Educational Teachings of Molla Hadi Sabzevari

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Abstract

Molla Hadi Sabzevari whose philosophy is based on Molla Sadr’a views tries to accentuate the role of rationality in educating the people of a society. This study explores the educational teachings of Molla Hadi Sabzevari as related to the different approaches to the philosophy of education. The main findings of the study concern a discussion of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and philosophy of education. The study also introduces some of Sabzevari’s ideas such as his efforts to seek intuitive knowledge of the divine and self-deny, achieving perfection based on self-knowledge, affective education based on nurturing love and purity of heart, and his emphasis on the God-Human closeness. Sabzevari’s personality itself functions as a model which foreground non-attachment to material possessions, effective use of teachings of religious figures, paying attention to spiritual knowledge, taking into account the daily lives of the students and their individual differences, humility, self-care, sociability and amicability, witticism, and his immense knowledge. These ideas and patterns may be used as a valuable guide for educationists.

Keywords: Philosophy of Education, Epistemology, Ontology, Axiology.
1. Introduction

The role of Molla Hadi Sabzevari in reviving the transcendent wisdom of Molla Sadra (1571-1640) is undeniable. In addition to being one of the prominent exponents of Sadra’s transcendent philosophy, Sabzevari practically lived his entire life in line with such a philosophical perspective (Eshragh), and soon became a paragon of morality and Islamic education for his disciples.

There have been some researches about Molla Hadi Sabzevari’s philosophical views so far. However, the present study intends to investigate the educational principles and implications of his ideas for education. Thus, the study highlights Sabzevari’s teachings with regard to materializing one’s talents and potentials and striking a balance in such a way as to prepare the ground for developing educational programs to improve the current educational system in Iran.

1.1. A brief biography of Molla Hadi Sabzevari

Molla Hadi Sabzevari is known as a scholar and a leading exponent of Molla Sadra’s philosophy. Sabzevari was one of the prominent mystics and teachers of his time who in addition to educating many successful students has left behind significant writings. His personal life which turned a blind eye to material possessions and properties of the world stood against being a subservient to the authorities of his time. His disciples and students all were talented and knowledgeable scholars of various sciences (Ashtiani, 2005, pp.100-104).

Sabzevari’s works have been taught in religious schools since their initial publications. One of the important contemporary explication of his works belongs to Morteza Motahari (2006) which specifically explores the theological aspects of his works.

Molla Hadi ibn Hajj Mizra Hadi ibn Mohammad Sadegh Sabzevari was born in 1797 in Sabzevari and died in 1873. He lived in Sabzevari for ten years and studied grammar and morphology. He entered schools of philosophy and mathematics in Isfahan when he was about twenty years old. Some of his teachers were Molla Ismael Vahed Al-Eyn and Molla abdol Razzagh Lahiji.

Not only did Sabzevari exceed in religious issues and teachings, but also in mysticism and intuitive knowledge. He was in addition to being a self-taught mystic and religious scholar became a man of personal wisdom and good behavior in language and thought.
In regard to transcendental (or sublime) philosophy, Sabzevari began to teach important books such as *Four Journeys of the Philosopher* by Molla Sadra Shirazai, known as Sadrol Motallehin. Students who sat in Sabzevari’s classes for seven years become competent enough to graduate in philosophy. More groups of students attended his classes. It is worth noting that during the seven year education, his teachings were not limited to *Four Journeys of the Philosopher* or other writings by Molla Sadra. In fact, he used many other sources (Rezanejad, 1992, pp.38-98).

2. Discussion

Before beginning the discussion, it is necessary to explicate some of the key words with regard to Sabzevari’s views.

2.1. Ontology

Sabzevari writes that,

Existence does not have any limits and thus is not definable; it does not have a limit because it is infinite and has no design, because design is a matter of “property” and is one of the five generals, and these generals are a matter of “essence”, whereas, existence and its properties are not matters of essence. Despite this, the concept of “existence” is an axiomatic one. However, the truth of existence is not transferrable to the mind let alone claim that it is axiomatic or theoretical (Motahari, 1976, p.26).

2.2. Epistemology

Epistemological discussions have appeared in Islamic philosophical books extensively. The reason for this is the fact that the role of certainty in rationality within the paradigm of Islamic philosophy has always been foregrounded, while ontological issues have not been discussed systematically as an independent branch of philosophy (Mesbah Yazdi, 1991, vol.1, p.150). These topics have been included in various books on Islamic philosophy. Some of them concern the properties, more specifically, the self-centeredness of the properties. Some others concern the role of knowledge, that is self-knowledge, and yet some deal with rationality and the rational. Finally, some address the issue of generals and particulars and mental existences.

Philosophy of Education has been established in the West since a century ago and M.A and PhD research programs have been designed. This discipline has run its evolutionary course. It began with topics like philosophical positions approach or implications approach and
continued under the titles of isms approach, traditional theory, and philosophy of education (Beheshti, 2010).

This approach which prevails on the philosophy of education in early twentieth century is based on the assumption that one can infer implications for the purpose, program, and method of education from investigating ontological, epistemological, and axiological, and philosophical systems. The theosophical basis of such an approach began with Platonic idealism and since then has evolved into different philosophical schools of thought such as pragmatism, existentialism, analytic philosophy, and postmodernism.

With regard to the role of epistemology in education, it can be noted that in fact epistemology has a direct influence on all aspects of education, especially, the method of education. It is obvious that learning methods depends on how to gain knowledge, methods and materials of knowledge, nature of knowledge, and the nature of cognitive capacities of the learners.

Islamic realism emphasizes innate and intuitive knowledge with regard to epistemology and considers sense perception and mental organization as codependent, thus, highlighting both empirical and analogical forms of learning. On the other hand, since in Islamic philosophy there is a property for the soul, and the soul has perceptual abilities, mind and thought specially emphasized. In other words, in such a view, knowledge is not naive spontaneous reflection, rather the mind is prepared through education (Shekarian, 2008, p.31).

2.3. Axiology

From a philosophical perspective, axiology goes back to Greek philosophy. Plato, following Socrates, considers axioms (values) absolute and thus independent of personal and social variables.

Similarly, Muslim philosophers consider axioms as absolute and trans-historical. Allameh Tabatabaie contends that similar to the maturation of an individual in a society values mature and evolve in the course of time. This does not however mean that there are no absolute principle. Rather, moral axioms such as purity, courage, wisdom, and justice have always been considered good and will never become otherwise. Accordingly, axiology affects all aspects of education because moral principles constitute the heart and soul of the educational system in Islamic philosophy and circulate like blood in the veins of that system. In such a view, the human perfection depends on acquiring moral virtues, avoiding vices, and enhancing innate inclinations for beauty, good, and perfection. The aim of Islamic education is human perfection.
which depends on human-God closeness. Therefore, moral education is very important so much so that it is privileged over acquiring knowledge (Shekarian, 2008, p.32).

2.4. Transcendental philosophy

“Transcendental philosophy (Hekmat Mote’ali)” describes the philosophical system of Sadre al-Din Mohammad Shirazi, known as Molla Sadra and Sadre al-Motallehin. However, this was not used by Molla Sadra himself, rather, it was first used by Avicenna in Chapter 9 and 10 of his book, “Points and Reminders (Esharat va Tanbihat)” (Beheshti, 2013, p.17).

Some of the most important characteristics of transcendental philosophy from Molla Sadra’s perspective are:

2.4.1. Reconciliation of four philosophical schools (Mashaie, Eshraghi, Solouki, and Erfani) and rational argumentation in line with principles presented in the Koran, tradition (sunnah), and mysticism.

2.4.2. Ordering basic sciences of philosophy in the form of four mystic journeys

2.4.3. Creating new and unique ideas of his own (p.18)

It is worth mentioning that Hakim Sabzevari is one of the most distinguished exponents of Sadra’s book, Transcendental Philosophy.

3. Philosophy of Education

In education, philosophy means to think philosophically, to philosophize. It means trying to come up with special scripts and frames to think about educational issues and policies. Philosophy of education means to analyze in details the components of education to devise a frame for a theory of education. It can be accordingly argued in general that philosophy of education includes three aspects: pre-deductive stage, deductive stage, and post-deductive stage. These three stages are not hierarchically the same; rather their order is significant (Beheshti, 2012).

Philosophy of education, in its pre-deductive stage stage, is nothing but a compilation of the ideas of the philosophers, contemporary or others, with regard to education. At this stage, philosophy of education has nothing to do with creation and innovation except for a somewhat creative reproduction of what has already been said. At this stage, philosophy of education is in fact a historical survey which only compiles, investigates, and explains existing philosophical ideas.

Philosophy of education, in its deductive stage, is systematic and logical mental efforts of thephilosopher of education to discover and infer the educational views of philosophers as
related to purpose, programs, and methods of education within the general categories of epistemology, ontology, and axiology.

Philosophy of education, in the post-deductive stage, means creating new philosophical principles and finding their corresponding implications for education. It is worth mentioning that these three stages in the philosophy of education can be rephrased as “recycling”, “discovering” and “creating”. It goes without saying that to achieve a philosophy for Islamic education requires research in all of these three areas. In sum, philosophy of education, epistemologically, is one of the philosophical sciences or additional philosophies which explains rationally the principles and assumptions of education (Beheshti b, 2006, pp.114-16).

With regard to the educational concepts and principles, Sabzevari notes in his Logical Investigations that statements, reasoning’s, and educational arguments and theories of education, concepts and their affirmative conceptual framework are important (Motahari, 2006).

4. Philosophy of Education from Sabzevari’s perspective

4.1. Ontology

We may begin the discussion by asking whether one can extrapolate a philosophy of education from a millennium of Islamic philosophy which could be able to provide the ground for a theory and practice of education and help the individual and the society. In response to this question, first we need to explore the nature of and types of philosophies of education and then investigate the relationship between Islamic ontology and education. Finding such a relationship can further help us to infer certain implications for anthropology and philosophy of science and finally present its implications for education.

Studying what the philosophers have said about the reality of the world is in many aspects significant for education. Philosophers and scientists who limit themselves to one or a few disciplines cannot grasp or present a comprehensive system which explains the world. Given the fact that ontology deals with knowing reality, it is understandable that different philosophers have interpreted the world differently, some have highlighted its material aspects and some spiritual. From the spiritualists’ perspective, the world is a manifestation of an independent reality; the ultimate goal of education is in fact achieving spiritual perfection. Therefore, teachers and learners, and in general the educational system, must take into account spiritual issues in their practice. Some philosophers have nevertheless considered the ultimate reality of the world as material. In contrast to these two views, one can mention religious realism which considers the world as a reconciliation of matter and spirit originated from the God. Therefore it seems obvious that educational purposes of each of these philosophies are different from one another,
and in fact, educational purposes depend on underlying ontological principles (Shariatmadari, 1990, p.116).

4.2. The distinction between existence and essence

The primary basic distinction in Islamic ontology is between existence and essence. Such a distinction leads to many consequences with regard to ontology and philosophy of education so far so that the main contradistinction between Islamic philosophy of education and other schools of thought such as behaviorism, essentialism, and naturalism lies in this. Accordingly, human beings are one of the objects in the world whose existence is different from their essence. This distinction paves the way for discussing the truth and identity and his need for education and leads to the question of whether the true nature of human beings are defined in terms of their existence or their personality. In other words, whether in education we should pay attention to the existence and being or to personality and character (Mousavi, 2010, p.16).

Philosophers before Molla Sadra considered knowledge and science as essence and dependent on human beings’ qualities, however, in the course of the evolution of transcendental philosophy, knowledge and science were freed from qualities and properties and were oriented toward existence and being.

In a commentary on Sabzevari’s book, Motahari writes that knowledge does not belong to any category and similar to existence, has its own essence and properties. Thereof roe, sciences and scientist are ontologically united; it is not that one happens for the other (Motahari, 2006).

Molla Hadi Sabzevari considers human existence among other creatures as the most remarkable phenomenon which is the ultimate reason for creation; his existence functions as mediation between the blessings of the divine and the earthly lives. In such a view, human beings are worshipped by the angels. Sabzevari constantly invites human beings to self-knowledge which is the prerequisite for knowing God. Sabzevari has in fact explained the position of human being in the world (Amini, 2011a, p.2).

5. Epistemological principles for education from Sabzevari’s perspective

5.1. Education

From Sabzevari’s perspective, to gain knowledge of something one needs to analyze it in a special logical frame. Such a logical frame is referred to as “three issues” by Sabzevari and are
generally questions with regard to what, existence, and why. In other words, the three issues are what, how, and why.

Islam has a comprehensive and inclusive system and similar to other religions pays attention to all aspects of life such as economics, society, government, and especially to education. The reason for this is that religion is in fact considered as a plan for living; thus, logically speaking, such a plan must necessarily address these aspects.

In defining education, Hakim Sabzevari says that education means reaching the truth of God and coming to awareness of one’s own defects. Thus, the first step in education is to know one’s own self and to realize the defects and shortcomings in one’s character. After such self-knowledge he is expected to seek a higher form of being who can make up for his own defects. Education plays a significant role in achieving this goal. Accordingly, recognition and materialization of sublime human values and achieving higher moral principles depend on education. In other words, to become a human being in its true sense and to achieve perfection depend on education that is based on correct principles. Thus, Islamic education, by using teaching of Koran and Sunnah is able to guide the human beings to their final goal which is achieving closeness with God (Amin, 2011b, p.169).

5.2. Intuition in the process of education

Knowledge is not solely a cognitive, mental, or sense-empirical phenomenon and is the result of the mental, emotional, and practical involvement of the subject of knowledge in the object of knowledge. Moreover, given the fact that knowledge and understanding are important key concepts in Sabzevari’s views, one can argue that knowledge and understanding are ways to reach self-knowledge and to realize one’s own inner talents and then try to manifest them. Intuitive education is creating insightfulness and thoughtfulness in a person. Spiritual or intuitive education is in fact the shedding of light on a problem. Such a thing is achieved by long and sometimes unconscious mental activity. In general, the idea of movement and going to somewhere is important. Intuitive education is not the arena of passive reading, writing, listening, memorizing, reciting, and inert discussions. Rather, it is closely tied with action and movement. Similarly, spiritual reflection is considered a kind of journey.

Adopting Sabzevari’s ideas for education one can say that intuitive education is a journey in cognition and consciousness, a journey which begins in the inner self of the individual, reaches self-consciousness, and then moves on to the world of consciousness, and finally to a consciousness of God. In such a view, what matters in learning is the gradual recognition and understanding which deepens in time. It must be noted that such an understanding requires a living relationship with the topic of knowledge, a rather love relationship. In other words, inner
eagerness and enthusiasm are needed to achieve this form of understanding. In such a kind of education all aspects of the individual are influenced by education. Since all knowledge and truth belongs to God, understanding requires using all possible ways of gaining knowledge. In fact, the most important motivation in human beings is seeking truth (p. 175).

6. Aims of education from Sabzevari’s perspective

6.1. Knowledge of God, reaching God, and self-denial

In self-denial, when the actions and personality of the self is annihilated in the presence of the almighty God, a person may be able to intuitively see God and comes to gain knowledge of Him. As Hakim Sabzevari puts it, the intuition of God is the ultimate reason for the sending of prophets, Imams, and truth seekers.

Seeking God as the goal of education has two functions from Hakim Sabzevari’s perspective: first, the seeking of human beings by God. It must be noted that such a closeness is not to be understood as a materialistic image because “spatio-temporal” closeness applies for two entities which have their own independent existence while when we say that God is close to us we mean that He is ubiquitous and omnipresence. Hakim Sabzevari notes in his explanations of God’s names that God is omnipresent in every object and if for one moment He stops his doing so all things will become nothing. Second is the seeking of God by human beings. From a religious perspective an action is valuable when it makes the one who takes that action closer to God. Hakim Sabzevari in his book on the names of God notes this and says:

seeking God and gaining closeness to him is true because a person can become closer to God by obtaining moral values and Godly characteristics, and this is the kind of closeness which is encouraged in prayers; if any form of worship and prayer does not possess this, it is not valuable.

Having illustrated that the ultimate goal of human beings is seeking closeness with God, one must ask how to achieve this perfection?

In explaining the ways to seek perfection, Sabzevari notes with regard to types of practical knowledge that theoretical reason like practical reason has four steps: purification, gaining the moral good, doing good actions, and finally, self-denial.

In the first step, one needs to purify himself of moral vices because a human being whose soul has been tainted by the sins and vices cannot manifest the qualities of God.

In the second step, a person needs to gain moral good because he needs to sweep his heart off the thorns and weeds of sins and then embellish his heart with the beauties of good.
In the third step, a person needs to take actions with regard to religious teachings in his course of perfection so that he can be able to manifest in himself the presence of God.

The fourth step is self-denial where the person seeking truth finds his own perfection as nothing in relation to God because in the world all beauties and light are only a ray of the light of God. It is like a firefly who shines in the dark but whose light becomes invisible in daylight (Saeidi Sabzevari, 1994, pp.157, 158).

6.2. Realization of perfection

Similar to other Islamic thinkers, Hakim Sabzevari considers the true perfection of human beings as dependent on acquiring the qualities and characteristics of God. Therefore, the ultimate goal of intuitive education is the realization of perfection (p.176).

6.3. Self-knowledge

Self-knowledge is a type of knowing the inner self which is the result of coming to contact with the Godly essence of human beings. Therefore, introspection in one’s self, that is, self-knowledge, is one of the aims of intuitive education. Self-knowledge is discovering the deeper and inner layers of one’s being. As a result of this discovery, the conflicts and contradictions between surface and deep meaning are eradicated and consequently one may able to reach perfection and a balance and unity of identity. From Hakim Sabzevari’s perspective, self-knowledge enables a person to gain knowledge about the perfect qualities of God and defects of the person himself.

6.4. Affective education with an emphasis on love and purity of heart

One of the tools for educating a person is through his emotions and affective states. Therefore, one’s heart should be full of moral good. Some of human emotions which are derived from God and his unity of existence lead him to knowledge and understanding (p. 177).

7. Axiological principles of education from Sabzevari’s perspective

Axiology, as a philosophical activity, helps to determine a criterion, in light of religious principles, for a studying educational activities and policies in various areas. Philosophy of education is a theoretical framework which plays a significant role in education. This role entails guidance and rethinking of issues influencing education. From this aspect, philosophy of education is like a benchmark which determines the efficacy of different activities within education, and which helps to decide what to add and what to remove from a system of education (Taherpour and Sharifzadeh, 2013, p.13).
8. Anthropological principles of education from Sabzevari’s perspective

Human beings as the subject of education play a pivotal role in an educational system and any approach to human beings can change directly and immediately in the course of education. In Islamic realism, a human being is considered to have two important characteristics: knowledge and faith. Therefore, spiritual, moral, reason, and critical thinking are emphasized. Moreover, given that in Islamic realism, human essence is considered the mother of all forms of knowledge, it behooves the educational system to revitalize human essence and consider it as one of the principles of education.

If human beings possess certain essences then their education must be carried out in light of those essential qualities. The word “tarbiat” in Persian refers in fact to this aspect of education (Motahari, 2003, p. 51). Anthropologically speaking, human beings share the quality of being human without a difference. What can materialize the potentials and talents of human beings belongs to all the same, and no one should be deprived of any such opportunities. One of the main things that all people need is the right for education which highlights the role of human beings as well as education (Shekarian, 2008, p.30).

9. Moral principles of education from Hakim Sabzevari’s perspective

9.1. Human being as having a freedom of choice

No doubt a person may reach sublime states of perfection and manifest the qualities of God or fall into the pit of animalness or even less pleasant states than that. This difference is rooted in the person’s character and self which can acquire various shapes and identities.

Hakim Sabzevari criticizes his predecessors who considered human beings as lacking a freedom of choice and says that,

though you too have come to the conclusion to consider the human agent as the source of action, your words lead to total determinism, because by using linguistic embellishments and word play one cannot change the reality. That you have used concepts like companionship, togetherness, and acquisition and have considered human beings as tool and channel for carrying out an action does not rejects such a deterministic view (Sabzevari, 1994, p.55).
9.2. Human being as seeker of perfection

Physical growth is a tangible phenomenon in human beings and is measurable with numerical criteria. In some mental issues one can similarly measure emotional and thought growth form observing behavior.

Seeking for perfection of the self has been confirmed in Islamic philosophy with which Molla Sadra and his followers agree, arguing that, the human self is physically contingent and spiritually immortal. This idea is based on the concept of movement towards perfection which occurs in the essence and properties of the material. Human self-beings his movement from the material world to world beyond the material which is abstract and ideal is significant. As Motahari notes, the self is physically contingent and spiritually eternal (2006).

In The Secrets of Knowledge, Sabzevari discusses the immaterial self and considers it as divine and Godly. With regard to seeking perfection and inclination of the self to absolute perfection, he writes that “the self is essentially inclined to reach its origin” (Sabzevari, 1982, p.366).

With regard to education of the objects, Sabzevari notes in his book about the names of God that,

God is only one of the divine names which in its force of education of objects and their seeking perfection are located as moving upward. Human being is not exempted from this realm, as another name for the divine may be located as in a lower position. All essence and material have been guided to reach its own form of perfection and the ultimate force behind all this is no one but God (Sabzevari, 1994, p.155).

10. Sabzevari as a model for teachers

Hakim Sabzevari never took things superficially or for granted. Rather, he investigated everything deeply and keenly observed the complexities of any any issue. He spared no effort in studying and explicating the teaching and ideas of religious figures. He was well-versed in lexicology and was able to interpreted difficult philosophical and mystic texts. In other words, Sabzevari was a philosopher, a mystic, a writer, and a committed scholar who tried to explain the difficulties and complexities of religious texts and concepts and reconcile them with the mind of their readers (Rezanejad, 1992, p.50).
Examples of Sabzevari’s behavior as a model for teachers

- Non-attachment to material possessions: one of the prominent characteristics of Hakim Sabzevari was his inattention of material possessions. While he was relatively well-off, he did not save any money except only enough to meet his daily needs; he gave his income away to his students and the poor (Anbarani, 1991).
- Proper use of religious teachings: Sabzevari explained a line of Persian or Arabic poetry, a chapter of Koran, or some religious teachings. His use of such topics prepared the students and created an immense degree of enthusiasm in them (Anbarani, 1991, p.126).
- Paying attention to intuitive knowledge as a way of gaining consciousness: Sabzevari had a purity of heart and his nightly prayers and supplications created a close tie between him and the almighty God. His knowledge was great and woven into his own being. He relied on God asked for succor from him. In all aspects of life he relied on the helping hand of God.
- Caring for the physical and spiritual life of his students: Hakim Sabzevari was particularly involved in the daily lives of his students. He gave away all of his income from the farm he had to his students. Hakim helped others without they asking him.
- Taking into account individual differences: Hakim Sabzevari chose his students with special attention and rigor. He dismissed those who were not competent enough to attend higher level classes. Applicants for attending his classes had to go through certain classes to become competent enough to attend the main classes. If Hakim Sabzevari saw that someone has special talents, he did his bests to help that person materialize his talents (Anbarani, 1991, p.127).
- Modesty: Though Hakim Sabzevari was an eminent scholar and mystic he bever claimed any authority in these areas. He led a simple life, was modest, and did not save any material possessions neither for himself nor for his family (Anbarani, 1991, p.124).
- Self-observation in all aspects of life: Sabzevari was a prominent figure in philosophy and religious principles. In mysticism and logics he was well-versed, and in his language he was eloquent (Rezanejad, 1992, p.162).
- Amicability and witticism: Hakim Sabzevari was a tall slim man, with an amicable face, eloquent language, and modest behavior.

11. Conclusion

In all human societies the role of philosophers is to explain the fundamental principles of value systems in that society. A philosopher is like forerunners who leads other people and help others choose the right path in their lives.
This study has investigated Hakim Sabzevari’s views, mainly based on Molla Sadra’s philosophy, and their implications for education. Sabzevari drew people’s attention to divine teachings and tried to make people closer to God and spirituality. This study has tried to theorize a new basis for a system of education by using Sabzevari’s ideas and therefore has proposed new principles for the process of education.

Hakim Sabzevari considers closeness to God as the ultimate form of perfection and believes that all efforts in education must be taken to achieve this goal.

The theory of essence transformation, which is one of the most brilliant ideas of Molla Sadra, was also confirmed by Hakim Sabzevari. This theory can be used for inferring educational principles. According to this theory, each body finds its appropriate soul in its transformations and then becomes unified with it. Human being is not a creature with a stable and unchanging identity nor a stable position. Rather, according to the transformations in its essence, a human being possess certain this world or other worldly qualities. In each level and realm a human being is shaped in relation to its appropriate context, and all cases moves from defect to perfection.

Given the fact that a human being is not complete when born and needs to find a way to reach perfection it is this trans-historical need that an educationist must meet. Moreover, the role of the teacher or educationist is not just a matter of duty and contract, rather matter of guiding the students to perfection.

Hakim Sabzevari had established a close spiritual relationship with his students so close a relationship that the students loved him greatly. A comparison between the life and teaching style of Hakim Sabzevari with some contemporary teachers shows that the current educational system in Iran needs a reconsideration and introduction of new ideas.

One of the main goals of Sabzevari in education was to gain intuitive knowledge of the divine and to self-annihilate one’s self in the presence of God. The realization of a perfect human being depends on self-knowledge, affective education based on love and purity of heart, paying attention to reaching a closeness with God, and also on anthropological and moral principles. From Hakim Sabzevari’s perspective human beings are free and perfection seekers.

One of the other things that this study has tried to show is that Sabzevari’s character can be used as a model for teachers. Some of his traits like ignoring material possession, proper use of religious texts and teachings, paying attention to spiritual knowledge, caring for the lives of his students, taking into account individual differences, modesty, self-observance, amicability and witticism are important. Together with his immense knowledge, each of these can be used as a model for teachers in education.
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