

Original Article (Quantified)

Identifying types of educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice in Iranian secondary schools

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify types of educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice in Iranian secondary schools. The research method is applicable-developmental in terms of its purpose, descriptive in terms of data collection, and qualitative in terms of implementation. The statistical population of the study includes 14 education experts, the selection criteria of which are professors with a background in the field of educational sciences who were fully familiar with educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice and had published various articles in this field, and they were selected by the purposive sampling method and the snowball method. The interviews continued until theoretical saturation. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect information. Data analysis was carried out through analysis and interpretation (coding) of the concepts expressed in the literature and texts through thematic analysis method, which included open and axial coding and MAXQDA 2020 software. The research findings showed that 41 concepts were obtained, which were identified as components of individual and personality dimensions (12 indicators), social and cultural dimensions (12 indicators), religious and spiritual dimensions (9 indicators), and educational and infrastructure dimensions (8 indicators), which are the dimensions of the educational activity model based on the culture of sacrifice for Iranian secondary school.

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Extended abstract

Introduction

In the contemporary world, where enemies are trying every day to distance young people from their value beliefs through cultural invasion and in the field of soft war, to make them identityless and followers of Western culture, raising children in the light of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom can guarantee their moral and spiritual growth and excellence, and is the best and strongest mechanism in this regard. Therefore, transferring these values to the new generation is of great importance, and the first way to transfer and institutionalize this culture is education (Afkari & Andalibnia, 2022).

The subject of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom is a subject that, no matter how much research and study is done on it, is still necessary and essential. On the other hand, given that the most important asset of any nation is its youth, and the mindset, attitude, behavior, and spirit of the young generation of any country will determine the future policy of the country, if a teenager and young person have a strong and correct intellectual foundation, they will become a useful person in the future, and conversely, if they follow weak intellectual foundations and wrong beliefs and culture, they will become a shaky and identityless person (Hoseini & Hoseini, 2022).

Considering that the Ministry of Education is in charge of education from about 6 years old in childhood to about 18 years old in late adolescence and early youth, and since, according to various theories in education, this period plays a very important and prominent role in the life of every individual, as a result, the importance and role of the Ministry of Education in the field of shaping and institutionalizing the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom cannot be denied. Considering this point, it can be acknowledged that the Ministry of Education, as an organization responsible for promoting and institutionalizing this valuable culture, plays an important and key role in cultural policy-making (Ebrahimabadi, 2020). Given the importance of this category, the researcher intends to identify the types of educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice among secondary school students. In this way, in addition to identifying and specifying the current situation, it will provide an appropriate picture to officials, planners, and other interested parties. It is hoped that the new model will provide the basis for improving and strengthening educational programs in order to form, promote, and institutionalize the culture of sacrifice, in line with the specific conditions of students in this period, and will pay attention to it in teaching-learning strategies in schools. Therefore, in this research, we seek to answer the question: what is educational activity based on the culture of sacrifice in secondary school in Iran?

Theoretical Literature

Culture of Sacrifice

Sacrifice literally means choosing the interests of others over one's own interests. In other words, seeking self-sacrifice and giving preference to what is desirable to others. This means that a person, with faith in the advancement of Islam and steadfastness in establishing religious rituals and defending sacred values and raising the banner of monotheism, strives with all his material and spiritual capabilities and even does not hesitate to sacrifice his life and property in the way of preserving and protecting the sacred goal, and understands his evolution by reviewing religious sources (Tabatabaei, 2016). Culture is a complex set of core, intellectual and non-material characteristics presented as an indicator of society and social group. The culture of martyrdom, which is called heroic death in the terminology, means a learned social and individual structure followed in relation to a social group and based on religious beliefs and convictions (Kurd Naeij & Khalili Palandi, 2018). The culture of martyrdom means that a person, mindful of the presence of God and possessing high human

and spiritual values, sacrifices his life for the sake of his values and beliefs, thereby fulfilling his highest duty to society and his beliefs. Therefore, the culture of martyrdom is interpreted as a philosophy or attitude towards life, although its essence is death (Moussalli, 2015).

Research Background

Keshavarzi & Kargar Jahromi (2025) investigated students' lived experiences of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom and its impact on the religious attitude of female students in the first year of secondary school in Shahed schools in Shiraz. The findings showed that the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom plays a key role in the formation of students' religious identity and religious attitude. Students in Shahed schools are introduced to the concepts of sacrifice and martyrdom through curricula, educational activities, and social models, which leads to strengthening religious beliefs, increasing their sense of social responsibility, and enhancing their motivation to participate in charitable activities.

Rostami et al. (2024) examined the various explanations for promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in schools from the perspective of student teachers. The results indicated that there were two general themes of challenges and opportunities for promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in schools. These challenges include superficial and fleeting education about sacrifice and the culture of martyrdom, lack of much attention to martyrs, especially martyrs defending the holy shrine, security martyrs, medical personnel martyrs, martyrs of terrorist incidents, martyrs of border guards, etc., lack of work in the field of publishing and introducing the achievements of dear martyrs in the media, lack of special and significant programs about sacrifice and martyrdom, especially during the Holy Defense Week, lack of work in the field of promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, lack of proper culture building among children regarding the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, updating textbook texts about the culture of sacrifice and selflessness, including more material in the field of sacrifice and martyrdom in textbooks, not paying much attention to introducing martyrs in schools and textbooks, and opportunities include paying more attention to the text of textbooks about the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom. Given the numerous challenges, planning and attention to this issue by the relevant authorities is necessary.

Rezai Koopai (2023) examined the role of education in institutionalizing the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom among students. They found that promoting this culture and introducing it as the dominant culture in society can play a major role in public participation because students, aware of the hardships of the dangerous path of the revolution, will understand well that they must preserve this valuable legacy of the late Imam and the martyrs with all their heart and soul. Therefore, it seems that the methods used in explaining and promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom by teachers and their initiative in using attractive and new methods in this field are workable and crucial.

Methodology

The research method is applicable-developmental, descriptive in terms of data collection, and qualitative in terms of implementation. The statistical population of the study consisted of 14 education experts, the selection criteria of which were professors with a background in the field of educational sciences, fully familiar with educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice and had published various articles in this field, and they were selected by the purposive sampling method and the snowball method. This sampling continued until theoretical saturation. Data and information were collected through preliminary studies and semi-structured interviews, and a list of concepts and categories was collected by open, axial, and selective coding techniques, and a model related to the topic was developed. Data analysis was carried out through analysis and interpretation (coding) of the concepts



expressed in the literature and texts using thematic analysis method, which included open and axial coding, carried out with MAXQDA 2018 software.

Research findings

Coding results showed that the research pattern includes individual and personality dimensions, social and cultural dimensions, religious and spiritual dimensions, and educational and infrastructure dimensions. A total of 41 concepts were obtained, of which 12 key concepts are for the components of individual and personality dimensions, 12 concepts for social and cultural dimensions, 9 concepts for religious and spiritual dimensions, and 8 concepts for educational and infrastructure dimensions.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this research was to identify types of educational activities based on the culture of sacrifice in Iranian secondary schools. Research findings showed that 41 concepts were obtained, which identified the components of individual and personality dimensions (12 indicators), social and cultural dimensions (12 indicators), religious and spiritual dimensions (9 indicators), and educational and infrastructure dimensions (8 indicators), which are the dimensions of the educational activity pattern based on the culture of sacrifice for Iranian secondary schools. The results of this study are consistent with the research of Keshavarzi & Kargar Jahromi (2025), Rostami et al. (2024), Rezai Koopai (2023), Heydari (2022), and Afkari & Andalibnia (2022). Heydari (2022) stated that self-sacrifice and martyrdom play a significant role in preserving religion and its values and the independence of the country. Education is a suitable platform for creating and institutionalizing a correct culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom because one of the tools of cultural influence is changing the attitude of the people of that society, and the students are the most influential groups of society due to their psychological characteristics, who spend the most and most useful time in schools. Therefore, with scientific and comprehensive planning and policy-making, the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom in education and training among students can be promoted to an acceptable level. According to the results obtained, it is suggested that education and training throughout the country should dedicate a week every year to sacrifice and martyrdom and hold various programs to promote these values in schools and educational centers. Education and training should hold various programs to display the values of the culture of sacrifice through art and culture.