



## A Comparative Study of the Educational Perspective of Islam and Postmodernism: A Systematic Review

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: 20 February 2021            Revised: 10 April 2021            Accepted: 09 March 2022            Online: 18 July 2022</p>	<p>In Iran and over the past four decades, study of the characteristics of philosophical schools through a critical-controversial approach has become a research tradition in the field of philosophy of education. The aim of present research was a comparative study of educational characteristics of the two schools of thought i.e. Islam and post-modernism through a systematic review. Researchers used Boolean's strategy to find the maximum sources and have used additional in-depth analysis method to analyze the data. The findings showed that the general structure of most selected researches is based on subjective assumptions that there is no opportunity to accept or reject them. Other finding indicates that the similarities between the two schools are mainly in the educational dimension and their differences are more in the ideological aspects. Based on these findings and while in reality there is no opportunity to respond to the criticisms of other philosophical schools in the Iran academic environment, researchers in the philosophy of education are advised to refrain from taking a critical approach and drawing unilateral conclusions against other philosophical schools. They should also be aware of the dangers of unproven mental assumptions in misrepresenting and distorting their research findings.</p>
<p><b>KEYWORDS</b></p> <p>Islamic Education            Postmodernism            Mental Distortions            Systematic Review</p>	

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## **1. Introduction**

The contemporary era is a time of complexity, diversity, contradiction, heterogeneity and variety of voices. Many societies are facing new changes in their social systems. Iran has also witnessed many changes over the past four decades - largely due to a change in the political system of the monarchy to the Islamic Republic. One of the changes has been the attempt to adapt the goals and programs of the educational system to the goals and ideals of the religious system through an alternative namely "Islamic education" (Arjmand, 2017). In this regard, some faculty members of universities as well as religious and governmental research institutes tried to compare the views of Islam with other philosophical schools - such as idealism, realism, existentialism, modernism and post-modernism (Ayatollah, 2006). The consequence of this flow of thought was the publication of dozens of books and articles and holding of various meetings, conferences and lectures (Bagheri 2007). This process is still ongoing.

Internationally, the era of domination of many of these schools - with the exception of postmodernism - seems to be over (Borbols, 2010). At present and especially in advanced societies, the views of postmodern philosophers are most prominent and influential on social systems, including education. In the field of education, postmodernism seeks to critique modern education and challenge its various dimensions (Rokowski & McLaren, 2001). For this reason, in many Iranian academic societies, the views of postmodernist philosophers such as Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard have been highly welcomed and their books and articles have been translated into Persian (Abdolkarimi 2016). At the same time, postmodernism as a rival historical-intellectual process has been considered by the supporters of Islamic education (Bagheri, 1996). Iranians' acceptance of postmodernism is important in two ways: First, proponents of postmodernism see it as a way out of society's rapid transition from modernism. Second, postmodern philosophers' critique of modernism has received much attention from proponents of Islamic education. For this reason, the proponents of Islamic education, to prove the shortcomings of the Western philosophical and intellectual system, mainly resort to the views of postmodern philosophers. Interestingly, the proponents of Islamic education, while rejecting both modernism and postmodernism, but use the arguments of the parties against each other - to show the correctness of their beliefs (Khaleghi Nejad, Maleki & Hakimzadeh 2015; Shamshiri, 2008). They also believe that many of the interpretations that some intellectuals have of postmodernism, in addition to not causing a leap beyond modernism, but also lead to further backwardness (Madadpour, 2002; Moradi, 2013; Rashidian, 2006). According to this group, since postmodernism considers its main mission to

reveal the crises of modernity and critique its fixed beliefs and values, it also explains most of the crisis of modern education and therefore mainly emphasizes on negative aspects.

Now, after more than three decades of comparing Islamic education with the principles governing postmodern education, it seems that in order to put an end to this discussion, it is necessary to re-evaluate previous researches by systematically reviewing their findings with a comparative approach. Accordingly, the necessity of conducting this research is to stop the repetitive cycle of extreme interest of Iranian researchers in conducting research based on critical-controversial dissertations, whereas the goal of most critical-controversial research is nothing but to prove a political or philosophical position by selectively gathering evidence (Sweeting, 2014). The present researchers believe that re-evaluating the findings of previous research can be a step forward in exploring the unknown boundaries of Islamic education and postmodernism. Accordingly, the aim of the study was to examine the educational perspective of postmodernism and Islamic education through a systematic review and comparative perspective. The specific objectives of the research are:

- Identification and explanation of Islamic education
- Identification and explanation of postmodernism education
- Identification and explanation of similarities and differences between Islamic education and postmodern education

## **2. Research Literature**

The first point that is interesting in reviewing the research literature is that despite the great interest of Iranian scholars in comparing the educational views of Islam with postmodernism, this issue has rarely been considered by researchers in other countries. For example, the most recent source in this regard is a chapter of book that focuses primarily on the religious upbringing of Middle Eastern immigrants in Europe (Saada, 2020). Another example is the study of how Finnish Muslim students reconcile their religious traditions with modern liberal and postmodern ideals (Rissanen, 2012). Malik (2012) also uses Pierre Bourdieu's theory - as a postmodern sociologist- to provide an analysis of the educational and employment inequalities institutionalized by schools in Pakistan. Apart from these three studies that have indirectly compared these two schools of thought, what has been published in international information databases again belongs to Iranian researchers. For example, Foroughi, Keshti Arai & Yousefi (2015) have examined the advantages

and disadvantages of the postmodern education system based on moral values. Farmahini Farahani, Mirza Mohammadi & Nowruzi (2014) studied the characteristics of non-formal education from the perspective of postmodernism in Iran.

Despite the difficulty of finding comparative research related to Islamic education and postmodernism in international information databases, many Iranian researchers have shown interest in this issue from various dimensions and have published their findings mainly in the form of articles. For example, Banhan & Farazi (2017) in an article entitled "Spiritual education in postmodern thought" showed that according to the humanist view of postmodernism, the solution to all things - even the need for spirituality - can be explained in the context of humanism, secularism and material benefits. Therefore, spirituality is a tool to achieve false peace in the current situation. Of course, these authors have not been able to prove why and how postmodern spirituality is a tool for obtaining false peace and what the characteristics of this peace are. Zand Vakili (2016) in a comparative study of human identity in postmodern and Islamic schools by emphasizing the views of Lyotard and the Iranian cleric Motahhari shows that Lyotard - through a narrative view- considers man to have a fluid, variable, and fragmented identity while Motahhari believes on unity of identity in all historical periods. Rahimi & Shirkhani (2016) in an article entitled "Challenges of postmodernism for Shiite Islamic teachings and ways to deal with those challenges" concluded that the positive aspects of postmodernism have been somewhat neglected and this school of thought can serve as a catalyst for Islam in the postmodern world. Khaleghinejad, Maleki & Hakimzadeh (2015) criticize the view of postmodernism in the curriculum according to the philosophical foundations of Islamic education and emphasize that the foundations of the philosophy of the postmodern curriculum in ontological principles are based on disbelief in the supernatural. Javadi Mordraz & Kurdi (2015) found that the fundamentals of postmodernism indicated that values are relative. Bahari (2013) with a comparative study of the principles of Islam and postmodernism (with emphasis on the views of Paul-Michel Foucault) believes that epistemological relativism with emphasis on language games, believes that man is confined in the circle of power networks. Ravand (2013) by examining educational effects of postmodernism (with emphasis on Lyotard's views) came to the conclusion that the goals of education and curriculum are relative and variable. Asef Mohseni (2013) emphasised that the weaknesses of postmodernism are intellectual rupture and obvious contradiction in thought, ignoring certain facts and knowledge, and not believing in fixed and innate values. Tavana, & Mawlawi Nasab (2012) in the article "Investigation of possible challenges between postmodernism and Islam from the perspective of moral education" states that the principles of moral education in Islam are based on fixed

metaphysical assumptions, while the principles of moral education of postmodernism lack any fixed and general basis and are based on pure discourse. Poor Tahmasebi & Poor Tahmasebi (2012) believed that in the postmodern era, the walls of schools and classrooms will collapse; information technology transcends the structural boundaries of pre-modern and modern education, and new social, cultural, and religious contexts are formed. Babaei (2006) showed that the goal of postmoderns is to educate critical citizens and to value public culture. Shahi (2011) specifies the construction of the negation of meta-narratives and moral patterns and models in contradiction with the principles of Islam. Comparing the views of modernism and postmodernism on education, Darmiani (2009) indicated that modernism believes in the general rules of learning for all, while postmodernism emphasizes group learning and interpersonal interaction. Beheshti (2006) considers liberation from oppression, individual and social empowerment of students, encouraging students to participate in critical and group discussions as goals of education according to postmodernists. Razavi (2004) revealed that the principles of Islamic education can be divided into two groups of primary and secondary principles. Primary principles are eternal, but secondary principles may change and become common or different from postmodern ideas. Pakseresht, Safaei Moghadam & Najarian (2002) found that what has paved the way for the emergence of postmodernism in the first place is the failure of modernism to fulfill promises such as democracy, peace, health and social justice in the shadow of the advancement of science and the dominance of rationality. This overview of previous research shows a dense volume of various findings but no correlation with each other. Accordingly, a systematic review of research findings from a comparative perspective can fill this arcane gap and provide a more comprehensive view of the ideas of the two schools of thought about education.

### **3. Research Method**

The present study is comparatively qualitative research in terms of nature, non-experimental in terms of control of variables, applied research in terms of purpose and systematic review in terms of method. A systematic review of the literature is important in that the researcher seeks to summarize and categorize existing findings. In the present study, the systematic study framework presented by Kitchenham & Charters (2007) was used. According to this approach, the review process should be done in three stages: design of review, review of resource and report compilation. The research population included all articles that were published in scientific journals during a period of twenty years (2000-2020) and the whole article or its abstract are available to everyone in one of the Iranian information databases such as ISC, Irandak, Magiran, Normag, etc. In

order to find the maximum resources, Boolean strategy was used in the field of title, abstract and keywords (Hynek, 2002) and then the sample size was determined ( $n = 52$ ). Additional in-depth analysis was used as a method of data analysis, in which the main focus is on specific findings in previous research (Cheng & Philips 2014).

#### **4. Findings**

After determining the selected sources according to criteria such as appropriateness to the objectives of the research, specified period and availability it in one of the Iranian information databases, in the first step, worksheets were prepared to extract the desired data and to make it clear to the colleagues of principal researcher what exactly they want to collect in each article. In the second step, to determine the validity of the selected data, two researchers familiar with the research topic re-examined the data of the previous step. In the third step, the supervisor, as the main expert, reviewed and validated the selected data according to the method of additional in-depth analysis. After performing these steps and according to the analysis of the obtained data, word traffic was examined. In the systematic review method, one of the researcher's actions is to find out what words - as the most important words related to the research objectives - are constantly repeated. Word traffic is shown in Table 1. The data in Table 1 showed that 12 words have been used more than 70 times and three words of Islam, Islamic education and postmodernism have been used more than 100 times by researchers. Also, in terms of content, these words can be divided into three groups: First, words related to the main subject of research, such as Islamic education and postmodernism. Second, words express philosophical aspects such as ontology, ethics, reason, modernism, and so on and third, words related to persons and spatial and temporal situations such as Iran, student, westernized, democracy, and so on.

Table 2. Words' Traffic

Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
Islam	101	Salvation	125	Globalization	64
Islamic education	100	Essence	120	Westernized	58
Postmodernism	100	Wisdom	115	Fanon	50
Training	94	Criticism	108	Quran	47
Educational system	92	Sharia	105	Revelation	40
Post modern	91	Hereafter	104	Nietzsche	33
Student	88	Foucault	102	freedom	32
Ontology	83	God	101	Allameh Tabatabai	30
Values	82	Epistemology	94	Plato	25
Philosophy	80	Teacher	91	Authority	22
Philosophy of education	77	Lyotard	91	Sartre	19
West	70	Iran	86	U.S.A	16
philosophers	65	Muslim	84	Human dignity	15
Ethics	66	Multi-cultural	80	Resurrection	14
Modernism	49	Derrida	80	Bourdieu	10
axiology	38	Islamic Revolution	77	Democracy	10

After examining the word traffic and semantic structure of the research, the results of data analysis are presented in three parts:

#### 4.1. Characteristics of Islamic education

Data analysis indicates that several features of Islamic education have been expressed by Iranian researchers. Some of the most important of these features are:

- Human salvation: This means that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is to raise a perfect human being and lead him to worldly and otherworldly prosperity (Asef Mohseni, 2013). In this way, man acquires all the divine attributes through Islamic education.
- The role of Essence: According to Islam, the human mind is not a blank slate with any information, but enters the realm of life with special powers, which is called "essence". Essence means a special creation that is common to all human beings

(Javadi Amoli, 2005). Essence should not be equated with nature and instinct. Nature includes living and non-living creatures and instincts related to animals, while essence is specific to humans (Zakir, 2005). For example, all human beings, without exception and according to essence, have a desire for beauty, truth and creativity (Rahbar & Rahimian, 2006). Therefore, education should be based on the Essence of students.

- The role of reason: Islamic education is a rational education. All Islamic jurists - especially Shiite jurists - believe in this jurisprudential rule that what the wisdom says is approved by the Shari'a and what the Shari'ah says is also approved by the reason (Maleki, 2005). Accordingly, reason is one of the most important sources of knowledge in the path of human education.
- Human freedom and responsibility: According to Islam, human beings are free beings and naturally have the power of choice and responsibility. There is also the belief that man can achieve salvation in the hereafter through proper training (Bagheri & Khoshkhoei, 2002).
- Continuity of education: In Islam, education is a constant process from birth to death. Therefore, this continuum does not know time and place. In Islamic thought, man always needs guidance and supervision (Banhan & Farazi, 2017).
- Universality of education: In Islam, education does not belong to a specific class, race or group. Accordingly, this opportunity should be given to all human beings regardless of individual differences (Beheshti, 2006). The school should be a place for the active presence of all learners.
- Comprehensiveness of education: According to the above characteristics, proponents of Islamic education believe that as this educational system originates from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Islam, so all aspects of human educational needs (intellectual, emotional, physical, moral, material and spiritual) are considered. (Mirza Mohammadi, 2005; Hassani & Alipour 2012). Thus, Islamic education is the most comprehensive and complete type of education.

#### 4.2. Features of Postmodern education

Analysis of the selected research reveals that Iranian researchers have pointed to various cases in examining the characteristics of postmodern education. This diversity indicates that as much as the philosophical and social views of postmodernist thinkers are widespread, diverse and ambiguous, they also do not have a coherent view about education (Forghani, Keshtiaray & Yousefy, 2015). However, the following features are mainly mentioned for postmodern education:

- Critique of Modernism: Proponents of postmodernism consider the modernism education system to have many disadvantages. This critique covers a wide range of topics from critique of the goals of modern education to school curricula (Khaleghinejad, Maleki & Hakimzadeh, 2015; Pakseresht, Safaei Moghadam & Najarian, 2002).
- Critical mentality: Proponents of postmodernism seek a pluralistic, discourse-based, anti-authoritarian, and critical education. In this regard, ideal education for postmodernists is an education that can tolerate hearing voices other than the voice of the dominant culture (Pedagogy of Voices) (Bagheri, 2007; Hosseini, Mahmoudi & Hosseini, 2007).
- Cultural pluralism: Other feature of postmodern education is respect for the culture and voice of ethnic, racial and gender minorities in educational systems and support for multicultural education (Pakseresht, Safaei Moghadam, Najarian, 2002). By accepting the equality of all cultures, postmodernism seeks to promote cultural pluralism through the educational system (Hosseini, Mahmoudi & Hosseini, 2007).
- Denying the Inclusion of Moral Judgments: Postmodern thinkers - inspired by Nietzsche's universal ideas - question moral judgments. In their opinion, in the field of education, trying to establish general rules and regulations of behavior causes the individual differences of learners to be ignored (Sajjadi, 2008).
- De-sanctification of educational patterns: Desensitization to beliefs and values and the normalization of norm-breaking are among the principles of postmodernists.

According to them, all sacred matters such as laws and institutions should be sanctified (Pourshafei & Arian, 2009; Farahani Farmahini, 2010). Due to the denial of any stability and certainty, they do not accept fixed value patterns in education and believe that students can follow different behavioral patterns in proportion to the diversity of values.

#### *4.3. Similarities and differences between Islamic education and postmodern education*

Before presenting the results related to the comparison of Islamic education with postmodern education, it is necessary to point out a few points. The content of these studies shows that most Iranian scholars in the field of philosophy of education in analysis and critique of philosophical schools have accepted definite and inviolable assumptions in their minds. These assumptions serve as standards for the acceptance or rejection of other schools of thought and philosophy. These assumptions in many cases result in nothing but misleading researchers and degrading their findings. These assumptions are:

- **Emphasis on the superiority of Islam over other religions:** In most selected studies, researchers have stated that Islam is the most complete religion, and as a result, Islamic education is complete and independent of any criticism (Zakir, 2005; Ravand, 2013). However, no attempt has been made by Iranian scholars to prove the similarity of "comprehensiveness of Islam" with "comprehensiveness of Islamic education".
- **Emphasis on Westerners' lack of knowledge about Islam:** Many researchers emphasize that Westerners and especially philosophers of schools of thought do not have an accurate knowledge of Islam and Islamic education (Rahimi & Shirkhani, 2016). The fundamental question is, even if this hypothesis is correct, what is the logical connection between it and the superiority of "Islamic education".
- **Derogatory view of the West towards Islam and Muslims:** The common denominator of other selected researches is the attempt to prove that the West and its intellectual-philosophical schools have a derogatory view of Islam and Muslims (Hakimzadeh, 2008; Khaleghinejad, Maleki & Hakimzadeh, 2015). According to this

hypothesis, most scholars tirelessly seek to prove the superiority of Islamic education over other educational systems by collecting scattered and irrelevant material from Islamic sources - such as the Qur'an and hadiths.

- Superiority of differences over similarities: According to previous assumptions, it seems that most Iranian researchers have accepted the hypothesis that there is a fundamental heterogeneity between Islamic education and other schools (Sajjadi, 2005; 2008). Accordingly, they often seek to magnify differences and ignore similarities.
- Localization of education: Simultaneously with emphasizing differences, one of the most common actions of researchers is to try to localize the views and ideas of other schools compared to Islamic education by finding verses from the Qur'an, hadiths or religious leaders speeches (Mashayekhi, 2002; Salehi & Yar Ahmadi, 2008). Their purpose in this action is to prove that, for example, what a postmodern philosopher told about education has already been stated in Islamic sources.
- Fundamental areas of Difference: One of the commonalities of selected research-regardless of their aims - which may be described as a kind of "research habit", is the intense interest of Iranian scholars in comparing philosophical schools with Islam out of four dimensions that are ontology , humanology, epistemology and axiology (Nedayi, 2010; Rahimi & Shirkhani, 2016). In fact, there is a common belief among scholars that the origin of the difference between Islam and other religions and schools of thought should be considered in the difference in these four aspects. According to them, these four domains form the main foundations of any religious or intellectual-philosophical school and form their social systems - including the educational system (Table 2). The fundamental question that Iranian researchers do not answer is that "what scientific evidence is there to show that differences in the above four domains necessarily lead to differences in educational perspectives?"

Table 2: Different directions of Islam and postmodernism in ontology, humanology, epistemology and axiology foundations

<b>Foundations</b>	<b>Postmodernism</b>	<b>Islam</b>
Ontology	Disbelief in God and disbelief in the supernatural	Theism and belief in worldly and otherworldly life
Epistemology	Denying dominance of reason and role of revelation in acquiring knowledge	Emphasis on the multiplicity of sources of knowledge such as nature, senses, experience, intellect, intuition and revelation
Humanology	Belief in the evolving nature of man with emphasis on role of language and culture	Belief in two-dimensional physical and spiritual nature of man with emphasis on role of God as the creator of human being
Axiology	Belief in relativity and variability of values with emphasis on role of man as the main source of value	Belief in fixed and unchangeable values by emphasizing role of the Qur'an and Islam as a source of values

The findings of table show that in all four areas there are obvious differences and slight similarities between Islam and postmodernism. These differences are very wide in the two areas of ontology and axiology, while in the epistemology - in terms of belief in the multiplicity of sources of knowledge - and in humanology - belief in the impactful nature of man - there are slight similarities between Islam and postmodernism. Despite these subjective assumptions, data analysis showed that the wide gap between Islamic ideology and postmodernism does not necessarily mean a profound difference between the two in the field of education (Table 3). The results of the previous sections showed 5 features of postmodern education and 7 features of Islamic education. Analysis of the data in Table 3 shows that at least 6 common features can be mentioned between the two schools of thought: First, both schools recognize the effect of education on human salvation, but the scope of this effect is not limited to worldly life for Islamic education proponents; Second, both schools accept reason only as a means of cognition; Third, both schools regard man as a free and responsible being; Fourth, the adherents of both schools consider education as a continuous and unstoppable process throughout one's life. Fifth, both schools condemn any discrimination and educational inequality - due to factors such as gender, race, culture and

class - and sixth, both theories accept cultural pluralism in the educational process and want to hear the different views of learners in school.

Table 3: Similar and different characteristics of Islamic education and postmodern education

Characteristics	Islam	Postmodernism
Human salvation	Worldly and otherworldly salvation	Worldly salvation
Role of nature	A tool in the service of the teacher	Unknown and possibly based on negation
Role of reason	One of the tools of cognition	One of the tools of cognition
Freedom and responsibility	Believe it with a religious interpretation	Believe it with a philosophical interpretation
Continuation of training	Accepted	Accepted
Universality of education	Accepted	Accepted
Comprehensiveness of education	Accept it only for Islamic education	Not accepting it for any kind of educational school
Critique of modernist education	Its acceptance in the critique of some principles of modernism	Accept it to critique all the principles of modernism
Critical spirit	Acceptance on some issues and non-acceptance on religious issues	Acceptance on all topics
Cultural pluralism	Acceptance with tolerance	Full acceptance
Denial of the inclusion of moral precepts	Rejection	Full acceptance
Sanctification of educational patterns	Full rejection	Full acceptance

This shows that, contrary to what is thought, there is a similarity in half of the features between Islamic education and postmodern education. Of course, there are important differences:

- ❖ The first difference goes back to the role of essence in education. While the philosophers of the school of postmodernism have not given any clear and specific opinion about essence, there is basically no source to show that these philosophers are aware of the existence of a this factor. In fact, most Iranian scholars, based on the idea that since there are differences between the views of postmodern and Muslim philosophers on ontology and epistemology, then postmodern philosophers

certainly do not accept essence role in education. The present researchers could not find any evidence to support this view.

- ❖ The second difference is not limited to these two educational schools. Belief in the comprehensiveness of Islamic education, in principle and without exception, causes differences between the supporters of Islamic education and all other philosophical schools. Of course, this belief has been criticized by some Iranian experts (Heidari Manesh, Shaykh al-Islami & Sheidanian, 2021). In their opinion believing in the comprehensiveness of Islam does not necessarily mean the comprehensiveness of Islamic education.
- ❖ While postmodernist philosophers have largely focused their sharp attacks on the principles and foundations of modernism, proponents of Islamic education have espoused the school of modernism in some areas and postmodern in others.
- ❖ While postmodern education believes in supporting the critical spirit of learners in all social, moral, religious, cultural and educational subjects, Islamic education does not allow criticism in some religious subjects and emphasizes imitation.
- ❖ While Islamic education believes in teaching ethics based on principles such as the inclusion of moral principles and the stability of values, postmodern education seeks to critique all moral boundaries by learners according to the new requirements of life.
- ❖ While postmodern education insists on the desecration of any fixed educational model, Islamic education emphasizes the role of individuals such as prophets and other religious leaders as educational and behavioral models.

The sum of these similarities and differences indicates a common zone in the goals and principles of education (Figure 1):

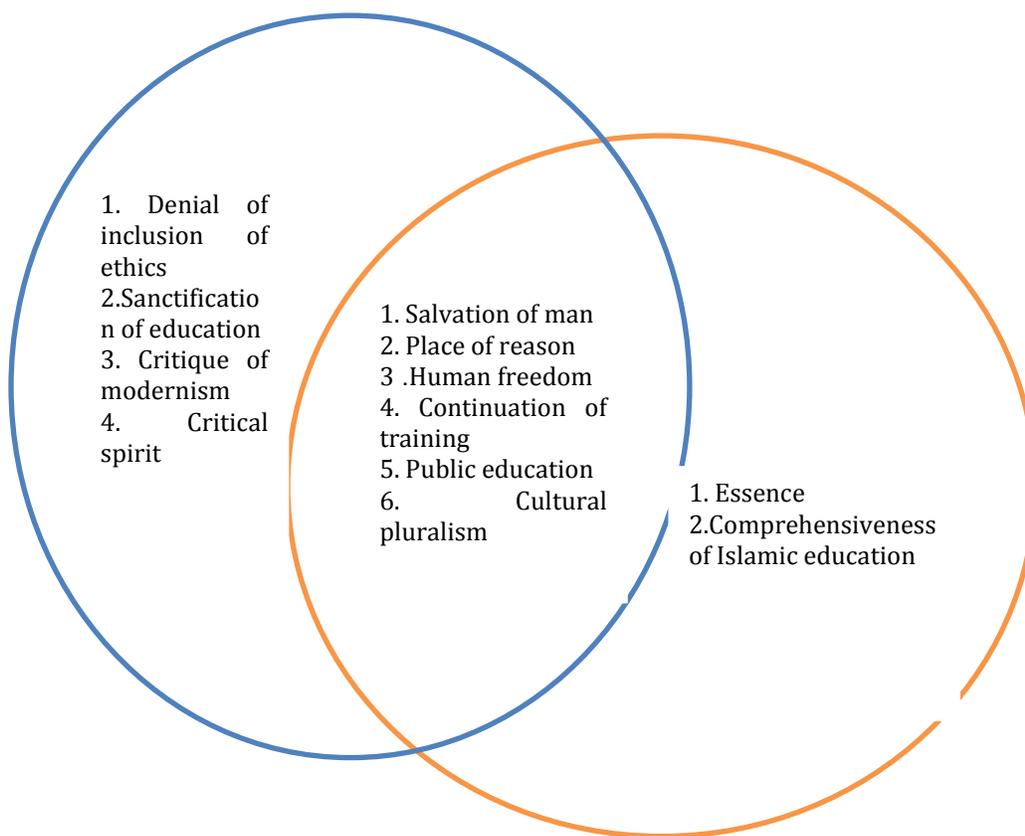


Figure 1: Common zone in Islamic education and postmodern education

## 5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to systematically review the findings of research related to Islamic education and postmodern education during the last two decades in Iran. The research literature revealed that this issue is not much considered by researchers in other countries of the world, while the interest of Iranian specialists in the philosophy of education to critical-controversial research continues. The interpretation of the present researchers is that the reason for this continuing interest is that the policymakers of the Iran educational system - influenced by the rule of the political system of the Islamic Republic - are strongly seeking to achieve the goals of Islamic education through upstream documents. Accordingly, the tendency of both the political and educational systems of Iran to recognize and compare the goals of other educational schools automatically affects the research orientation of faculty members and researchers. It is clear that

this interpretation is mostly based on empirical evidence and personal experience of current researchers, and its generalization is subject to independent research in this field. Another finding of the study was to pay attention to the mental assumptions of researchers. In our view, the consequence of these assumptions is a reduction in the generalizability of findings of these studies. The research findings also indicated that most researchers have named five features of postmodern education and seven features of Islamic education. There are two notable points about this finding: First, to determine the characteristics of Islamic education, most Iranian researchers usually provide a long list of characteristics to show that Islamic education has considered all aspects of life. Second, a cursory analysis of this list reveals that many of features are not directly related to education and are more philosophical in nature.

The third finding of the research revealed that, contrary to popular belief, the similarities between the two educational systems are equal to the differences. This finding is not consistent with the results of previous research (Bahari, 2013; Nedayi, 2010; Pourshafei, & Arian, 2009; Salehi, & Yar Ahmadi, 2008; Shahi, 2011; Zakir, 2005). Another finding of the research indicates that the similarities between the two schools are mainly educational and the differences between them are often ideological. For example, while in Islam some principles have a very definite and sacred status so that no doubt is allowed about their acceptance, the ideology of postmodernism emphasizes the denial of any certain principles in the form of metanarratives. Although this ideological conflict can have educational consequences, in practice a small part of the materials and subjects, the atmosphere of classrooms and schools and the activities of pupils are affected by these differences. According to these findings, the following are suggested to researchers of educational philosophy in Iran to improve the quality of their future research:

- Avoiding the repetition of critical-controversial research and one-sided conclusions while there is practically no audience in the Iran academic environment to respond their criticisms about other philosophical and educational schools.
- Awareness and avoidance of the dangers of subjective assumptions for conducting comparative research in the field of philosophy of education
- Avoid confusing philosophical and religious issues with educational matters and non-scientific conclusions
- Attempting to analyze and compare the consequences of Islamic education and non-Islamic education by examining and analyzing the objective behaviors of Iranian and non-Iranian principals, teachers, and students

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