Application of Ali Safaei Haeri's Philosophical Counseling Model in Education

Hamzeh Mohammadabadi[1]* iD | Hamid Reza Alavi[2] iD | Morad Yari Dehnavi[3] iD

1. Corresponding Author, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. E-mail: hamzeh@ens.uk.ac.ir
2. Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. E-mail: hralavi@uk.ac.ir
3. Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. E-mail: myaridehnavi@uk.ac.ir

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article **Article History:** Received: 29 December 2024 Revised: 25 February 2025 Accepted: 03 April 2025 Published Online: 11 June 2025 **Keywords:** Education, Philosophical counseling, Islamic counseling, Safaei Haeri.	Most philosophical counseling models are Western-based. However, Ali Safaei Haeri's model is assumed to be religious in nature. This qualitative and analytical-descriptive study aims to examine the applications of this model in education. Ali Safaei Haeri follows a self-refinement approach based on truth-centered self-transformation. His philosophical counseling model is part of his educational system. In this model, the processes of evaluation, familiarization, and grounding are followed by construction and the initiation of an intellectual flow through the posing of fundamental questions. He emphasizes the significance of contemplation, thinking, and reasoning. According to Haeri, a counselor should engage in purification, education, and the act of reminding. He also advocates for rational education and encourages free-spirited and logical thinking. Intellectual materials, cognitive requirements, and the nature of thinking are of great significance. When an individual reaches true knowledge through sound thinking, their tendencies are also directed to a correct path. Furthermore, attending to the client's moods and emotional signals is crucial in the counseling process. In religious education, truth-oriented self-transformation enables individuals to understand themselves, the creation, and their role in the creation. If individuals consciously choose the path of truth, they fulfill their divine duties. Consequently, the training of a righteous and reformed individual positively affects the community.

1. Introduction

Philosophical counseling is a type of counseling seeking to understand and analyze an individual's worldview. Worldview can be defined as an individual's overall attitude toward life (Sharaf, 2021). An individual needs to know whether their self-knowledge is genuinely true or whether such self-knowledge has been influenced by the environment and others (Raabe, 2019).

Regarding the significance of philosophical counseling, many thinkers consider a wide range of mental and psychological diseases and discords to be the result of defects and inefficiency in the individual's belief and value system, believing that a philosophical focus on this system will contribute significantly to addressing the emotional and psychological problems faced by individuals (Raabe, 2019, as cited in Sharaf, 2021).

Furthermore, for many philosophers, including Mulla Sadra, Suhrawardi, Zakaria Razi, Albercamo, Pirhadou, and some other contemporary thinkers, philosophy has been presented as a method and approach to life. These thinkers have paid attention to the practical aspects of philosophy in life as well as spiritual and philosophical exercises (Maftouni, 2017)

From the perspective of philosophical counseling, the mind or the soul is something distinct from the body and is the place where the individual's beliefs and values are formed (Sharaf, 2021). In philosophical counseling, the client plays a fully active and conscious role in changing their worldview and beliefs (Sharaf, 2021). Our understanding of the world will make our expectations of it more realistic, and such realistic expectations reduce our suffering, thereby bringing us greater peace (Alavi, 2014b). In his book, "A Philosophy of Boredom," Svendsen (2015) argues that the crisis of the present century is that of boredom, suffering, and sorrow. Suffering is not about failing to achieve one's desires, but rather it is associated with the lack of satisfaction while achieving desires.

Accordingly, based on religious principles, human life is not limited to the material possibilities and limitations of this world. Therefore, a philosophical counseling model is required based on the principles of anthropology and religious ontology. A model that is effective for the true peace and happiness of man in both worlds. It seems that the models presented in recent years have been mostly developed based on the ideas proposed by Western thinkers.

According to Islamic teachings, the purpose of human creation is convergent, harmonious, and even identical to the purpose of his education (Alavi, 2014a). Therefore, incorporating the ideas of a religious scholar who specializes in Islamic education, along with the philosophical and doctrinal foundations of human education, could contribute to the development of such a model.

Some philosophers, thinkers, and education professionals, including Ali Safaei Haeri, consider thinking to be the cornerstone of human education and growth (Safaei Haeri, 2007). Haeri is known as one of the leading Islamic education professionals who has written valuable philosophical books (Safaei Haeri, 2009a, 2009b, 2007d, 2004a). Ali Safaei Haeri's intellectual comprehensiveness and his possession of a coherent intellectual system are evident in his studies.

Given the essentiality of philosophical counseling based on Islamic principles, we have recently conducted a study on Ali Safaei Haeri's works, focusing on his philosophical counseling model in two recent articles (Mohammadabadi et al., 2024a; Mohammadabadi et al., 2024b). The present study aims to examine the application of Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling approach and model in some areas of education: (1) rational education, (2) emotional education, (3) religious-moral education, and (4) social education.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The history of philosophical dialogue and counseling dates back many years. For example, Prophet Abraham (AS) engaged in a philosophical conversation with the people of his time, discussing the impermanent and destructible nature of the moon and the sun (Shahabadi, 1981). He encouraged them to contemplate and understand the eternal essence of God (An'am 6:78). Nahj al-Balagha, written by Imam Ali (AS), is also full of philosophical conversations and doctrinal and ideological questions. Additionally, some traces of philosophical counseling can be observed in the Socratic dialogue and the methods of other philosophers and thinkers. In contemporary times, several theories have been proposed on philosophical counseling. Considering the infancy of philosophical counseling, there is still no precise separation of actions taken based on it (Ghaedi & Pooragha, 2021). However, in a relatively comprehensive summary in his book, Peter Raabe (2019) has discussed most of the methods

and techniques employed in philosophical counseling. An example is the 'beyond-method' method proposed by Achenbach (the founder of the modern philosophical counseling movement). He advocates for an open-ended approach that involves continuous reinterpretation of oneself and the world. Achenbach considers any discussion and dialogue to be philosophical counseling in nature and does not even consider the goal-oriented approach to be correct (as cited in Raabe, 2019). However, his theory holds serious problems.

Nevertheless, according to Peter Raabe, the competency and authority of the counselor are highly important. Furthermore, most texts on philosophical counseling fail to address the deterrent and preventive power of philosophical counseling, a feature that is considered an important distinction between philosophical counseling and psychotherapy. Peter Raabe's four-stage model involves (1) free-floating, (2) addressing the current problem, (3) teaching reasoning as an intentional (conscious) act, and (4) transcending the current problem (Raabe, 2019).

In addition to Raabe's book, there are other research studies on philosophical counseling, including "Foundations of Philosophical Counseling" by Ghaedi and Pooragha (2021). After defining philosophy, analytical philosophy, and philosophical counseling, this book explores the goals of philosophical counseling, attitudes, methods, techniques, and training required for philosophical counselors. It also addresses some challenges and practical aspects.

The book, "Philosophy, Counseling, and Psychotherapy," edited by Cohen and Zinaich (2013), presents some of the important approaches to philosophical counseling. The books "Philosophy for Counseling and Psychotherapy" (Howard, 2002) and "Wisdom Therapy" (Kordnoughabi, 2021) are other books on philosophical counseling.

Although the book, "Principles of Psychotherapy and Counseling with an Islamic Approach" authored by Janbozorgi and Gharavi (2016), does not include the term philosophical counseling in its title, it covers subjects such as anthropology, ontology, insight building, divine worldview, self-knowledge, and wisdom, all of which are relevant to philosophical counseling.

Some books can also contribute to expanding and developing some stages of philosophical counseling, including "Applied Logic" (Khandan, 2000), which practically teaches and introduces a large number of fallacies essential for clients in the conscious education stage.

Moreover, some articles published in Persian language have addressed philosophical counseling: "Philosophical Counseling: A New Ground for Education and Research in Educational Fields" (Ghaedi, 2017), "The Differences and Similarities of Philosophical Counseling with the Rational Emotional Approach of Ellis" (Pooragha et al., 2017), "Question and its Place in Philosophical Counseling: A New Ground for Educational Research" (Dibavajari, 2016), "Explaining the Necessity of Philosophical Counseling in Logotherapy" (Sharaf, 2021), and "Educational Counseling through Philosophical Dialogue" (Dibavajari, 2015).

Furthermore, the research study, "What is Philosophical in Philosophical Counselling?" (Lahav, 1996), first provides a brief description of the nature of philosophical counseling, and then, suggests that philosophical counseling can contribute to philosophical self-examination.

Louw (2021) seeks to resolve the definitional crisis for philosophical counseling. He proposes twelve conditions for philosophical counseling to remain within the realm of philosophy as an end in itself. Several approaches can be proposed for philosophical counseling, including a method based on monism and nondualism found in traditional and ancient Indian philosophical teachings, which emphasizes the merging of the individual with the universe (Bhagabati, 2021).

In addressing the questions of what philosophical counseling is and how it differs from psychological counseling, and considering the different goals of philosophical counselors, Sivil and Clare (2018) attempted to classify philosophical counseling into four categories. The book "Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education: Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation" takes an innovative approach to practical philosophy as a way to facilitate wisdom-centered education. It also provides examples of transformative group philosophical conversations (Helskog, 2019).

The book "Philosophical Assumptions of Psychotherapeutic Paradigms" addresses the common misconception held by some professionals that psychotherapy is solely a scientific field and has no connection with philosophy. In reality, philosophical paradigms are always present, whether implicitly or explicitly (Marica, 2015).

In an article titled "Philosophy Therapy Centers," Mladin (2014) states that philosophical counseling can be an alternative to psychological therapeutic interventions such as CBT, and, with the help of Socratic dialogue, it finds a suitable philosophy for the individual, helping them rationally understand the world and practice philosophy in life.

Spiritual counseling (Sandu & Caras, 2014) can also be related to philosophical counseling in that it does not view salvation as a worldly achievement. Instead, it considers the highest success to be the sharing in the mystery of divinity. By changing the individual's worldview, it explains the ultimate goal of humanity based on Christian belief.

Furthermore, an article titled "Theory and Practice of Philosophical Counseling: A Comparative Approach," which deals with the basic principles, approaches, tendencies, and schools of philosophical practice, is a relatively comprehensive study to determine the role and place of philosophical counseling in modern culture (Valentinovich, 2018).

Most of the studies on philosophical counseling appear to have been conducted from the perspective of Western thinkers. Focusing on the works of Ali Safaei Haeri as an Islamic thinker, the present study aims to explain his approach and model as well as its applications in education.

2-1. A brief Look at Some of the Approaches in Philosophical Counseling:

Overall, there are two main approaches to philosophical counseling. The problem-solving approach, focuses mainly on addressing the current problems faced by the clients while the second approach is the refinement approach, which goes beyond addressing current problems and deals with the worldview and philosophy of life of individuals (Lahav, 2020).

Lahav's self-transformation approach belongs to the second category (Lahav, 2021). He believes that, through philosophical reflection, individuals can escape from the peripheral prison of thoughts and from their own Plato's cave, connecting with and cultivating their inner self (Lahav, 2020).

Jopling (1996) introduces the approach of authenticity of truth to philosophical counseling. He believes that philosophical counseling is not limited to providing philosophical tools for clients' self-assessment as this may lead to confusion between self-knowledge and self-deception. In his opinion, truth is important in philosophical counseling and the counselor should guide clients to move on the path of accurate, defensible, guiding, and true self-understanding (Jopling, 1996).

Despite the opinion of Achenbach and Lahav, Mills (2021) believes that philosophy cannot be separated from psychotherapy and that philosophy itself is a psychological activity. In his opinion, different philosophical and psychological methods should be combined to treat different groups.

In his logic-based approach, Cohen (2021) helps clients to formalize arguments and avoid falling into fallacies. Schuster (2021), in her self-diagnostic approach, believes that the relationship between the philosopher and the client and their intellectual interactions are more important than making a diagnosis. With the help of a philosophical counselor, the client understands and receives what can be provisionally called "philosophical self-diagnosis" (p. 153).

Tillmans (2021) posits that life is inherently problematic and philosophy is not about addressing life's problems. She argues that life cannot be reduced to specific psychological, emotional, or intellectual issues. Instead, she emphasizes learning through conversation. Rutter (2021), in his Emotional Life Clarification Approach, believes that people often experience emotions in their lives without clearly understanding them. Rutter discusses Rogers's reflection of emotions and how reflection of emotions can clarify the client's emotional life.

2-2. Ali Safaei Haeri's Approach and Model in Philosophical Counseling

Ali Safaei Haeri's approach is a refinement approach based on truth-oriented self-transformation (Jopling, 1996) with free-spirited logical thinking. Thinking is the basis of human guidance. In his approach, an individual can achieve self-transformation and a refined worldview based on truth and through refined thinking (Mohammadabadi et al., 2024a).

Safaei Haeri's model also involves some stages, with the main stage being construction. The other stages include evaluation and identification, friendship and familiarity, attraction and intimacy, and grounding and construction. The construction stage is initiated by posing a question or providing a foundation for the question to arise within the audience. This stage encompasses teaching reflection, reasoning, and thinking, as well as offering reminders and notices.

2-3. Research Methodology
This basic and qualitative study was conducted using a theoretical approach. It also adopted a descriptive-analytical method in which the researcher describes specific cases as they are presented in books and writings, and then analyzes them (Alavi, 2017).

The data in this study were collected using library techniques. By analyzing and summarizing the data, Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling approach and model were explained, and then, the applications of this model in various areas of education were examined. The data were collected from sources including books, articles, websites, software, and paper and digital notes. The data were analyzed using classifications, inferences, analyses, and explanations.

2-4. Research Questions
Given that philosophical counseling helps individuals address their mental, spiritual, and psychological problems by modifying their beliefs, values, and worldview systems, this type of counseling can be considered a type of educational activity whose main goal is to help clients freely modify their beliefs, values, and worldviews. Accordingly, the present study aims to examine the applications of Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model in various educational areas. To this end, the following questions are addressed in this study:
1. What are the applications of Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model in rational education?
2. What are the applications of Ali Safaei Haeri's model in emotional education?
3. What are the applications of Ali Safaei Haeri's model in religious-moral education?
4. What are the applications of Ali Safaei Haeri's model in social education?

3. Findings
3-1. Application of Ali Safaei Haeri's Philosophical Counseling Model in Rational Education
Given that knowledge and awareness foster interests and tendencies, which in turn shape behaviors, the key issue in education is knowledge (Alavi, 2014). In his philosophical counseling model based on religious and educational foundations, Ali Safaei Haeri considers thinking to be the cornerstone of human development. He believes that thinking guides individuals toward knowledge. A person begins to think by asking questions, enabling them to derive reliable knowledge through fundamental inquiries. Safaei Haeri's model is based on a self-transformation approach, so an individual must start growing from the inside and reach true knowledge through thinking, rather than having pieces of knowledge injected into them in a packaged form. Such knowledge will be permanent and fundamental. Therefore, since the counseling process focuses on the power of reflection, thinking, and reasoning, and the counselor teaches techniques that foster development, this counseling process has direct implications for rational education.

Like the LBT approach in philosophical counseling (Cohen, 2020), Safaei Haeri also emphasizes teaching the correct reasoning method so that the individual can correctly apply logic and the correct form of reasoning, along with the intellectual materials and thinking requirements. Safaei Haeri reminds us that, "although philosophy is the mother of mysticism and science, education is the core of philosophy. Moreover, the logic of philosophy is not epitomized in formal logic, and the method used to gain knowledge precedes knowledge itself. This method focuses on both thinking materials and forms and thinking requirements" (Safaei Haeri, 2006a, p. 13).

According to Safaei Haeri, the best method of education is to induce questions in the client's mind. The client must be led over the bridge of doubt and skepticism and brought back to certainty. The counselor must give the client a chance to think and then help him to find an answer to the problem step by step using the counselor's hints. This technique enables the client to gain critical power and to analyze the issues logically.

The client's curiosity must be aroused, not suppressed. The power of criticism must remain with the client; it is a misconception that an ideal client for the counselor is one who never objects or voices disagreement. The client must be given the courage, opportunity, and possibility to express their judgment on various issues, rather than analyzing social issues solely according to the counselor's preferences.

The counselor must explain sincerely to the client that the purpose is to discover the truth, even if it is for or against the counselor or client. The client's opinion must be taken seriously, even if it is wrong so that they feel they have both the power to give an opinion and the right to do so. The client should not feel that the counselor is indifferent to their statements, actions, desires, and life.

The counselor should ask the client for arguments and proofs (Safaei Haeri, 2007). "There are two ways to stimulate the mind, which is the cornerstone of human growth and the first line of their education: one is argumentation and the other is asking well-informed questions. Arguments can weigh heavily on the mind, so it is essential to help the client find and grasp the arguments. Anyone with sight can perceive the truth; thus, one must lift the veils with carefully crafted questions to find the truth and appreciate its beauties. Clients should be encouraged to identify, find, recognize, believe in these arguments, and ultimately, to move forward" (Safaei Haeri, 2007, p. 33).

Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model seems to be effective in rational education, especially in the following areas:

- **Promoting philosophical thinking:** According to this model, the client gains the skill for analyzing fundamental and existential issues by facing fundamental questions, contemplating them, and learning the logical way of thinking.
- **Strengthening critical thinking:** This philosophical counseling model encourages clients to think freely about humans, existence, and the role of humans in existence by freeing themselves from prejudices, limitations, and intellectual deviations, and to criticize opposing ideas and achieve knowledge based on truth.
- **Improving decision-making:** According to this counseling model, the client can make the right decision by reflecting on suitable raw materials, thinking logically, and learning criteria for distinguishing right from wrong reasoning under suitable intellectual conditions, utilizing the power of deduction, assessment, and perfectionism.
- **Enhancing problem-solving thinking:** According to Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model, the client learns that many of life's problems have fundamental roots and can find radical solutions to them. In addition, by practicing the power of thinking, the client can analyze and resolve everyday challenges and problems in life.
- **Strengthening forward-looking and strategic thinking:** By learning the logical way of deliberation and inference, and by comparing goals to identify the best way to achieve them, the client develops a discernment power. With effective planning, accurate goal setting, and predicting future outcome based on current analyses, the client can adopt a macro, truth-based strategy for their future. This approach helps prevent the waste of talents and mitigates potential future challenges.
- **Strengthening reciprocal thinking:** In a community with contradictory ideas, the client can understand and analyze opposing opinions. By listening to and evaluating diverse opinions, they can assess and compare these perspectives with their own knowledge, which has been acquired through an intellectual process.

3-2. Application of Ali Safaei Haeri's Philosophical Counseling Model in Emotional Education

According to Ali Safaei's model, knowledge fosters emotional tendencies and inclinations. If we desire feelings to be deep-rooted rather than superficial, they must stem from genuine knowledge. Superficial feelings and emotions are fleeting, disappearing as quickly as they arise. However, when love is cultivated from knowledge, it becomes enduring and contributes to the development of more stable behaviors (Safaei Haeri, 2006b).

The heart is the source of feeling and movement, not just the means of awareness and knowledge. Thus, we cannot come up with artistic or emotional knowledge or a heartfelt path at the same time. There is an association between this source of feeling and the source of awareness in humans in such a way that when you recognize and choose the best option, this source of feeling gives you the power to move and propel you forward (Safaei Haeri, 2009a). Moreover, according to Safaei Haeri's philosophical and educational counseling model, gaining awareness and establishing intimacy before construction and before reaching knowledge are of great importance. Establishing intimacy that occurs with some components, can emotionally contribute to better communication with the counselor and

better use of the counselor's guidance. According to this religious model, reaching monotheistic knowledge and receiving God's love create faith and emotional relationships among individuals. It also helps individuals become eager to each other, eliminating the grounds for perversion. In a faith-based community, when behaviors are knowledge-based, then regardless of their nature, they will be rational, emotional, and humane (Safaei Haeri, 2004b).

Safaei Haeri suggests that the counselor should develop, prepare, and pose questions by knowing the spirits of each client. When a method is adopted based on this philosophical counseling model and in line with the client's mood and spirit, the cognitive and emotional impact of the adopted method will be significant (Safaei Haeri, 2007a). According to Safaei Haeri, meeting the client's emotional needs requires familiarity, attention, admiration, and praise, and complaints each has a limit, requiring consultation and experience (Safaei Haeri, 2009c).

He believes that knowledge and awareness should be induced in the client's brain, love and interest in the goal, and path in their heart (Safaei Haeri, 2007e). When dealing with younger clients who sometimes display extremely maladjusted behavior with conflicting desires, the counselor needs to broaden their vision to the extent that their desires are not confined to limited interests, but rather to the infinite where there is no friction. The love of God should be induced in their inner character so that they can develop a sense of forgiveness and sacrifice for the sake of God and His love (Safaei Haeri, 2011).

Some of factors contributing to the growth, inactivity, and moral decline of individuals (Safaei Haeri, 2011) are associated with the emotional aspect of human training and education. These factors provide a good means for philosophical consultation in the process of self-guidance of the client and their correct orientations. Counselors must reach a high degree of intimacy, faith, and honesty, such that they truly view the client as their own child, their companion, and their confidant (Safaei Haeri, 2007e). Overall, it seems that Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model can contribute to the following areas of emotional education:

– **Enhancing self-esteem:** The model in question places a great emphasis on personality and contributes significantly to strengthening self-esteem and a sense of self-worth in clients (Educational Research and Planning Organization, 2024).

– **Emotional flexibility:** When the client goes through an intellectual process and comes up with a true understanding of the world, they will perceive that material possessions are not the criteria for pride. They also understand that failures and successes are relative and transient, measured by efforts and motivations. When the client understands the vastness and greatness of existence, they do not lose hope when faced with adversity and hardship; thereby, finding the ability to recover and adapt to failures and emotional challenges.

– **Conflict resolution, effective communication, and empathy:** When an individual truly understands themselves, creation, and their true role in existence, and when they view the whole existence and others as connected, working towards a sublime purpose, they seek to improve loving, supportive, and even empathetic relationships by understanding others, engaging in their feelings, and helping to direct and guide others.

– **Ability to regulate emotions:** According to Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model, assessing a client's mood and providing effective counseling suitable to their mood can help the client come up with a correct understanding and regulate their feelings and preferences. Thus, clients' feelings are controlled and managed in a logical, positive, and constructive way. A client who develops a correct understanding of their feelings and emotions is more likely to experience more logical emotions.

– **Stress control:** When an individual recognizes the purpose of the creations and the criteria for true honor based on deep philosophical knowledge and takes steps on the path to eternal happiness, they do not easily get stressed by facing a few fleeting obstacles and adversities. Moreover, they do not easily lose their emotional control with the superficial and short-term problems in this world.

– **Feeling useful and not feeling absurd:** According to Safaei Haeri's model, when a client develops a rudimental knowledge of their role in existence, they are no longer worried,

attempting to take steps toward achieving transcendent goals. This move toward the superior path is soothing for the client and gives meaning to their life.

3-3. Application of Ali Safaei Haeri's Philosophical Counseling Model in Religious-Moral Education

This counseling model that highlights the significance of liberal and non-judgmental thinking helps people come up with true knowledge that results in religious and divine love. A religion that is acquired based on refined thinking and true and monotheistic knowledge is valuable and lasting. Argumentative and monotheistic religion is different from an imperative and impetuous religion. When monotheism is deep-rooted and based on true knowledge, religious education will not be superficial, imperative, and impulsive, which will lose its mission with a slight change in circumstances (Safaei Haeri, 2006). An emotional religion is an emotion without knowledge and action (Safaei Haeri, 2010).

An important issue to note is that religion originates from thinking. The resulting insight that makes up a worldview, leads man to a set of beliefs. These beliefs can tolerate systems and rulings. Thinking about humans, the world, and man's role in the world can reveal the great talents of man, appreciating the vastness of the path ahead of humans. When thinking about themselves, humans can recognize their convictions and the ruler. Thus, humans develop an interest in divine existence and fall in love with Him. When understanding their sheer poverty, helplessness, ignorance, and predicament, they begin to develop a sense of attachment to Him who is rich, and their love and interest in God can guide them toward whatever they wish (Safaei Haeri, 2007). When a smaller love and restricted lovers have drawn an individual to great deeds and the carvings in Bisotun[1], how is it that His love does not contribute to performing greater deeds and lifting heavier burdens?

Safaei Haeri believes that the counselor should help the client remove the veil of ignorance and reach the truth by asking well-developed questions. This process helps the client to achieve a deeper understanding of religious and moral issues through logical reasoning and analysis (Safaei Haeri, 2007).

By contemplating on their talents, people can understand that their main task is not eating, sleeping, and doing pleasurable things as meeting such basic needs does not require all these talents imbedded in human beings. Moreover, reaching a comfortable life does not need a huge bulk of capital and all these needs can be met just through individual and social instincts. Therefore, the main task of a human being is promoting and going. When engaged in moving forward, the world becomes a path for people. They should not make a detour on this path and become an obstacle. Moreover, a measurement of the extent of human talents will reveal the length of the path. Human talents indicate the path that should be traveled by them. Such a worldview and insight demonstrate the role of man in the creation. The man's job while taking this endless and vast world as a path is moving along it. Thus, the man's role in the creation is to employ the laws imposed on the creation, aligning them with the movement toward growth. When faced with this endless task, they will no longer wish to remain at one stage. When observing their own vastness, they will no longer be satisfied with small achievements as the world is regarded as a path, not a destination, so they will no longer remain on the path.

An individual who, based on their knowledge, develops a love for work and moves, is primarily tasked to develop themselves since as long as self-building is not completed, building others is not possible. Self-building is also possible when an individual finds the courage to self-immolate and burn the dirt and impurities of their existence to find a new birth.

Sometimes individuals perfume themselves before cleansing their impurities, pretending to be different. As long as an individual is a slave to someone other than Him, they cannot bear the burden of God's mission. Therefore, they must be freed from the rule of anyone other than Allah. In other words, man must first attain freedom from themselves and others, and even freedom from freedom. If someone does not become a servant of the perfect, faultless, and unlimited God, their freedom is merely a changing bondage at every moment, based on something chosen either through their limited intellect, desires, or statements of others.

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1. A legend by the Persian poet Nezami narrates the story of a man named Farhad, who was a lover of Shirin. To be allowed to marry Shirin, Farhad had to carve stairs into the mountain, which he did it successfully.

Therefore, a man must first go through the stages of self-development that involve "self-knowledge (paying attention to themselves), purification, discovering weaknesses and overcoming them, discovering talents and strengths, and encouraging them to initiate an inner revolution" (Safaei Haeri, 2007). "Who can control all their actions? The one who is a believer as when a man views the creation as a harmonious and unified entity, realizing that no movement takes place in existence accidentally, they, who are part of this complex world, turn towards the One God, unable to move aimlessly. A believer plans for every move and does not take a step without a purpose. Everything they do is in line with a single origin" (Safaei Haeri, 2007, p. 14-15). Overall, Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model has some implications for religious and moral education as detailed below:

- **Recognizing religious and ideological foundations:** According to Safaei Haeri's model, self-transformation and perceiving the truth of the divine worldview contribute significantly to understanding religious beliefs and their permanence, as well as their connection with daily life and their impact on human tendencies and behavior.
- **Ethical values:** When the philosophy of life and values are reformed, accepting moral values, such as honesty, justice, and compassion, becomes easily possible for humans by reaching true knowledge.
- **Ethical behaviors:** Acquiring knowledge and reforming the system of beliefs and values helps in developing behaviors that are consistent with religious and moral principles and values.
- **Piety and abstinence:** Promoting the spirit of piety and restraint in individual and social life is one of the outcomes of valuable religious beliefs. When beliefs are well-established within individuals, they are effective in correcting and controlling behavior as avoiding evils is in line with the ultimate goal of man, which has been discovered through philosophical reflection.
- **Worship and servitude:** Practicing and strengthening acts of worship and servitude to God are among the requirements for moving on the true path and reaching the ultimate goal. The model in question gives direction to acts of worship and provides some recommendations for worship exercises step by step.
- **The role of religion in life:** Someone who has realized that religion is a human necessity without coercion or indoctrination and with inner development, understands that religion plays a primary role in guiding life and making moral decisions.
- **Respect for others, responsibility, and promotion of social behavior:** The purpose of creation determines the direction of human movement and responsibility, regulates human relations with the entire existence and beings, and prescribes social behavior that is consistent with moral and religious principles.
- **Religious and ethical reflections:** Reflection and analysis of moral and religious issues to achieve a deeper understanding is essential for people who reach truths through philosophical thinking and reflection as they have learned not to accept anything easily through indoctrination and imitation, without thinking, and with their eyes closed.

3-4. Application of Ali Safaei Haeri's Philosophical Counseling Model in Social Education

Following Ali Safaei Haeri's counseling model, individuals can reach a deep understanding of themselves, the creation, and their role in creation through thinking and self-transformation. Then, their goals and direction of movement lead to development and growth. Their goal is not only the development of talents but also the direction of the developed talents.

For this transcendent movement, man has needs related to themselves, others, the environment, and the community. To meet these needs, their social talents should develop. Concerning others, they need to identify, train, and organize forces and elements, etc., and they must start from a good starting point. Humans are also struggling with conflicts and contradictions in their association with the environment and to resolve them, they need some degree of self-transformation so that they can even benefit from the conflicts when moving towards their goals. An individual who has discovered the necessity of movement, complex connections in the creation, and the composition of their great talents does not stop, moving towards their unlimited goal (Safaei Haeri, 2007b)

According to Safaei Haeri, acquiring knowledge through thinking and making decisions based on the power of reasoning and assessment takes precedence over all issues, including social issues. In

fact, with this insight, man develops a comprehensive plan about their role, and any of their actions and social relations will be unveiled (Safaei Haeri, 2007c). "How did prophets guide the illiterate people by asking questions, leading them to reflect, remember, and reason. How did they lead them to freedom and liberation by making them aware of their worth and values. How did they turn them into worthy people through education, purification, and remembrance. How did prophets develop educational, moral, social, political, economic, and legal systems by focusing on the foundations and purposes and by using knowledge and beliefs. How prophets inform people of the form, method, and procedure of action along with the responsive system, foundations, purposes, and requirements" (Safaei Haeri, 2007c). The educational, moral, social, and governmental systems are placed one after another in a descending order (Safaei Haeri, 2007b). The educational system, that is, education based on knowledge, thinking, and reason, precedes moral and social education, paving the way for them. The community will develop if the members are educated based on sound knowledge and through refined and fundamental paths of philosophical thinking. The effectiveness of Ali Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model in social education can be summarized as follows:

- **Social responsibility:** When individuals come to the realization that they live in a rule-governed and connected world and their worldview is corrected, they cannot be aloof and bury their head in the sand (Safaei Haeri, 2007).
- **Social services:** it can be defined as participation in voluntary services and activities to help others. In a social system formed based on the purpose and the role of man in creation, humans choose their jobs and roles based on this common goal and provide services to each other (Safaei Haeri, 2007).
- **Social leadership:** It can be defined as the ability to lead and manage social groups and organizations. According to Safaei Haeri's intellectual model, education is an important factor affecting the social domain, as he believes that "we need to educate and organize our skills and forces when interacting with others" (Safaei Haeri, 2007, p. 11). Therefore, individuals who develop their personality based on these ideas will acquire the ability to lead, manage, and organize other people and groups. In such societies that have a common goal but different tasks, leadership becomes necessary. In such a society, the ruler Himself is the educator of humans (Safaei Haeri, 2007).
- **Social justice:** Efforts to establish social justice and reduce inequalities are taken based on the goal of divine man, which is the same goal pursued by the prophets to establish justice for people (Safaei Haeri, 2007b).
- **Developing interpersonal relationships and communication skills:** The ability to communicate effectively with others involves the skills of listening, speaking, and interpreting non-verbal signs. These skills are developed and promoted according to the necessities because when a person understands the necessity of communication, guidance, and addressing people's problems, they do not remain static.
- **Collaboration and teamwork:** The ability to cooperate with others and work in groups to achieve common sublime goals.
- **Conflict resolution:** The skills of managing and resolving conflicts to maintains effective and constructive relationships.
- **Submissiveness and tolerance:** Since all people are created by God, they should be cherished and respected. Therefore, acceptance, tolerance, and a sense of responsibility for guiding others are essential.

4. Conclusion

Considering that Ali Safaei Haeri's approach is a self-refinement method based on truth-centered self-transformation through logical thinking, his philosophical counseling model focuses on the initial stages of counseling, which include evaluation, identification, and grounding, followed by thinking in the construction stage. Safaei Haeri believes that the counselor should make the client think by inducing questions in their mind, and then help the client through the flow of thought to find the truth with timely guidance. However, the client's thinking must be purified from deviations to pave the way

for logical thinking. Thinking must begin with direct and immediate knowledge and then lead to a more perfect understanding of man, creation, and the role of man in the creation.

If philosophical counseling is provided based on this model, rational education can be efficiently provided in various fields as this model is principally based on logical thinking and knowledge. Since knowledge directs human tendencies and preferences, once the client acquires true knowledge, their interests and preferences are also modified and redirected toward a sublime path. According to this model, the counselor must be capable of making decisions in counseling by recognizing different spirits that align with the clients' moods and emotions. In addition, during the counseling process, the counselor must be aware of the factors contributing to the growth, inactivity, and moral decline of clients so that they can go through the counseling process by examining the client's signs in line with the client's spirit.

Since Safaei considers the goal of education the same as the one pursued by the prophets, his model focuses on religious and moral education. By carefully examining his educational system, we find it a part of his education and training system, with its goal the same as the goal of education. Therefore, if this counseling process is carried out correctly and the client reaches true knowledge and makes choices based on correct knowledge, they will take action to fulfill their divine duty. The knowledge acquired in this process will be highly profound and lasting, lacking any superficiality.

Concerning social education, Safaei Haeri believes that the educational system takes precedence over other systems. As a result, when philosophical counseling is provided efficiently and the client is freed from confusion, achieving a divine and sound worldview, then they consider their duty to move in a superior direction. Therefore, the client cannot be aloof to others and, thus, is encouraged to take on individual and social responsibilities. When an individual becomes righteous, the community is also reformed as when they know themselves, the creation, and God, comprehending the complex relationships with all of existence, they feel responsible for all of existence, others, and the community, and begin their social movement.

The philosophical counseling approach and the implementation and stages of Safaei Haeri's philosophical counseling model have been described in a research study conducted by Mohammadabadi et al., 2024a).

If the stages of this model, including identification, familiarity, intimacy, grounding, and most importantly, construction, are well followed in the case of individuals and clients, its impact in the areas of education will be significant.

Consequently, it can be argued that Safaei's philosophical counseling model, as a key part of his educational system, is highly effective in all educational fields, bringing about profound and lasting outcomes based on a deep understanding of man and creation. Some models may be effective in different areas, but their effect is fleeting. However, Safaei Haeri's model with its special characteristics based on rational knowledge and self-transformation may have lasting effects.

As a suggestion, this multi-stage model can be implemented in various counseling and training centers individually and, sometimes, in groups, with its effects observed and examined in practice. Parts of this model, as subsets of his educational model, may have been used in educational centers to some extent. However, as a coherent model of philosophical counseling, it is better to use it in counseling centers and help clients achieve thinking-based cognition.

Overall, it seems that this counseling model, which is based on refined logical thinking, is relatively comprehensive compared to some philosophical counseling models. Accordingly, in addition to identifying and providing appropriate contexts for clients, it leads them to true self-transformation by asking fundamental questions, thinking, and analyzing them. This self-transformation is effective and constructive in various areas and even leads clients to think about their own growth and their impact on society.

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