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SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN ISLAM

Arshad Ahmed Baig *

Waqar Akber Cheema **

In order to have a grasp of the Islāmic educational system it is imperative to understand and even imitate in attitude the Madinan society of the Prophet's era. To replicate the Islāmic fervor of Madinah in social milieu we must see and declare our educational institutions a continuation of Al-Suffah and Dār al-Arqam. In doing so we will have our compass set right. The graduates of those institutions will be our role models. Their approach towards life and conduct in public and solitude, in mutual transactions, trade and commerce, politics and battle fields will be our curriculum. Such will be our educational system.

The sketch of Islāmic education system that we often have in our minds is quite vague. This vagueness is due to a number of factors. Most important among them is the absence of the practical manifestation of that system. Another factor is the patch work. A number of our institutions mention Islāmic education among their objectives and even call their efforts a hall mark of that system, yet they are not even aware of its fundamental reality let alone its practical philosophy and constituents. On the other hand, the academicians who fully know and understand these concepts and also have the good intention to practice them face the challenges of the West-inspired Market Driven Economic Philosophy. This is the poison that kills the potential of the best of men. We usually come across such comments:

- Our educational scheme should follow the demands of the society and world at large.
- Our institutional culture should represent the concepts in vogue in society.
- We must follow the likes and dislikes of the children and their parents.

This line of thought needs to be corrected. It is generally held that life cannot move on if we opt for ways different than those of the society at large and that education system is no exception to this. We, however, believe that people with such ideas lack conviction and self-confidence.

This thought pattern spins around the ideas of customer, consumer and market. The catch-call lines are 'Customer comes first' and 'Customer is always right.'

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Though these lines by themselves have a major conceptive flaw; it gives a very narrow view of customer's good". Let us first emphasize the idea of having goodwill and care for the customer. If he is ruining his life and afterlife then his true interest and care must also be considered while saying, 'customer comes first.'

We must remember that an educational institution is a place of two-way trade of influences. An educational institution like other institutions of a society is naturally influenced by the general trends of society. However, unlike other places of social interaction, an educational institution itself influences and transmits new currents to the society which in turn shape up the broader social attitudes. The magnitude of this responsibility is increased manifold in the times of general decadence. An educational institution must not give in to "in-vogue ideas"; it should rise up to the occasion and try to do at least the damage control. People with competence and character must accept such a challenge. Naturally, the true heirs to the tradition of Al-Suffah and Dār al-Arqam can only be the agents of change; they cannot run blindly the course and trends set by the society.

Let's seek further light from education system in the city of Madinah during Prophet's era. We learn that Islāmic education system:

- Is about creation of a total environment imbued with the spirit of learning.
- Is an integral part of the Islāmic philosophy of life.
- Aims at training the vicegerents of Allah on Earth.
- Has a comprehensive curriculum following a holistic approach where physical, spiritual and material aspects of life and the success of this life and the life hereafter are taken care of.
- Produced men and women of character and competence who were so strong in faith, meticulous in action and visionary in understanding that they shined as beacons of light for centuries.

In the light of these points the Madinian philosophy of life is what guides us in selection of teachers and courses, preparation of curriculum and syllabi, assessment and evaluation mechanism and other activities related to education. In order to properly understand this philosophy of life we need to understand our concepts about man and universe. The whole process of education finds the right direction only when man understands the purpose of his life and his relation with the universe and the Almighty Allah along with the reason he has been granted the free will and ability to conquer and exploit the universe with a sense of responsibility.

Allah Almighty says:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْأَنْهَارَ (32) وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ (33) وَأَتَاكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ (34)

“It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and sent down rain from the sky and produced thereby some fruits as provision for you and subjected for you the ships to sail through the sea by His command and subjected for you the rivers. And He subjected for you the sun and the moon, continuous [in orbit], and subjected for you the night and the day. And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.”(1)

The whole universe is for man to explore and exploit but man for himself is supposed to obey Allah. The Messenger of Allah is reported to have said:

فِيَاكُمْ خُلِقْتُمْ لِلْآخِرَةِ وَالْدُّنْيَا خُلِقَتْ لَكُمْ

“You are created for Hereafter and the world is created for you.”(2)

Dr. Muhammad Iqbāl has expressed the same thing in his line:

جہاں ہے تیرے لیے تو نہیں جہاں کے لیے

“You are not for the world; instead the world is for you”

The due understanding of the relation between the Creator and the creation and realizing the status of the universe are important issues that set the tone of life. It is worthy to note that education system is established and strengthened for the same purpose.

A structured programme in an educational institution based on these essentials is what defines an Islāmic educational system. It imbues the practical lives of people with the Hue of Allah (sibghat Allah) which can then be termed as the character of an Islāmic society. The premises of a school or university should be the prototype of such an Islāmic society. The Qur'ān based educational system alone guarantees true development. If we stick to the Qur'ān and the commands of

the Prophet (pbuh) it will lead us to success.

The Messenger of Allah said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ أَقْوَامًا وَيَضَعُ بِهِ الْآخَرِينَ

“By this Book, Allah would exalt some peoples and degrade others.”(3)

As believers we have no other way to success. Ours is a scheme specific and unique.

خاص ہے ترکیب میں قوم رسول ہاشمی

An Islāmic system of education is not all about having an Islāmic studies course. If the system at large is not oriented with the Islāmic colour, and merely includes a few chapters of the Qur'ān or hadith reports, it does no good. Shedding away this mindset of patchwork is imperative to design a comprehensive curriculum from an Islāmic perspective. Islāmic educational system denotes the entire civilization and the curriculum should thus be designed to reincarnate that same ideal civilization. Ideology shall reign supreme in relation to all arts and sciences and they shall be taught from the Islāmic viewpoint.

In such a frame of reference all the natural and social sciences and arts will bolster together and strengthen a specific philosophy of life wherein a student of even the natural sciences will find himself drawn closer to Allah, and will act in conformity with His commands.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbāl said, “Scientific knowledge instilled with the spirit of tawhid is a kind of mysticism that can salvage the new generation.”

Another dimension from the viewpoint of Islāmic system of education

Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not concerned with worldly grandeur • Not running after material riches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sincerity in work • Honest and upright • Anxious to teach etiquettes • Role model in character
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An epitome of humility Thirsty for love of knowledge • Seeking excellence in piety and righteousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirous to learn and explore • Will to build strong moral character

Intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasure of Allah • Purity of intention and fear of Allah • To learn and teach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revival of higher values of life • Building a healthy society • A life with higher goals
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love of Allah • Purity of thought and action • Remembrance of Allah swt • Intellectual focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief with action • Knowledge and action • Sacrifice & care • Love and fraternity
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall development • Spiritual refinement • Global peace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human welfare • Continuous progress and development

In the pre-modern traditional Islāmic society education was a social phenomenon with a strong inter-personal relation between student and teacher. The madrasah/school was only a physical setting, not a system governing the nature of teacher's interaction with his students. In the modern educational system teacher has become a “knowledge-worker” who passes on information and seeks his remuneration for it. With the role of teacher the sense of duty attached, if at all, is only in terms of completing the tuition hours and making his pupils aware of some facts and skills. This is the job of a teacher. In the world driven by forces of “market-economy” education is just another industry-a business. The governing bodies of educational institutions decide what to teach, and this is based on the demand, and demand of a subject or courses is in turn determined by their marketability. This is the alpha and omega of education in our day. There is no room for a murabbi-a mentor in the true sense of the word. The concept of murabbi entails a moral notion in the idea of education and personal and social touch to the student-teacher relation. Modern institutions with set rules do not allow anything that can undermine the commodification of knowledge or give way to personalized student-teacher relation. This explains the 'organization', institutionalization, and reductionism of knowledge and education as we see today.

The problem of organization and, institution in the modern educational system as against the system that involves the notion of murabbi is not in the sense of academic calendars, or daily schedules. In fact, even the greatest murabbi- the Messenger of Allah -used to allocate and distribute time for different people and

activities, the problem in reality is about practically forcing both teachers and students from different social backgrounds and intellectual abilities onto a set path with no consideration for choices otherwise. And the set path itself serves the broader ends of a materialistic global setting.

In short it must be realized that:

1. Education system and society are strongly interlinked and integrated.
2. Education system is not an isolated concept to be viewed separately from the society and imposed upon it from outside.
3. When we have a specific conception of a system of education then the society it aims to create shall be seen as its end goal.
4. We must declare and visualize our educational institutes as heirs of the legacy of Dār al-Arqam and Al-Suffah. Once this connection is established, it shall serve as a kind of policy guideline for all the subsequent decisions and will help do away with all the confusion and make it easy to determine as to what ought to be done.
5. In this age of Islāmic revival it is an important obligation to show the world a practical manifestation of the Islāmic system of education. We must have confidence about this scheme and should not give in to doubts and skepticism.
6. The primary concern of the institutions should be the students. Their good (falāh) in the hereafter along with progress and achievements in this world should be the matter of concern.
7. Responsibility of an educational institution is increased manifolds in the times of decadence. It should point out the wrongs in social attitudes and behaviours. It should not be all about damage control rather it should play a proactive role in setting the direction right.
8. The entire educational system shall fall under the system of divine guidance.
9. The essentials of the educational system should be understood in the light of rightful understanding of the relation between Allah, man and the universe. This understanding also owes itself to the divine guidance.
10. Producing individuals with balanced personalities shaped up under the system of divine revelation to rescue humanity in this world and Hereafter. This precisely is the purpose of education.

Rabi bin 'Āmir said in the court of the Persian commander Rustam:

الله ابتعثنا، والله جاء بنا لنخرج شاء من عبادة العباد إلى عبادة الله، ومن ضيق
الدنيا إلى سعتها، ومن جور الأديان إلى عدل الإسلام.

“Allah has sent us and has brought us here that we may extricate those who so desire from servitude to the people [here on earth] and make them servants of Allah; that we may transform their poverty in this world into affluence; and that we may free them from the inequity of the religions and bestow upon them the justice of Islām.” (Tārikh al-Tabari).

ISLAMIC SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Body	Soul
Material needs	Spirituality
Worldly relations	Hereafter consciousness
Knowledge/ awareness	Rightful conduct

References:

- 1- Al-Quran 14:32-34
- 2- Al-Baihaqi, Shu'ab al-Iman, hadith 10097
- 3- Muslim bin Hajjah, al-Sahih, hadith 817

ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

Ommeh Asma *

Abstract:

After 9/11 an irrational or very powerful fear or dislike of Islam and the feeling as the Muslims are under siege and attacks. Islamophobia is deemed as a human rights issue because of its implication of fear and intolerance culminating in hate speech and attitude toward Muslims. The OIC defines the root causes of Islamophobia and strongly condemn and respond the Western behavior against Islam and Muslims.

ISLAMOPHOBIA:

Islamophobia is prejudice towards or discrimination against Muslims due to their religion or perceived religious, national or ethnic identity associated with Islam. (1)

The term “Islamophobia” was first introduced as a concept in a 1991 Runnymede Trust Report and defined as “unfounded hostility towards Muslims and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims.”(2)

The Council of American Islamic Relations provided the detail list many of the misconceptions commonly held by Islamophobic people.

- Islam is unchanging and refuses to adapt to new realities or changing times.
- Islam shares no common values with any of the other major religions.
- Islam is no longer relevant and their ideals are irrational.
- Islam promotes violence. (3)

All over the world Muslims are under siege and attack Islamophobia however, goes much beyond this and incorporates racial hatred, intolerance, prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping the phenomenon of Islamophobia in its essence is a religion based resentment.

The leading cause of Islamophobia is usually misinformation or total lack of information based on the religion.

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ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION:

The Organization of Islamic cooperation is second largest International Organization representing 57 Muslim countries and it is the spokesman for the 1.5 billion Muslims where they highlight their problems & develop cooperation and coordination.

After 9/11 great change war noticed when the war against international terrorism began & indirectly Muslim Ummah was targeted under the shadow of war for peace & Islamophobia.

OIC emphasizes the inter civilization dialogue based on mutual respect & promoting international peace & security, tolerance & global harmony. In the 38th session of the International Conference of Foreign Minister's request the Secretary General to prepare an observatory report on Islamophobia & to effectively counter Islamophobia through discussions & debates at various International forums.

In a 2008 first observation report are as follows.

- a) Ignorance or insufficient knowledge of Islam in non Muslim society.
- b) Insufficient dissemination of information about Muslim countries.
- c) Abuse or misuse of freedom of expressions.
- d) Incitements by individual groups or organizations with vested interests.
- e) Lack of binding legal instruments.
- f) Confinement of the debate.
- g) Exacerbation of anti Muslim sentiments after 9/11.
- h) Lack of political will and commitment.
- i) The threat posed by the cheap labors.

In this report noted some western institution recognizing the rise of Islamophobia and also mention General Secretariat activities.

The OIC has strongly condemned responded to the publication of Blasphemous Caricature of the Holy Prophet PBUH by a newspaper in Denmark and Sweden, which inflamed Islamophobia. (4) And the OIC also strongly condemned on the release movie 'Fitnah the initiative to ban Minarets in Switzerland.

OIC General Secretariat to raise awareness of the issue of Islamophobia by to meet the political leadership of the western world and also develop interaction in

the USA think tanks, United Nations, European Union, OSCEC (Organization for security and cooperation in Europe, and Council of Europe).

OIC MEDIA STRATEGY:

Media are the most effective tool and source for the dissemination of information and shaping of public opinion. OIC decided the Muslim world recognizes the centrality of this medium for fair and objective portrayal of Muslim issues and causes as well as the true image of Islam.

OIC Department of Information presents a plan OIC Media Strategy in Countering Islamophobia in Brussels workshop.

The strategy had short, medium and long term goals an action plan to fight Islamophobia. The organization's internal decision is a short term strategy. Medium strategy based on the influence of this plan with NGO's. And the long term achieves goal policy for member countries.

In this strategy to fight Islamophobia which fulfilled by misconceptions about Islam and Muslims, and incites hatred and discrimination against them on religious and ethnic ground. Make films on Muslims, resolve the negative impact of Muslims; they decided the visit students and journalist on a yearly basis to resolve the misconceptions of Muslims.

Establish a printing press in western countries in those languages. To allocate special budget for Islamic learning in American and European Colleges and Universities. Islamic history, states and cultural books translate in English, French, German and Spanish language, then available in western library and book store.

For this plan Kuwait established Waqf fund for preserving Islamic values. They established a committee for advertisement with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan and General Secretariat.

In the 40th session of ICFM endorsed a resolution on the establishment of an OIC Satellite Channel will contribute towards enhancing Islamic solidarity, particularly in the domain of culture, trade, industry, tourism, education, etc. Egypt, Qatar, Jordan and Turkey offered to host the project but particular progress was not possible.

Besides that OIC held on 12 & 13 September 2013 an International Conference in Turkey on Islamophobia Law and Media. It was emphasized that Islamophobia is contrary to the concept of respect of human rights. It is the synonyms of intolerance and discrimination which itself is extremism. The hate speech and

also discussed the role in the conference. For this solution urged to use its position by Media. The Islamic Broadcasting Organization and News Agency was bound to make it possible to promote our objectives in the member states, but their achievement of Mission and Goals barrier a media policy of member states. Electronic media of all member countries are developed, but biased reporting may not be possible against international cooperation of the Islamic world. Even the organizational report has failed to place the issue of member countries' media. In these circumstances, how can be expected that could be present at the effectively in international level.

OIC STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW:

Secretary General of OIC presents the 6th observatory report on Islamophobia in ICFM. The OIC strategy based on

- i. Combating this phenomenon comprehensively and collectively in coordination and cooperation with the Member States, the International Community and the UN Human rights mechanism by raising global awareness of the basis tenets of moderation and modernization.
- ii. Initiating vigorous diplomatic efforts to sensitize the International community on the dangerous implications of the phenomenon of Islamophobia in the religion as well as the global context.
- iii. Conducting public diplomacy awareness raising with a view to neutralizing the motivated and systematic campaign against Islam and Muslims by extremists in Western Societies in particular, and
- iv. Monitoring Islamophobic acts, events, publications and utterances on a daily basis with a view to removing misperceptions issuing rejoinders and rebuttals and calling on the government and other authorities concerned to take appropriate remedial measures. (5)

The OIC were effort for approved international law in UNO. In order to prevent conflicts of promotion, religious affairs and values. The organization faced truce opposition from the west. There reaction was very stunned.

The OIC sponsored UN resolution on religious defamation instead provides justification for government to restrict religious freedom and free expression. They also provide International legitimacy of existing national laws that punish Blasphemy or otherwise ban criticism of a religion, which often have resulted in gross human rights violations. These resolutions deviate sharply from Universal human fights standards by seeking to protect religious institutions and interpretations. (6)

On March 21, 2011 UN Council of Human rights passed the resolution 16/18. They concern OIC's Islamophobia issue, the resolution based on intolerance, discrimination and incitement to violence against religion or beliefs.

After resolution approval Western Countries exposed and they criticize the OIC's efforts.

Its present goal is the International criminalization of all speech that defamed Islam, which the OIC defines as anything that sheds a negative light on Islam or Muslims, even when it's true. Its target is the West and one of its tactics to accuse those who criticize Islam or its various interpretations as "Islamophobic" it is attempting to pass the equivalent of Islamic Blasphemy codes in the west, using accusations of bigotry to silence anyone who speaks the truth about Islamic terrorism or Islamic persecution of religions minorities. They also say that the OIC's claims that it seeks to protect all religion and religious symbols from defamation are patently false and are contrary to the actions of the OIC countries which discriminate against in Fidel's. In Saudi Arabia, Jews are denied citizenship, In Iran, Baha'is are denied equal employment opportunities, In Pakistan, Ahmadiyya Muslims are jailed for openly practicing their faith and there's a genocide against Coptic Christians in Egypt. Many OIC countries also prohibit the building or repair of churches and synagogues as well as public worship by minority religions. (7)

The west, in the guise of freedom of expression, providing justification for criticizing Islam while the law of Israel state of stoning crime such as... Idolatry, Blasphemy. (8) Even they didn't allow to raise questions about the Holocaust. Is it a Jewish propaganda or really Hitler being massacred 60 Lac Jewish?

Also in India the constitutionally secular state, but follow the divine law of extreme punishment to discredit the god.(9) It caused several incidents of killing the Muslims by Hindus extremists in Utter Pradesh, Malipur, New Delhi, Hamachal Pardesh, Kashmir, Ahmed Abad and Dehli for eating cow and doing its business.

In this context the criticism of Islam and an approved resolution in UNO presented by OIC is unjustified.

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