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An Examination of Quality of Education in Pakistan with respect to Personality Development of a Child in Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

The phase of primary level education is the most important phase throughout the educational process. The purpose of this research paper was to critically analyze the quality of education in Pakistan at primary level. The method used for the research was qualitative and descriptive. For clear understanding of underlying theme the article was divided into three sections: the first section gave the brief introduction to importance of primary education and educational structure in Pakistan, the second discussed the education in Islamic context, and the third dealt with the reshaping of educational structure with respect to quality education. The review of literature revealed that the quality of education in Pakistan was far from its objectives, personality development of children, grooming of learners, as well as critical and creative thinking. The study also found that the education we gave to our children was not up to the mark as it was not fulfilling the requirements of quality education that's why the generation, we educated was unfaithful, disloyal, immoral and highly corrupted. Moreover, Islam had given emphasize on child development from all aspects; physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social and economic. In this context, the author recommends to follow the infrastructure of Islamic education to develop the child's personality in comprehensive way. For this purpose, objectives of education, pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment system must be revised in the light of Islamic teachings.

Key Words: *Education system, Primary Education, child Development, Quality education*

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Introduction

Undoubtedly, education plays a dynamic role in individual and social progress. Without education, the development of human personality in appropriate manner is almost impossible. A person remains well informed about his obligations and rights with the help of education. Moreover, it enables man to think correctly and differentiate between right and wrong. It provides an opportunity to get information from the outer world, instructing man to think logically, familiarizing him with previous history, so he might be a superior judge of the present.

The main purpose of education is to develop the capacities or skills in the individual to prepare him for the promotion of good, elimination of evil, participation in worldly matters actively and gently. There is no doubt in accepting the fact that education stands the backbone for the growth of nations. By looking upon the history of nations, we may carefully extract the conclusion that advanced countries made progress on the basis of quality education.

Presently, the educational structure in Pakistan is divided into six levels: **1) Pre Schooling** (it includes Play Group, Nursery & Prep class for the age 3-5 years kids), **2) Primary Schooling** (From Grades One-Five), **3) Middle Schooling** (From Grades Six-Eight), **4) High Schooling** (From Grade Nine-Ten also called Secondary School Certificate), **5) Intermediate** (From Grade Eleven-Twelve also called Higher Secondary School Certificate), **6) University Education** (Undergraduate, Graduate and Post Graduate Programs).

Unfortunately, our education system in Pakistan is facing number of serious problems at all levels which need to be solved immediately. These problems play the role of obstacles in achieving the educational goals appropriately. Social restrictions, expensive education, lack of planning, improper facilities, gender discrimination, shortage of funds, insufficient facilities are very common in education. One of these problems is the issue of "Quality Education" at primary level. As the phase of primary level education is the most important phase throughout educational process because it aims at developing physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social and economic aspects of personality. But unfortunately these skills are ignored in our educational system which results in improper nurturing of a child. In this context, the author intended to address the issue of quality education at primary level by looking into its infrastructure, goals and outcomes. All these elements of education are addressed in Islamic perspective.

Objective of the study

This research work was basically designed to achieve the following objectives;

- ❖ To assess the quality of education at primary level in Pakistan.
- ❖ To examine the child development in terms of physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, economic and social aspects.

- ❖ To address the underlying theme and propose new infrastructure of quality education in the light of Quran and Sunnah.
- ❖ To suggest some recommendations in order to improve the quality of education in the light of Islamic teachings.

Research Methodology

The main purpose of this research work was to investigate the quality of education at primary level. Qualitative and descriptive research methods were employed in the study. For the collection and analysis of data, the author looked into the educational structure of Pakistan and made a comprehensive division into six levels in order to assess the issue in appropriate way. One of the important levels of education (primary level) was chosen to examine the quality of education. The author investigated the essential skills to be developed in the students of primary level. These skills were derived from the Islamic educational system. Furthermore the relevant literature including Quran, Sunnah, books, articles, theses, and reports were consulted to address the underlying theme in an accurate way. There were three stages of research: **first** was the collection of data from primary and secondary sources, **second** was the analysis and demonstration of data, and **third** proposed a framework to improve the quality of education. At the end, some suggestions were also made in order to diminish the problem and improve educational progress.

Literature Review

It is the dilemma of our education system that it is far away from our national, cultural, and religious needs. It is unable to produce balanced individuals who can promote peace and prosperity in the society. History confirms that we had a brilliant educational system before British rule. It was developing all necessary skills including physical, moral, spiritual, and social and was producing a balanced personality. ⁽¹⁾ Presently, there are many serious problems in the education system of Pakistan at all levels. One of these problems is the quality of education as the quality of education has a declining trend in Pakistan. Moreover, an educational system of poor quality may be one of the most important reasons why poor countries do not grow.

As Islamic is a complete code of life which provides guidance about all aspects of human life. Islam does provide the complete set of instructions about all educational phases. The verses of Holy Quran and traditions of our beloved Prophet PBUH explain the sketch and basic principles of education. These principles play a significant role in constructing the infrastructure of quality education and producing peaceful individual in the society. It would be quite beneficial to present the importance of education in Islam, educational mechanism, and goals of quality education in Islamic perspective in following lines.

Education in Islamic Context

Islam has laid a great emphasize on learning, practicing and spreading knowledge.. This is the reason that first five verses of Noble Quran were directly associated with the educational process as Allah Almighty stated in Surah Al-Alaq:

﴿اَفْرَأْ بِاِسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ... عَلَّمَ الْاِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ﴾⁽²⁾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created... Taught man that which he knew not”.

These five verses of Surah Al-Alaq clearly demonstrate the importance of reading, learning, and teaching in Islam. Similarly, the traditions of Holy Prophet divulge the importance of knowledge, learning, teaching, high status and position of scholars, and reward of seeking and conveying knowledge. Each book of hadith has a particular section on “Book of Knowledge” (كتاب العلم). Some of the ahadith showing importance of knowledge, reward of seeking knowledge, and high rank of scholars are mentioned below;

«خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ»⁽³⁾

“The best of you is he who learns the Quran and teaches it”.

«طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ»⁽⁴⁾

“Seeking knowledge is duty upon every Muslim”.

«مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا، سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ»⁽⁵⁾

“Whoever follows a path in pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise”.

«فَقِيهِ وَاحِدٌ أَشَدُّ عَلَى الشَّيْطَانِ كَمِ أَلْفِ عَابِدٍ»⁽⁶⁾

“A single scholar of religion is more formidable against Satan than a thousand devout persons”.

«يوزن دم الشهداء بمداد العلماء فيرجح مداد العلماء على دم الشهداء»⁽⁷⁾

“The ink of a scholar’s pen and blood of martyr will be weighed and the ink of scholar will be valuable than the blood of martyr”.

One of the unique examples of importance of education in Islam could be seen by an occasion in the life of the Prophet. At the battle of Badr (بدر), the Prophet was successful, seventy of his adversaries were taken as prisoner. Presently these prisoners were all proficient individuals. Along these lines, so as to profit by their learnedness, the Prophet pronounced that if every prisoner taught ten Muslim kids how to read and write, that would be considered his ransom to release from imprisonment. This was the first informal school established by the Prophet PBUH to educate Muslims. It was of regardless of to him that every one of its educators were non-Muslims, all were prisoners of war, and were probably going to recreate a new issue for Islam and Muslims once they were released. This Sunnah of the Prophet PBUH demonstrated that whatever the risk was faced, the education was compulsory to him in all atmospheres.

Reshaping Educational Infrastructure in Islamic Perspective

It would be important to say that Islam does not focus merely on education but emphasizes on ‘quality education’. It ensures the broad-based development of children. According to Penny Tassoni, Kath Bulman, and Kate Beith, the main aspects of development include physical, communication, personal, social, emotional and cognitive development.⁽⁸⁾ In this connection, Islam wants to develop six goals of education in an individual to ensure the ‘quality of education’. These six goals of quality education include physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and economic development.

The visual representing of goals of quality education is given below;

Physical Development: Islam ordained the believers to develop their selves physically and hygienically. For this purpose, Allah Almighty explained the principles of permissible (Halal) and impermissible (Haraam) food, eatables and drinks in the Holy Quran.

The Noble Quran mentioned the very basic principle in this regard:

﴿كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا﴾⁽⁹⁾

“Eat from whatever is on earth lawful and good”.

Our beloved Prophet advised for the physical development of children:

«علموا أولادكم السباحة والرمي والفروسية»⁽¹⁰⁾

"Teach your children swimming, archery and horse riding"

Intellectual Development: Along with the physical development, Islam emphasized on the intellectual development. There are number of verses of Holy Quran and traditions of Holy Prophet PBUH which show the importance of intellectual development. For this purpose, Islam differentiated between right and wrong type of education as the Noble Quran strictly prohibited for seeking knowledge which is harmful for the humanity as Allah Almighty mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah;

﴿فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ...مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ...﴾⁽¹¹⁾

“And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife...not have in the Hereafter any share...”

Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH did not emphasize upon mere education but focused on beneficial knowledge as he said in this regard;

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْأَرْبَعِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ...»⁽¹²⁾

“Oh Allah, I seek refuge in you from the four: the knowledge does not benefit...”

Moral Development: Islam has given particular instructions regarding moral development of children. Allah Almighty declared the ethics of Holy Prophet PBUH as best ethics. There are numerous verses of Holy Quran and traditions of Holy Prophet which deal with the importance of moral development.

Allah Almighty stated in Noble Quran;

﴿قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا﴾⁽¹³⁾

“Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire”.

Hazrat Ali interpreted this verse of Quran that educate your children and train them morally.

Our Holy Prophet PBUH said for moral development of children:

﴿مَا نَحَلَ وَالِدٌ وَوَلَدَهُ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدَبٍ حَسَنِ﴾⁽¹⁴⁾

“The best thing, a father can give his children is good morals”.

Spiritual Development: Islam did not focus only on outer beautify but equally emphasized upon inner beauty. The true believer is one who has a sin free heart. Due to the significance of beauty of soul Allah Almighty has ordained many times in Holy Quran to pure the soul as it was mentioned in Surah Al-Aala:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى﴾⁽¹⁵⁾

“He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself”.

Social Development: Islam wanted an individual to become wise, intelligent, progressive, productive, and target oriented. In this connection it ordained believers to become socially well aware, participate in worldly activities, and promote social peace and prosperity as Allah Almighty said in this regard;

(16) ﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى﴾

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety”.

Our beloved Prophet PBUH said:

(17) «خير الناس من ينفع الناس»

“The best among people is one who benefits people”.

Economic Development: one of the goals of Islamic education is the



economic development of child. Islam wants to develop the sense that an individual should utilize his maximum potential to do the livelihood for himself and his family. In this connection, Islam appreciates the labor, encourages earning permissible

livelihood, emphasizes upon legal means of and finally explains the reward of hardworking.

Allah Almighty ordained in Holy Quran in this regard;

﴿وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا﴾⁽¹⁸⁾

“And do not forget your share of the world”.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The above literature clearly shows that the condition of education in Pakistan is miser at all levels and particularly at primary level. The present infrastructure of our educational system is unable to develop necessary skills in children. Due to improper nurturing the educational process is unable to develop hygienic personality, critical thinking, and good morality. This flaw gives birth to unfaithful, disloyal, immoral, corrupt and ill-mannered generation. It is therefore suggested to make immediate changings to the infrastructure of the educational system of Pakistan by redefining objectives of education, curricular and co-curricular activities, teaching methodologies, and assessment system. All these elements of education system are needed to be reconstructed by keeping in view the teachings of Quran and Sunnah. The revival of educational system in Islamic context would provide an opportunity to produce such students who would be equipped with the teachings of Islam and promote peace and prosperity in the society

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