

Postmodernism World: A Brief Analysis in Philosophical, Social and Educational Aspects

Javad shirkarami¹, Yadollah Dusti² and Sakineh Azizi³¹ PhD student in Philosophy of Education, Islamic Azad University, Arak, Iran² Master of Educational Planning³ Master of Science in Elementary Education

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Abstract

Human has always tried in history to accomplish advances in various eras including materials and spiritual eras. When human found himself, the innovation movement started. The philosophical- social stream was gradually formed after years of war in 20th century which changed various literature, social sciences, and educational sciences eras. The objective of this stream was criticizing modernism and its dead-ends. Today post-modernism is one of the biggest discussions in all scientific, formal, and informal meetings, and forming enormous conventions with mutual concern have been observed whose objective is finding desirable solution to face with problems. The postmodernism worldview is based on rejecting absolute realities. The epistemology of postmodernism is mostly related to the present time than future or past. Postmodernism rejects the universal ethical and general spiritual values and mostly believes on relativity of values. The curriculum plan of postmodernism emphasizes on issues that increases cultural, historical, political, ecological, aesthetic, and theological awareness.

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Introduction:

Human has lived in an integrated history of personal life to ethnical, and agricultural life to modern industrial life, and finally to the present sophisticated life that is called atomic, electronics, and information explosion age, and era of artificial people (Heydari Tafreshi et al., 2012). A historical era that is combined with 18th century's enlightenment according to agreements of the 15th century authorities includes many evolutions in various aspects of humans' lives. The salient features of this historical era is development of new knowledge, increasing urbanization, democracy, and the development of political, social and educational gradual deterioration of traditional systems. The modernism features can be called as rationalism, secularism, truth-orientation, and humanism. Modernism started when human discovered himself, and individual issue with conception of thoughts waking period was proposed as the superior human traits. (Rahman Seresht, 1998) The world has seen a new social-philosophical stream in recent decades. This stream has challenged various art, literature, and social sciences fields in spite of its specific sophistication and extension. The stream called postmodernism is actually criticisms of modernism and its dead-ends. Now, this question is asked whether postmodernism is a new period of human life in the rest of modernism establishment? (Hosseini, 2008). The present era is called "Post Modern Era" for quick extension of sciences and technology. The features of this period are quick growth and development of technology and environmental evolution. In such conditions, society and its organizations such as educational system and schools are changed. (Heydarifard, 2010) It is tried here to describe postmodernism era briefly, quote scientists and authorities ideas, and then propose political-social, philosophical, and educational aspects, and finally conclusion.



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Postmodernism:

A cultural movement was proposed about 50 years ago which had deep root in art history and theory cognition, to find a solution to solve problems and obstacles. Postmodernism is one of the biggest controversial issues that are proposed in all formal, informal, scientific, and so on meetings. Today, affluent informal conventions are forming in local, national, state, and international levels that connect people with mutual concerns and problems aim of finding desirable solution to face with environmental, political, educational, and international crises problems. The postmodernism thought is used in many fields and has been significantly grown and developed recently. Postmodernism describes new forms of culture and economic-social organizations since the late years of the World War II which has been with industries growth, communication, and revolutions in cultures.

Postmodernism can be known as a project or emission, trying to rethink about holism, universalism, enlightenment era, and appraising individual and mass intellectuality by aim of accomplishing mind in history, non-generally, and pluralism. (Nozari, 2000)

Friedrich Nietzsche's thoughts can be known based on postmodernism. Nietzsche mocked the sustainable thoughts infrastructures by his sharp criticism and blamed the world well-known scientists. The principal message of Nietzsche was his sharp criticism from perception of value and anti-value in society. This message was merged with death of metanarratives in postmodernism philosophy. Nietzsche believed that value and anti-value are hidden in the related determination to power. According to his idea, value is beyond interest to power and human is seduced by his truth and faith seeking appearance.

Thinkers:

Some scholars are proposed in this issue and their thoughts have significant effect in formulating theoretical framework and drawing extensive conceptual and meaningful extension of postmodernism including Jean-Francois Lyotard, Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, Felix Guattari, David Harvey, Fredric Jameson, Charles Jencks, and Ihab Hassan. (Quoted by Nozari, 2010). Since proposing all designs are not possible here, summary of some of them are as following;

If we propose the main conception in thought of Lyotard, the famous writer of "*postmodernism condition*" book, the discourse, image, micro, and macro narratives, metanarratives, legend, language play, and science concepts can be mentioned. According to Lyotard idea, our era sees collapse of a macro metanarratives, which claimed the promising of reaching to faith and reality at some times, but what remained for us is multiplicity and plurality of disparate or incompatible and unbalanced language games. Generally, it can be stated that Lyotard views and ideas are combination of Wittgenstein, post-structuralism, deconstructionist, and other similar ideas which are offered by inspiration. (Quoted by Kashef Al-Ghoza, 2015). The general notion of Foucault's work is combination of philosophical and historical studies. According to Hegelian tradition dominated on French enlightened space after the World War II, two main features protected this tradition: first concern about theorization of the relationships among public or general history, and thought history. Second, concern about human issue or this matter how people are proposed as identified subject (quoted by Kashef Al-Gheta, 2015). Foucault is known as post-structuralist. One of the main reasons of affluent perceptions about his intellectual inputs is in phenomenological, structuralism, hermeneutics, and Marxism aspects. Deconstruction is one of the most principal ideas of Derrida. He showed by this view that physical, logical, ethical, and epistemological systems were built based on reciprocity and conceptual opposition of opposing concepts such as inner / outer core / derivative, or general / specific opponent concepts. In each dual set, there is a united origin stream that denies the opposite pole and removes it. He believes that we shouldn't permit a minor group to take the control of everything and condition for criticism and expressing ideas for all people. Derrida hesitates the renovation conceptions following dynamic, modern, and creative conceptions; these are conceptions that can behave creative and innovative learners by functionalization the philosophical thoughts and many educational issues. (Tabanni and Badri, 2008)

Principal:

- 1- **Credit invalidity:** modernity was put in framework called "metanarratives" or "great narratives" by professional language of cultural studies, but postmodernism tries to show that these conceptions lost their meanings and all ideas are based on the absolute meaning of reality, science, and intelligence, because they are not adaptable with the today precise analysis; and aren't actually more than a handful of artificial structures. In other words, values are relatively. (Kashef Al-gheza, 2015)

- 2- **Meaningless:** in the world free of reality and intelligence and non-valid science, meaning itself doesn't have meaning.
- 3- **Denying reality:** there isn't any automate reality. If there is, human has lost the ability of recognition and differentiate between virtue and reality.
- 4- **Skepticism:** everything should be doubted and nothing should be considered absolutely and completely.
- 5- **Pluralism:** Emphasis on multiplicity of cultures, ethnicity, race, gender, truth and even longer without distinction or preference for one over the other (several authors: 2000)

The Philosophical Nature:

The philosophical bases of postmodernism can be mentioned according to worldview, epistemology, axiological, and its characteristics. (Aryan and Purshafei, 2009). Postmodernism is actually indicator of tearing and collapsing subject. Subject (human) in postmodernism lives in the present time and doesn't have any relation with his past. It means the human subject of postmodernism doesn't have pre-determined essence and forms based on its specific social relationships, language, and culture. According to their idea, they are greatly influenced by varied and disparate culture. Therefore, they are limited and conditional and everyone has its specific "ego".

Epistemology is knowledge of forming human cognitions about nature and defects of objects, or human abilities in achieving such knowledge. The epistemological bases are on postmodernism that our inferential results and breakthroughs are dependent on certain conditions historically. It means they depend on a certain time and location and are not generalizable. Postmodernism doesn't believe reality by its absolute meaning. Reality according to postmodernism is causable and makeable not discoverable issue.

Postmodernism denies public and universal ethical and intellectual values and believes on relativity of values. The general features of postmodernism' value-orientation is that values are collected from various resources and human can accept the ones which reflect "ego" and your group better. The followers of value-based orientation can combine values in relatively endless sets and probable changes, and old values with the new ones.

The Social-Political Nature:

Today we face with daily incremental transnational trade union by arrival the transnational companies which are the natural reflection of these companies extension. In addition, we face with religious, cultural, and ethnical movements who pass the national boundaries and connect with each other. We face with transactional political groups, because Christian and democratic socialists talk about establishing European political parties whose activities range exceeds boundaries of one country, and this is accelerated movement by European parliament establishment. Governments lose their independency more day to day, their governance, and power reduction. Some people believe that postmodernism is ideological statements of an academic-technical class' needs, which is resulted by right and left political parties failure, metanarrative' dead-ends, and anticipation the modern social movements. According to this view, postmodernism supported radical extremist movements in the past, but they lost their hope of revolution in postindustrial communities, gradually tended to liberalism, emphasized on political and cultural pluralism, and philosophical relativism since their thoughts had no relation with the western advanced political-social structure and conditions. (Momeni, 2012)

Education:

The effect of postmodernism in education is the emergence of critical pedagogy which is rooted from Frankfurt school (criticism theory) of Germany. The salient representatives of this school are Marx, Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Jürgen Habermas. (Behrshiti, 1998). Postmodernists believe that schools should be ready to hear others' voices. Not only the teachers, formulators of curriculum, should hear others' voice, but they should start to listen. Foucault knows all sciences political and curriculum indicator of political methods. He is supporter of non-authoritarian approach in education and believed that the relationship between teacher and student should be a form of horizontal and latitudinal not vertical and longitudinal. The final objectives of postmodernism are not achievable, and there is no ideal and logical objective. Moreover, objectives are hierarchical and step by step. Principles are proceeding method, and people are proceeding principles. People talents and abilities are mentioned. Methods are dependent on

situations and new methods are appraised. The beneficiaries and subordinates interests and needs should be accounted. And ability of solving problems should be reinforced. (Rabbani and Badri, 2008)

The postmodern curriculum emphasizes on increasing cultural, political, ecological, aesthetical, and theological awareness. It means this type of curriculum depends on context and general condition of human life. Actually, the curriculum contents should be in a way to put people in process of “becoming”. Curriculum seeks for evolutionary treatment to make teachers and students discover problems and issues in an exploratory and hopeful travel. (Beyramipour et al., 2010)

Conclusion:

By the beginning of globalization, the modern period was deteriorated. According to Jackens interpretation, the prefix “post” should be added to “modern”. The emotion of this movement and departure happened in 1875, 1914, 1945, and 1960; as though, definition of period out of modern period is fully felt. This condition influences on various levels of postmodern human and evolved him both in personal identity aspect and social aspects such as political, religion, society, and culture. Knowledge was classified and become fluid and light by computerizing society and mass media domination. Therefore, the power pilot returns to knowledge control. Actually, governments are dependent on what they control. These evolutions show themselves especially in reducing centralized power of governments, increasing power super-state groups, and arrival of new social movements (Kashef Algeza, 2015)

Important criticism on postmodernism is on worldview (meta-narratives) and universal for example, some postmodern writers such as Fredric Jameson thinks to draw postmodern cultural logic extension in the global scale (Parsa, 1998). In contrary, Habermas claimed that modernity includes freedoms and unprecedented improvements in the lives of contemporary people. What makes Habermas dissatisfied from postmodernity is that they are not able to consider right of reasoning according to his idea. In other words, according to Habermas, the postmodernism followers neglect positive consequences of “rational subject” such as human freedom, humanistic and civil rights by challenging it. They damaged the difference between freedom and captivity, and don’t show freedom way to human. Habermas knows modernity as unfinished design that hasn’t still reached to its high ideals, and it should tries to practice the mentioned ideals.

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