this school, whenever they could not find a religious expression to prove a ruling, resolved it according to their personal intellect and inference and issued a fatwa. The consequence of this tendency was the departure of the reason from the instrumental state and alignment with the Qur'an and Sunnah (Hami, 2012). Opposition to reason became more widespread, and both Sunni and Shiite groups of jurists tended to do so. In fact, the extremist tendency to the role of reason was first met with the reaction of some Sunni jurists. This reaction spread not only in the field of jurisprudence but also to ethics and beliefs. The consequence of this opposition was the absolute denial of rational perceptions, which led to the emergence of the "superficiality" movement in jurisprudence (Safa, 1987). The apparentists were satisfied with the apparent verses of the Qur'an and Sunnah in obtaining the Shari'a rulings and did not attach any role to reason. This tendency also led to the emergence of the Ash'arite in the field of moral philosophy. The Ash'arite denied the power of reason in distinguishing between good and bad deeds and believed that a good deed is what God considered good and an ugly deed is what God considered ugly (Mousavi Bojnourdi, 2007). Among the Shiites, from the late fourteenth to early sixteenth centuries, there was also a group who denied the role of reason in the field of religion. They said that one should suffice only with the religious expression because history has shown that the reason often makes mistakes. The pioneer of this movement was Amin Astarabadi (died 1614). He divided rational perceptions into two categories: First, perceptions close to the senses (such as arithmetic, geometry, etc.) and; Second, perceptions unrelated to emotion (such as wisdom, theology, principles of jurisprudence, and theoretical issues of jurisprudence). In his opinion, because religious and jurisprudential issues are of the second category, reason cannot be trusted in it (Rezvani 2009).

### *C) Function of Reason According to Imami Jurisprudence*

Contrary to the two extremist views, the view that is considered by Shiite jurists nowadays and can be mentioned as a moderate perspective is that the reason is a source for discovering the Shari'a ruling, but it is not the only source (Shirvani, 2006). In other words, those who have accepted the authority of reason acknowledge that in the absence of a book, tradition and consensus on a Shari'a issue, the support of scholars and jurists should be to rely on reason (Jannati, 1988). Contemporary



Shiite jurist Javadi Amoli (2007) attributes three roles to reason: First, reason is a criterion for some principles and rules and revelation does not oppose it (for example, according to reason, revelation can never promote idolatry and polytheism). Second, the work of reason is to try to discover the book and tradition. Third, the intellect's agreement with the details of the rulings and the discovery of their secrets is beyond the scope of the reason. Therefore, most Shiite jurists do not deny reason as a source for discovering the Shari'a ruling, but at the same time do not consider all rational perceptions acceptable.

*D) Similarities and Differences between Imami and Sunni Jurisprudence Regarding the Position of Reason*

In examining the similarities and differences between Imami and Sunni jurisprudence, it is necessary to first point out a few similarities: The first similarity is the agreement between all branches of jurisprudence regarding the role of the Qur'an and Sunnah in deriving religious rules. The second similarity is the acceptance of reason as one of the effective tools for understanding religious subjects. In fact, there is a common denominator between the apparentists, rationalists, and moderates, who affirm the role of reason in understanding many religious spheres. The third similarity is the existence of both groups of jurists who agree and disagree with the role of reason between both Sunni and Shiite groups. Therefore, both among the Sunnis and the Shiites, many progressive and modern thinkers have taken diligent steps to strengthen the position of reason in the jurisprudential system. For example, among Shiite jurists, some opinions of Mullah Mohsen Faiz Kashani (1598-1680) were more advanced than the popular opinion of Shiite jurists. For example, he did not forbid music, he considered the age of puberty for girls to be thirteen (not nine years), and he did not forbid marriage with women of other religions (Faiz Kashani, 2009). Also, most Shiite scholars have declared chess to be haram based on a number of narrations, while Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, declared it halal in the last years of his life. This is also true of his fatwa on music (Ghaforeyan Nejad, & Ghaboli Deragshan, 2016). Among the Sunni jurists can be found those who believed in the role of reason in religious affairs. For example, Ibn Hazm (994-1064), one of the leading Sunni jurists, considered the value of judicial testimony of men and women equal.

Another similarity between both Sunni and Shiite groups of jurists is the understanding of the emergence of new phenomena and issues in modern life. In fact, what has led both Imami and Sunni jurisprudence to the centrality of reason in deriving rulings is the fact that it is not possible to extend the rulings of Shari'a to new cases of modern life by simply reading the literal verses and

hadiths. In other words, increasing the scope of Shari'a rulings requires rationalism in Ijtihad. Therefore, distancing oneself from the literal recitation of Qur'anic verses and interfering with external sources - including reason-, leads to the issuance of rulings appropriate to the conditions of the present life. The content of verses and narrations covers a very limited part of the complex and pluralistic aspects of modern society. Therefore, for a jurist, the question is that "what should be done about the rest of the issues". Rationalism introduces a conceptual tool for extending Shari'a rules to new issues and extends the umbrella of Shari'a to areas about which there is not even a text. One of these areas is the religious education of the young generation, which deals with realities such as modern technologies, rapid scientific change, change in the nation-state relationship, citizenship, and gender, linguistic, and ethnic equality. It is natural that the successful religious education of this generation is possible when it is possible to have religious interpretations appropriate to the conditions of the time. According to what has been said, the first difference between Imami jurisprudence and Sunni jurisprudence is a wide range of practice and power of reason in different areas of religion, which means that Imami jurisprudence gives more power to reason. The second difference is related to limiting the involvement of religion in only religious affairs and refraining from entering other areas of life. While opponents of reason have limited the inference of rulings to several sources, the entry of reason into the realm of religion allows the jurists to give their opinions on all aspects of life. In fact, the reason, as the most important tool of ijtihad, leaves the hand of the jurist open to comment on all life phenomena such as education, economy, politics and culture. In other words, Sunni jurisprudence reduces the area of responsibility of the jurist by ignoring reason, while Imami jurisprudence seeks solutions for all aspects of life - traditional and modern. In this situation, all social institutions such as the family, educational, political and economic systems must set their goals within the framework of jurisprudential rules.

#### *E) Educational Effects of Views of Two Branches of Jurisprudence*

Religious education has been one of the main goals of Iran's formal education system for the last four decades. Regarding religious education and considering the role of reason, there are three perspectives: Habitual, cognitive and intuitive. From a habitual point of view, religious education means raising the young generation according to religious principles and laws, creating behavioral habits, convincing learners, and educating them according to predetermined forms. The cognitive perspective emphasizes religious education based on reason and that all religious teachings are supported by reason. Accordingly, religious education is a systematic and rational process to

acquaint learners with religion. The third or intuitive view considers religious education as a kind of intuitive experience that can be examined and analyzed from a rational point of view. Considering what has been said about the role of reason from the point of view of orthodox and rationalists, it can be inferred that the first group is more in favor of the habitual view, the second group is in favor of cognitive education and the moderates are in favor of intuitive education. Of course, it should be acknowledged that the jurisprudential schools have not directly and specifically provided a view on the method of religious education, but their views on reason affect it. In other words, when the opponents of reason do not consider rational research to attain religious knowledge, nor do they conceive of such power for reason, they will naturally not value the rational analysis of teachers and learners. Jabbari & Sajjadi (2009) found that opponents of reason follow principles such as the emphasis on worship, denial of questioning, following the habit, less attention to individual differences, inflexibility in teaching process, coercion in education, and superficiality in religious education. On the contrary, rational and dynamic religious education insists on denying imitation and indoctrination, applying rational thinking, recognizing the tendencies of young generation, balancing behavior, and cultivating the power of criticism and reasoning in educating of young generation (Khaleqkhan & Masoudi, 2010; Sajjadi, Afshar & Rezaei Zarchi 2010).

Given that the jurisprudential and political system of Iran follows the Imami jurisprudence, now the fundamental question arises as to which of the three models of the proponents of reason, opponents of reason or moderates is subject to the Iranian educational system in the religious education of the young generation. Also, is there any agreement between the accepted model of Iran's jurisprudential system and current characteristics of religious education in educational system? The research findings of educational scientists provide a thought-provoking answer for these questions. Savari & Salar (2016) in examining the challenges of religious education and offering solutions to improve it from the perspective of contemporary Neo-Mu'tazilites found that they have dealt with two related categories: First, critique of present educational systems in Muslim countries, and second providing solutions to improve these systems. In the first step, the Neo-Mu'tazilites have identified challenges such as anti-rationalism, anti-liberty, and rule of dogmatism in the educational systems and; Secondly, as religious reformists, they insisted on strengthening principles such as freedom, rationality, innovation, modernity, diversity, dialogue, critique, tolerance and equal religious and educational opportunities for men and women. Amin Khandaghi & Ebrahimi Herestani (2011) by examining the approaches of reform in curriculum of religious

education in Iran indicated lack of using exploratory methods, persuasive-motivational methods and active methods in religious education. Movahedi Mohassel Tusi, Mehr Mohammadi, Sadeghzadeh & Naghizadeh (2013) refer to two task-oriented and result-oriented approaches in religious education highlighted that result-oriented approach is based on materialism and disbelief in human will and authority and has an instrumental and utilitarian views to man; while task-oriented approach is based on the meta-material worldview and belief in human freedom and authority. These researchers believe that in the process of religious education, a result-oriented approach should be avoided, while that is the approach of many teachers of religious subjects in Iran's schools. Findings of Baghcoli (2013) show that according to the jurisprudential view, two types of Muslims can be distinguished from each other: Intrinsic Muslim and transverse Muslim. A child born to a Muslim parent is considered as an inherent Muslim, but a person whose parents are not Muslim and who choose Islam after reaching puberty is a transverse Muslim. He believes that the prevailing attitude towards religious education in the Iran's education system presupposes that all students are inherently Muslim, while on the one hand the existing challenges of the contemporary world (such as deconstruction, lifestyle diversity, explosion of information related to other religions and cultures, propaganda against Islamic beliefs and etc.) and on the other hand, the existing facts and realities about the religious and moral condition of the young generation indicate the confusion of Iran's adolescents and young in religious behaviors. Saeedi Rezvani (2010) in explaining the challenges of hidden curriculum of secondary schools and deepening Islamic education has concluded that this curriculum has negatively motivated students to religious subjects and strengthened the idea of "separation of religion from politics." In a nutshell, it seems that while Iran's jurisprudential system and the Imami jurisprudence defend the reason and its role in religious affairs, the content of school religious textbooks, teachers' behavior, and classroom atmosphere are more in favor of behaviors such as imitation, habit, and lack of criticism. Naturally, in this situation, explaining the role of reason and agreement between Imami jurisprudence and the realities of the educational system becomes an obvious necessity for Iranian educational policymakers.

## **5. Conclusion**

The purpose of this article was to re-emphasize the role of reason in the process of Islamic education from the perspective of comparing Imami and Sunni jurisprudence. The main premise of the authors of article was that after the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran, because the majority of people are Shiites, Imami jurisprudence has played a major role in deriving religious

rulings and determines the behavior of people in various social spheres such as politics and education. Accordingly, the present researchers tried to show the role of reason in the religious education of schools if the Iranian educational system follows Imami jurisprudence. The findings reveal that there are scholars in both Sunni and Shiite groups who value reason and its central role in deriving religious rulings. Another finding of the research is that both groups of supporters and opponents of the role of reason have gone to extremes, while Imami jurisprudence has tried to choose a moderate position in this regard. Another finding was the need to use reason in deriving religious rules due to the spread of technological innovations and rapid developments in modern life. In fact, the necessity of Islamic jurists and thinkers to respond to the new needs of life caused not only Imami jurists but also most Sunnis to accept the role of reason. The latest finding of the present study is that regardless of theological and jurisprudential debates about the role of reason, it seems that the prevailing atmosphere of religious education in Iran's schools - contrary to the view of Imami jurisprudence - gives little value to reason. Thus, the present researchers suggest that Iran's educational policymakers try to re-evaluate and review the current practices in religious education to the younger generation according to the role of reason.

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