



## Educational Philosophy Professors' Perspectives on Missions of Educational Philosophy: The case of Iranian and non-Iranian contexts

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### ABSTRACT

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, educational philosophers face critical responsibilities, including theorizing, analyzing, and evaluating educational issues, while determining educational approaches and reassessing goals for conceptual clarity. The present study undertakes a comparative analysis of the roles and responsibilities of Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophers through qualitative interviews. This qualitative study involved interviews with a selection of Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophy professors. Entry criteria required participants to be professors with at least five years of teaching experience, while exit criteria allowed participants to withdraw from the study at any time. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify core responsibilities and influences shaping their educational philosophies. Additionally, literature on educational philosophy in both Iranian and non-Iranian contexts was reviewed to derive emergent themes illustrating similarities and differences across the two settings. Findings indicate that while the responsibilities of Iranian professors align with those of their global counterparts, their perspectives are influenced by local cultural contexts, especially religious values, and a strong sense of Iranian identity. This reflects a meaningful intersection of global educational philosophy and distinctive local contexts. The study highlights the necessity for educational philosophers to tackle contemporary challenges by diagnosing problems, analyzing issues, and proposing effective solutions. It emphasizes the importance of training future educational philosophers to recognize cultural and religious influences and cultivate skills to effectively address educational issues in a global context.

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## **Intruduction**

Philosophy aims to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the universe, emphasizing humanity's position within it and the responsibilities individuals hold towards themselves and others. The different categories of philosophy—ontological, epistemological, and axiological—reflect and inform one's political, social, and educational orientations. Consequently, each philosophical school influences educational goals and practices, as no two philosophers share identical viewpoints (Hashemi, 2010; Mahroozadeh, 2010). For instance, idealism encourages educational philosophers to guide individuals toward self-fulfillment and absolute values, while whereas pragmatism emphasizes the transmission of cultural values through education. On the other hand, post-structuralist thinkers, such as Heidegger and Foucault critique power structures, suggesting that knowledge is often arbitrary and shaped by those in authority (Giroux, 1992).

Given the existence of diverse philosophical schools, it is essential to improve interactions between educational authorities and philosophers. Bagheri (2006) asserts that societal perceptions of educational philosophy must shift to underscore its relevance to daily life. Kneller (1971) categorizes educational responsibilities as theoretical, norm-based, and categorical, further classifying philosophers as progressive, conservative, or neo-structuralist. Ghaedi (2013) identifies two key roles for educational philosophers: historical followers and active practitioners, the latter enhancing the field's depth and relevance. Davis and Sumara (2020) argue that educational philosophers uniquely contribute to addressing educational challenges through principled inquiry, inclusivity, and value evaluation. Khadivi et al. (2022), asserts that philosophy is essential for education. They noted that, in addition to the specific topics it addresses, philosophy also examines the foundational assumptions of other areas of knowledge. Educational philosophy is a branch of philosophy that examines the process of education through a philosophical lens. “The method of philosophy is rational rather than empirical, and logical reasoning serves as the philosopher's primary tool” (Karamad & Davoodi, 2021, 13). By clarifying and examining the presuppositions of each educational theory, educational philosophy provides deep insights, facilitating the conscious acceptance and rejection of ideas that underpin effective educational practices.

According to Khadivi et al. (2022), adopting a philosophical view will help teachers in educating students. The philosophical foundations of education in Iran are articulated in the comprehensive document, ‘The Theoretical Foundations of Fundamental Transformations in the Formal and General Education System of the Islamic Republic of Iran,’ approved by the Supreme Council of Education in 2011. This document explores the educational ideals and outcomes of the educational system from diverse perspectives, aiming to present an educated individual aligned with Iranian-Islamic characteristics.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, educational systems globally faced unprecedented challenges, necessitating a re-evaluation of the roles of educators and philosophers. The crisis prompted discussions on emerging issues, such as virtual education, isolation, and the dominance of technology, highlighting the necessity for educational philosophers to engage in social justice and equity initiatives (Baumfield & Hall, 2022). Papastephanou (2021) emphasized the importance of questioning underlying societal norms during this period. Additionally, Hejný (2021) examined the characteristics, possibilities, and limits of the e-learning method, while Prempeh (2023) called for philosophical frameworks to better navigate educational objectives reshaped by the pandemic. Furthermore, studies by Raghunathan et al. (2022) and Ferreira et al. (2020) addressed the importance of mental health and ethical educational practices in the face of the pandemic.

According to the philosophical foundations of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the ultimate goal of education is to achieve a virtuous life, representing the ideal condition for human existence. The missions of educational philosophers encompass the critical analysis of educational topics (such as punishment, reward, learning, and teaching), the exploration of abstract questions about education, and the pursuit of a coherent framework that aligns all educational activities, ensuring that each component contributes to the overall educational aims. These responsibilities reflect the broader objectives of educational philosophy in Iran and highlight the importance of contextual factors in philosophical thought.

Therefore, educational philosophers have a crucial role in resolving educational crises and promoting inclusivity. This study aims to compare the missions of Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophers, clarifying their similarities and differences addressing the ongoing challenges. Specifically, this study investigates the modified responsibilities of educational philosophers during societal and educational shifts. Therefore, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the main roles and characteristics of the Iranian educational philosophers?
2. What are the main roles and characteristics of the non-Iranian educational philosophers?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the roles and characteristics of the Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophers?

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

In this study, the term 'Iranian philosophers' refers to individuals with expertise in the philosophy of education. Notable participants include Dr. Khosrow Bagheri (Faculty member at the University of Tehran), Shahin Iravani (Faculty member at the University of Tehran), and Saeed Zarghami (Faculty member at Kharazmi University), to name a few. Entry criteria for participation required individuals to be professors with at least five years of teaching experience

in educational philosophy. Exit criteria allowed participants to withdraw from the study at any point for personal reasons. Table 1 summarizes the codes and affiliations of the Iranian participants.

Let me know if you need any further modifications or additional information!

**Table 1.** *The Academic Affiliation of the Iranian Educational Philosophy Professors Participating in the Study<sup>1</sup>*

Code	Specialty	Work Place
1	Philosophy of Education	Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz
2		Kharazmi University
3		Research and Planning Organization of Education Ministry
4		Kashan University
5		Tarbiat Modarres University
6		Qom University
8		Kharazmi University
8		Ferdowsi University of Mashad
9		Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz
10		Shahed University of Tehran
11		Cognitive Sciences Organization of Tehran
12		Mazandaran University
13		Howzeh and University Research Center
14		Tehran University
15		Tehran University
16		Tehran University
17		Tehran University
18		Tehran University

Moreover, the term ‘non-Iranian philosophers’ refers to established scholars such as Pilgren (Professor of Philosophy of Education at Stockholm University, Sweden), Stengel (Professor of Philosophy of Education at Vanderbilt University), and Taylor (Professor of Philosophy of Education at McGill University, Canada), to name a few. Table 2 summarizes the codes and *the academic affiliation* of the non-Iranian participants.

<sup>1</sup> Participants 1 to 13 were interviewed in person in a face-to-face manner. Data collected for codes 14, 15, 16, and 17 are based on a study by Khalili (2010).

**Table 2.** *The Academic Affiliation of the Non-Iranian Educational Philosophy Professors*

Code	Specialty	University or Organization
1	Philosophy of Education	Stockholm University, Sweden
2		Oklahoma State University
3		Wonderbuilt University
4		Caplan University
5		George Washington University
6		Michigan University
7		Strasburg University
8		University of Colombia, New York
9		Miami and Corl Gobbles University of Florida
10		Leicester University of England
11		McGil University of Canada
12		Michigan University

## Instruments

This research utilized a combination of primary and secondary data sources to effectively address the research objectives.

## Primary Data Collection

To obtain primary data, a purposive sampling method was employed, selecting eighteen scholars and professors with expertise in educational philosophy from both Iran and other countries. Participants were chosen based on their:

- a. Scholarly achievements,
- b. Knowledge in the field,
- c. Willingness to cooperate in the study.

Interviews were primarily conducted directly with these individuals, taking into account their accessibility.

## Secondary Data Collection

In addition to the primary data collected from interviews, reference was made to the works and writings of some of these educational philosophers relevant to the title and objectives of the study. The selected scholars are recognized for their contributions to philosophical reflections and critical thinking in education.

## Procedure

Structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants using a semi-structured format, allowing for flexibility while ensuring essential topics were addressed consistently. The interviews aimed to explore key topics related to educational philosophy, including:

- a. Perspectives on different aspects of the field,
- b. Evolving trends,
- c. Critical challenges.

Interviews were conducted in both face-to-face and virtual settings, depending on the availability and preferences of the participants. All interviews were audio-recorded to facilitate accurate data capture. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

To complement the primary data, secondary data were collected from the written works of the scholars who have made significant contributions to the philosophy of education. The selection of these scholars was based on their prominence in the field and their influential viewpoints and approaches within educational philosophy. The written works were coded, and themes were extracted and analyzed through thematic analysis to generate relevant data in order to answer the research questions.

The categories and themes were systematically extracted to uncover underlying trends, concepts, and insights relevant to the research questions. The analysis process involved multiple stages of data coding and cross-checking for inter-rater reliability.

## Results

### The First Research Question

To answer the first research question, regarding the main roles and characteristics of Iranian educational philosophers a total of 18 scholars, coded 1 to 18, were interviewed (Table 1). The results were coded and the main themes emerged.

Code 1 posits that the duties of an educational philosopher are rooted in the essential characteristics of the concept of a ‘philosopher of education’ which are not inherently historical in nature. Thus, these characteristics are perpetually linked with philosophy or are expected to be so. As [Smith \(1965\)](#) corroborated, the key mental philosophical features of this concept are consistent, that is, the practice of wisdom. Additionally, there are other vital characteristics, including the liberation of thought, intellectual bravery, and being centered on virtuousness. Code 2 asserts that the educational philosopher's most critical role is to philosophize and enable students to learn how to develop their philosophical perspectives. The capacity to scrutinize and analyze educational trends is among the philosopher’s other significant features. The

educational philosopher should possess the courage to initiate such an approach, coupled with a free and independent thought process .

Code 3 states that in the past, educational philosophers have predominantly approached educational issues from an abstract position of power, proffering theories and models that have had a lasting impact on the field of education. However, such theories have made a distinction between theory and practice. Thus, contemporary philosophers must gravitate toward a more practical approach. One of their foremost roles is to address the challenges facing education, analyze pertinent issues, and offer solutions while adopting a pathological standpoint. Educational philosophers are also expected to adapt, interact, and empathize with education authorities. As such, they should shun the academic environment's abstract nature and instead shift toward the practical and conceptual dimensions of education.

Code 4 outlines the main responsibilities of a philosopher, which include explicating abstract concepts, determining limits for freedom, justice, reality, democracy, reason-centeredness, universal lifestyle, globalization, and nationalization. Additionally, this code states that an educational philosopher should possess a strong curiosity, convergent questioning, critical thinking skills, patience, and openness to others.

Code 5 explains that the duties of educational philosophers vary depending on their respective schools of philosophy. For example, proponents of the Frankfurt School of Philosophy believe that an educational philosopher must analyze, demystify, and crystallize philosophical concepts. This philosopher is expected to present their viewpoints in the four domains of philosophy- ontology, anthropology, epistemology, and axiology- and explain their implications for education. Philosophy deals with questions such as: From which perspective should we view humanity, material or divine? Who is the ideal individual and what features do they possess? What types of content should be presented in education? Which criteria should be used in evaluation?

Code 6 defines the most important duties of an educational philosopher as having a comprehensive attitude towards educational issues in society and being responsible for these issues. This philosopher should also be responsible for educational movements within the formal education system, gain knowledge of the views of other philosophers in the past and present, develop relationships with other experts and practitioners in the educational domain, cooperate with others, examine shortcomings, and offer solutions to educational problems. The most important characteristics of an educational philosopher include being flexible with other opinions, being patient to accomplish goals, and updating their knowledge and understanding in their respective technical field of study.

Code 7 highlights the importance of philosophical thinking about education and its characteristics, the analysis of educational issues, and responsiveness to various educational issues as critical features of an educational philosopher. Code 8 specifies that the first duty of

an educational philosopher is to offer conceptual analysis and clarification. The second duty is theorization, which develops the relationship between theory and educational action. Analyzing and reaching logical inferences are essential characteristics of an educational philosopher. Code 9 suggests that every philosophical school has specific duties for the educational philosophers. From a phenomenological perspective, especially hermeneutic phenomenology, new schools of thought can observe certain duties. Code 10 identifies the most crucial roles of the educational philosopher in the current era, which includes:

1. Comprehensive mastery of the educational philosophies;
2. Thorough understanding of his/her own educational system;
3. Positive influence on the educational trends of the country;
4. Making the authorities in charge of educational system as well as the society of the role of educational philosophy in directing the educational movements;
5. Educating and training the outstanding students and researchers in the realm of educational philosophy as instructors.

According to Code 11, educational philosophers have several duties, including the clarification of concepts, revision of goals and educational methods, and contemplation of social changes and personal and social needs to adapt educational actions accordingly. They also have the responsibility of interpreting educational actions by collecting data and noting down for theorization.

Code 12 expands on these duties, stating that educational philosophers should stay abreast of modern sciences and related philosophies, be connected with educational issues, locate the proper philosophy for the society's educational system, examine the philosophical bases of instructional programs, investigate qualitative and quantitative research methods in education, analyze modern philosophical issues and new theories, and possess deep knowledge, broad views, and a flexible personality receptive to criticisms.

Code 13 specifies some responsibilities of educational philosophers, including an accurate analysis of Western educational philosophies and avoiding being trapped in Western ideologies. They also need to change their views regarding education strategies prevalent after the 17th century and return to a spiritual solution for education. Educational philosophers should keep education free from the impurities of industrial society and revive its divine identity. Moreover, they must have a modified view of nature, free from Westernization and incorrect beliefs, and focus on reviving humanity based on non-philosophical theology.

Code 14 proposes that the role of education is philosophizing, and educational philosophers should intelligently anticipate the consequences of theories in action and shed guiding light on existing performance. Other responsibilities include illustrating a perfect man, adapting to



current society's needs, understanding necessities and prerequisites of the real world, and getting familiar with cultural features. Lastly, educational philosophers should clarify their duties and positions in education and for the public.

Code 15 states that evaluating educational issues is a crucial responsibility of educational researchers. Additionally, they are required to assess their vision and national documents and scrutinize them against societal culture and daily needs. The assessment of graduates based on their civil and cultural identities is another responsibility. The University and education sectors must work together to fulfill these duties. The gap between education and educational philosophy is analogous to that between academia and industry. The education sector must take advantage of University's ideas and innovations.

Code 16 believes that educational philosophy should address pressing global challenges. It tackles the transfer, usage, criticism, and purification of culture. The hidden issues of education should also be resolved through an action-oriented approach to educational philosophy. It also analyzes the philosophical aspects of the educational problems.

According to Code 17, educational philosophers delve more deeply into the issues and have a comprehensive understanding of education in comparison to practical educators. Philosophers lay down the principles for reform and analyze educational problems. Educational goals should reflect the philosophy of education, and the transfer of culture is another crucial role. Contemplation and theorization enable us to achieve more significant success in this field. The creation of modern educational philosophies is also a vital responsibility.

Code 18 proposes that educational philosophy encompasses a wider array of educational issues, while also serving as a tool to identify and resolve contradictions in systemic structures, textbooks, curriculum, and instruction that ultimately contribute to the formation of a more coherent educational system. Furthermore, educational philosophy adopts an analytical approach to deconstruct educational issues, identify areas that require further research, and facilitate the transfer of educational messages to the system. As such, educational researchers play a vital intermediary role, bridging the gap between the system and educational philosophy. Although educational authorities tend to focus on practical aspects, and philosophers are naturally drawn to theoretical pursuits, the two fields must work in tandem for their interaction to be mutually beneficial. Drawing from analytical philosophy principles, it can be inferred that educational philosophers concentrate on analyzing educational concepts, discourse, and reasoning, placing educational action at the forefront of their agenda instead of theoretical frameworks.

Table 3 presents the roles and responsibilities of Iranian educational philosophers, as perceived by teachers and scholars within the field of educational philosophy.

**Table 3.** *Categorization of the most Important Responsibilities of an Iranian Educational Philosopher According to Educational Philosophy Professors and Written Documents*

[illegible]

Table 3 indicates that Iranian philosophers have several key responsibilities, such as analyzing educational issues, recognizing and transferring culture, determining educational pathways, resolving contradictions in the education system, visualizing an ideal human being, developing a written educational philosophy, taking a comprehensive look at educational issues, promoting interaction between educational officials and philosophers, understanding the requirements and prerequisites of philosophical ideas in the real world, evaluating educational issues, maintaining a balance between higher education and employment, being aware of philosophers' views both present and past, analyzing and clarifying concepts, creating greater congruence between theory and practice, becoming familiar with different educational aspects, training students and researchers in education, revising educational goals and methods, interpreting educational practices, staying up-to-date with relevant research, developing deep knowledge and awareness, and philosophizing about education.

### **The Second Research Question**

To address the second research question regarding the main responsibilities of non-Iranian educational philosophers, the insights of twelve individuals who commented on this subject were used. Out of these twelve, five individuals were interviewed directly and were coded as 1 to 5 for analytical purposes. The remaining seven individuals, coded as 6 to 12, provided indirect comments through their writings.

Code 1 posits that the primary duty of an educational philosopher is to optimize or develop a good society through education. Schools serve as environments where students can cultivate critical thinking skills and contribute to the development of social lives for all. The role of an educational philosopher is to apply theoretical ideas to improve the state of education in schools.

Code 2 asserts that an educational philosopher should engage in dialogic discussion and analyses of educational, political, and practical ideas.

According to Code 3, the philosophy of education is an active process in itself that can also be used in teaching and research by teachers. He believes that economic, political, historical, philosophical, and social aspects of education are essential. As a professor of education, he adeptly infuses a philosophical perspective into questioning, theorizing, and storytelling, engaging in multicultural dialogue among various organizations, including schools and universities, as well as students, teachers, administrators, parents, policymakers, educators, researchers, and academics.

Code 4 believes that the most important responsibility of an educational philosopher is to answer the following questions: How is our understanding of education changing? How is the world changing? How is education changing? And how are the schools of philosophy changing?

Americans' understanding of knowledge and education is changing. Therefore, education and the philosophy of education are evolving too, and it is the responsibility of the educational philosopher to demonstrate these changes.

Code 5 believes that the educational philosopher should be familiar with the different dimensions of anthropology and education of the soul, thought, and body. They should understand the characteristics of human beings, the subject of the educational process, the philosophical nature of humanity, the goals of education, the course content, and the educational procedures.

Additionally, he/she should be familiar with not only the rational and metaphysical aspects of human beings but also human psychology and its various dimensions.

Code 6 ([Frankena, 1956](#)) posits that philosophers have attempted to use the discoveries of modern sciences to augment the moral, aesthetic, and theological experiences of humans as they seek to understand their place in the universe. A comprehensive philosophical view of the world involves using human wisdom to guide human behavior. As philosophers focus on both reality and ideals, they need to undertake the less thrilling but crucial tasks of analysis and criticism. This includes critically evaluating the assumptions and methods employed by philosophers, scholars, and the public. It also entails offering precise definitions of terms such as 'real, true, right, cause, material, essence', and 'time'. Regardless of philosophy's ultimate goal, be it analyzing or criticizing, its most immediate aim is achieving conceptual clarity or methodological understanding. The educational philosopher borrows from theoretical, normative, and analytical approaches, applying them to their own contributions to the field.

Code 7 ([Reboul, 1985](#)) believes that when it comes to educational sciences, philosophy serves a dual purpose of inquiry and integration, which is the epistemological role of educational sciences. Reboul argued that educational researchers must question themselves about educational goals. This inquiry should focus not only on the 'howness' but also the 'whyness' of educational affairs. Educational goals are not solely concerned with the technical aspects of education.

Code 8 ([Soltis, 1988, as cited in Smith, 2017](#)) is of the opinion that educational philosophy has an impact on three dimensions: personal, general, and professional. Non-experts often expect educational philosophers to address the personal aspects of philosophy and compare it with educational philosophy. However, some educational philosophers focus on helping thoughtful educators develop their unique personal educational philosophy. Meanwhile, many believe that the educational system is a tradition inherited from the ruling 'philosophical schools' of the medieval era. Educational philosophers are expected to offer comprehensive and coherent definitions of a public educational philosophy.

According to [Soltis \(1988, as cited in Smith, 2017\)](#), an educational philosopher has a responsibility similar to that of a physician in treating patients wherever necessary, but in the general domain of education. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the philosopher must have a clear understanding of education in general, its features, and the duties that can be fulfilled in this dimension.

Code 9 similarly believes that the role of the educational philosopher is to create a desirable philosophy for the educational system and to develop insight into questions and philosophical issues. Siegel argued that the philosopher should provide means for enlightenment, understanding, and introspection about a philosophy. He also believed that the responsibility of educational philosophy is similar to that of a research physician, raising awareness and improving performance (as cited in [Beheshti, 1995, 46-49](#)).

[Woods \(1972\)](#), code 10, believes that as a human being, the philosopher has the right to describe the characteristics of a good life. However, the philosopher's philosophical orientation does not allow him to provide a final answer to this problem. Some philosophers claim that deciding about the variables of a good life and developing laws about it falls within the realm of philosophy. Woods contends that studying philosophy does not lead to categorical results about value-based questions; nevertheless, if the philosopher undertakes a serious discussion of these questions, he can pose first-grade questions, examine the logical congruence of them, identify the assumptions and presumptions, and reveal false reasoning based on biased sources.

In 1963, Taylor (Code 11) argues that the philosophy of education has two dimensions: the illumination of educational issues (analysis) and the offering of probable solutions (synthesis). Thus, it can be inferred that the responsibilities of educational philosophers may include shedding light on educational issues and providing solutions for the educational system.

Smith (2017) (Code 12) notes that if philosophy is introduced as content or theoretical exploration of truth, insight, and value, and education is a sociopolitical organization, then the responsibility of educational philosophers is to design a school system that reflects the fundamental philosophy of the society. However, if education is seen as an activity and training for personal growth, then the responsibility of educational philosophers is to influence the curriculum, discipline, evaluation, and students' achievement reports. In essence, the responsibility of educational philosophers is to accurately study the ideas of prominent philosophers and propose educational plans that align with a fundamental philosophy. Therefore, educational philosophers must become knowledgeable in exploring the educational meaning of the universal philosophical systems.

Table 4 summarizes the main responsibilities of educational philosophers as reflected in the works of their international counterparts.

**Table 4.** *Categorization of the Main Responsibilities of Non-Iranian Educational Philosophers as Reflected in the Works of the Educational Philosophers Abroad*

Code	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Having a Comprehensive View about the Educational Affairs	*			*			*	*	*	*		
Proposing Solutions for the Educational Affairs	*							*	*		*	*
Dialogue and Discussion		*	*				*					
Analysis of Educational Ideas		*				*						
Questioning Mood			*				*					
Philosophizing of Teaching			*									
Examination of the Quality of Change in the Learner, Teaching, and the curriculum				*					*			
Examining different Dimensions of Eschatology	*				*							
Understanding the process, goal, and educational contents					*							
Embarking on Realities						*						
Illumination of Educational Affairs				*		*		*		*	*	*
Achieving Conceptual Transparency						*	*			*		
Deep Thoughtfulness and Clear Understanding of Educational Issues								*	*			
Non-definite Comments in Educational Issues										*		
Accurate Study about the Great Philosophers across the Globe												*

The findings presented in Table 4 demonstrate that the primary responsibilities of an educational philosopher abroad are to possess a comprehensive and coherent understanding of educational issues, provide effective solutions to these issues, facilitate discussion and dialogue, analyze educational ideas, question established norms, philosophize on the economic, social, and political aspects of teaching, explore various aspects of eschatology, maintain a strong grasp on the process, goals, and contents of education, focus on the realities of educational issues, promote conceptual transparency, exhibit thoughtfulness and a profound understanding of educational issues, avoid providing definitive conclusions about educational issues, and conduct thorough research on great philosophers.

### Third Research Question

To answer the third research question regarding the similarities and differences between Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophers, several notable Iranian philosophers (Codes 1 to 12) and non-Iranian philosophers (Codes 13 to 17) were interviewed. The themes that emerged from these interviews were identified as distinguishing factors between the two groups of educational philosophers.

Code 2 believes that the responsibilities of educational philosophers around the world are similar. However, given that educational philosophers are expected to observe, analyze, and

illuminate problems in highly ambiguous societies, their role and responsibility are particularly significant. Therefore, there is a correlation between the role of the educational philosopher and the clarity of the issues within the educational society. Code 2 (Ghaedi, 2013) stated that the philosophy of education in Iran is limited to a general familiarity with philosophy. It appears that the main role of the philosopher or independent thinking has been largely overlooked. Although philosophy is similarly neglected in other regions, innovative ideas emerge from elsewhere that remain unnoticed in Iran. Sometimes in Iran, philosophy is equated with ideology.

Code 3 believes that the duties of philosophers are the same for all situations. If a philosopher aims to make a diagnosis and offer solutions, the process remains consistent across all circumstances. Healing processes for any disease are the same regardless of the country it affects, be it Malaysia, Western countries, or Iran. According to Code 4, the responsibilities of philosophers around the world differ according to their intellectual, political, economic, and social circumstances. Conversely, the differences arise from the types of countries inhabited by these philosophers. Factors such as religion and local culture significantly influence different societies and philosophies. For instance, there is a significant difference between Iran and Germany, or the USA and Germany, and the issues of globalization in different nations, such as the Netherlands, Australia, Afghanistan, and Iran, is substantially different.

Code 5 claims that the duties of philosophers do not generally differ, but rather differ philosophically. Materialistic and divine types of philosophy have different views of these responsibilities. Islamic philosophers investigate educational issues from an Islamic perspective, where Western philosophers hold their own views. Not all Western philosophers necessarily hold divine views, and Western philosophers may be either Jews or Christians while defending the righteousness of Christ or upholding Islam. For example, John Dewey examines human beings from biological, psychological, and social perspectives, and there is no trace of theological thought in his views. Western divine philosophers take a spiritual point of view when looking at human beings while materialists believe that humans possess social, psychological, and biological dimensions.

Each society has its unique characteristics, making it essential for philosophers in our country to understand national, cultural, and religious values, as well as the nation's history. Furthermore, they should aim to maintain and improve these values while incorporating useful experiences from other societies, and the thinking styles of Iranian and international philosophers are similar, differing only in content. While there are common responsibilities, such as analyzing, criticizing, and examining scientific theories and educational issues, differences arise from the unique nature of each society. For example, a society that has not yet embraced the philosophy of education and adheres solely to positivist views will differ from a post-positivist society.

Hashemi (2010) asserts that the influence of religiosity in philosophy distinguishes philosophizing in Iran from other countries, including industrialized nations. Religious considerations can be integrated as a prerequisite for reasoning, and educational philosophers can caution against misconceptions about religious teachings. Educational philosophy must align with a society's unique demands of a society, particularly in our religiously-based educational system, which requires a distinct philosophical approach.

As noted in code 11, believes that socio-political contexts shape the obligations and expectations of philosophers.

Code 12 suggests that many educational philosophers in Iran and the Muslim world tend to echo Western scholars, missing the opportunity to create an educational philosophy grounded in the teachings of Islam's holy texts. They argue that a philosophical approach that considers the roles of science and technology within the context of Islamic teachings may effectively counterbalance the adverse effects of Western industrialization.

Moreover, code 13, contends that while educational philosophers share many common responsibilities, varying societal contexts—such as historical, social, religious, and cultural factors—impact their mandates, necessitating adaptation for context-appropriate fulfillment.

On the other hand, code 14, believes that there are no disparities between Western and other philosophers' roles and assignments. Although each society faces distinctive challenges in education, the goal of education remains the same.

Code 15 asserts that there are no significant differences in the responsibilities of philosophers, suggesting that these duties are fundamentally the same across all societies.

In contrast, Code 16 supports the notion that while all philosophers can engage in dialogues, the nature and specifics of these dialogues may vary depending on individual perspectives and local contexts. In our schools, we employ John Dewey's extended theory to encompass issues, such as cultural transfer, reproduction, and revival. It appears that the duties of philosophers in our country diverge from those of their counterparts in Iran.

Code 17 posits that the responsibilities of educational philosophers in Iran differ from those of industrial countries. Despite these differences, the responsibilities of Iranian philosophers are deemed more critical than those of American philosophers. Countries like Iran experience profound social and educational transformations similar to those faced by John Dewey a century ago. Consequently, it is imperative for educational philosophers in Iran to cultivate a new understanding of their evolving educational system.

Table 5 illustrates the responsibilities of both Iranian and non-Iranian philosophers, highlighting these distinctions.



**Table 5.** Comparison of the Responsibilities of Educational Philosophers for Iranian and Non-Iranian Scholars

Country		The Responsibilities of Educational Philosopher
Non-Iranian	Iranian	
	*	Theorization, analysis of the educational issues, knowledge and transfer of culture, determining the route of movement of a perfect man, possessing a comprehensive view of the educational issues, removing the contradictions of the educational system, interaction between the educational authorities and the philosophers, evaluation of the educational issues, creating a balance between the higher education and the occupations, having a sense of responsibility towards educational movements, analysis and illumination of the concepts, congruence between theory and practice, familiarity with different issues of education, familiarization with different dimensions of anthropology, revising the educational goals and methods, interpretation of educational actions, familiarity with the modern sciences of the day, possessing awareness and deep knowledge, philosophizing about education and its features
*		Developing a comprehensive and coherent view about educational issues, offering solutions for educational issues, dialogue and discussion, analysis of the educational ideas, inquiry, philosophizing the educational, social, and economic aspects of teaching, instruction, curriculum, examining different aspects of eschatology, getting acquainted with the processes, goals, and contents of education, studying the facts, illumination of the educational issues, achieving conceptual clarity, insight and understanding educational issues, not giving definite views on educational issues, accurate study about the philosophers.
Theorization, illumination of the educational issues, analysis of educational issues, getting acquainted with the views of other philosophy, sense of inquiry		Similarities
Philosophizing the economic, social, and political aspects of teaching, not giving definite views on educational issues, accurate study about the great philosophers, illumination of the educational issues, achieving conceptual clarity, deep insight and understanding educational issues, illustration of a perfect human being		Differences

Table 5 shows that the responsibilities of Iranian philosophers are largely similar to those of their counterparts in other countries, including industrialized nations. There are several areas of overlap between their duties, such as developing theories, shedding light on educational issues, exploring the views of other philosophers, and promoting a sense of inquiry. It is worth noting that every country has its own distinct religious, social, and political conditions that inevitably impact the mission of its philosophers. Therefore, every educational philosopher carries out their duties in accordance with the specific features of their locale, including cultural context and local conditions. Iranian educational philosophers, for instance, base their views on both their religious and Iranian identities, bringing philosophical nuances to their work. This is particularly evident in the Iranian Fundamental Change Document (2011).

## **Discussion**

This comparative study presents key observations on the role of Iranian and non-Iranian educational philosophers in the context of prevailing educational issues. The study highlights that while theoretical research remains the core commitment of educational philosophers, Iranian educational philosophers have practical responsibilities in policy-making, planning, and macro-decision making, as well as playing necessary roles in the process of educational changes. Such practical commitments align with the educational philosophy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Chupani et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the educational philosophy in Iran, as articulated in the "Theoretical Foundations of Fundamental Transformations in the Formal and General Education System," delineates a framework that instructs educational philosophers to engage actively with the broader socio-educational context. This engagement is vital for ensuring that the education system not only addresses contemporary challenges but also aligns with the cultural and ideological tenets of Iranian society.

However, the study highlights that the unclear nature of educational philosophy and ambiguity surrounding the role of educational philosophers in Iran present significant challenges. The changing nature of global challenges in education, as exemplified by the impact of COVID-19 on all levels of education, further underscores the need for educational philosophers to analyze and offer solutions to these challenges (Alvandi & Farzadi, 2020).

In the face of such challenges, it becomes paramount for Iranian educational philosophers to redefine their roles based on the teachings and frameworks established by Islamic educational philosophy, which advocate for holistic human development. This includes nurturing individuals who are morally upright, critical thinkers, and socially responsible citizens, in line with the goals of creating a virtuous society articulated in foundational documents like the Fundamental Changes Document.

Aside from their theoretical commitment to researching educational issues, Iranian educational philosophers also possess practical responsibilities within the prevailing conditions.

This includes fulfilling their duties in policy-making, planning, and macro-decision-making, as well as participating in the educational reform process. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the necessity for educational philosophers to adapt their roles dynamically, enabling them to respond effectively to the rapid changes in educational delivery and the emergent needs of students, educators, and policymakers. This flexibility is crucial for fostering resilience within the educational system while promoting innovation that aligns with contemporary technological advancements and societal transformations.

These practical and functional commitments are further emphasized in the Fundamental Changes Document, which highlights the roles educational philosophers must perform in guiding educational reforms through evidence-based practices and participatory approaches. Moreover, engaging with stakeholders including educators, students, and community members can facilitate a more inclusive educational environment, allowing educational philosophers to synthesize diverse perspectives and generate more comprehensive solutions to pressing educational challenges.

The findings of the present study underscore the necessity for Iranian educational philosophers to blend their theoretical insights with practical applications, ensuring that their contributions are not only scholarly but also transformative in addressing the educational needs of society. Only by reconciling theory and practice can they effectively navigate the complexities of contemporary educational landscapes and fulfill their critical roles within the framework of Iranian education.

## **Conclusion**

It is evident that educational philosophy plays a minimal role in shaping Iran's new educational system, as few educational systems reject a specific educational philosophy. Due to the ambiguous nature of the mission of educational philosophers, the conditions for the advent of educational philosophy in Iran have not been met. Iranian educational philosophers have failed to step into their expected position in this newly emerging situation, thereby creating a fundamental challenge. The conditions of society today call for additional responsibilities for educational philosophers. Therefore, many of the roles and duties of educational philosophers have changed in line with basic educational shifts. They cannot provide all the answers to educational questions in a way that holds true for all times and places. In this new global situation, COVID-19 is among the most hotly-debated topics in the political circles of the world. Its main effects are observed universally at both micro-economic and macro-economic levels. The home and family atmosphere has been significantly affected by Corona conditions due to lock-downs and home quarantine issues. All educational systems, ranging from primary education to higher education, have been impacted to a great extent. The shift from 'first life' (real physical life) with 'second life' (virtual life) has accelerated human interactions, including cultural and educational exchanges, in virtual spaces. Responding to the modern global

challenges in the realm of education, analyzing related issues, and offering solutions are all among the responsibilities of educational philosophers. They are expected to theorize about these challenges and offer solutions. Evaluating educational issues is also part of their main responsibilities. The fundamental mission of educational philosophy is to reform education and address educational problems. This field requires continuous, creative, and intelligent theorization on educational problems, especially in this new emergent situation. Philosophers must consider the dimensions and complexities of these crises, reflect on the realms and dimensions, and contemplate on the goals and educational methods.

In conclusion, the study suggests that educational philosophers have a critical role in responding to modern global educational challenges and offering solutions that are reflective of the dimensions and complexities of these crises. Their inherent mission in the field of educational philosophy is to reform education and resolve educational problems, requiring continuous, creative, and intelligent theorization. Thus, educational philosophers are expected to play significant roles in recent educational changes and offer solutions to resolve the complications of education.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research and authorship pertaining to this article.

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