

Role of Islamic system of education in moral behavior and spiritual identity of Muslims.

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ABSTRACT:

Humans have always had the curiosity to know themselves, to know the world around them, and to know their place in the world. Morality, spirituality and religion are closely intertwined, 'certain moral ideas became united with certain religious and spiritual ideas to such an extent as to become indistinct from them'. The role of religion in educational institutions is one of the most sensitive and volatile topics on the political and legal landscape now a days especially in country like Pakistan which has been created on religious ideology. The Islamic Way of Life is based on this unique approach to life and a peculiar concept of man's place in the Universe. Islam has provided mankind with the highest possible standard of morality. This moral code, which is both straightforward and practical, provides the individual with innumerable ways to embark upon and then continues the path of moral evolution. By making divine revelation the primary source of knowledge, moral standards are made permanent and stable.

The first part of the paper is about the relationship between education and its role as spiritual and moral tool of training. Second part deals with the concept of education in Islam and third part will present types of knowledge in Islam and their application as moral and spiritual tool of education. Last part will give moral and spiritual training methodology in Islamic education.

The relationships between 'moral', 'spiritual' and 'religious' seem to be akin to the relationships between the cluster 'social', 'human' and 'political'. In each of these clusters, only beings of the kind appropriately described by the middle term can engage in activities which could be properly described by the first and third terms. Islam as religion of spirituality and morality gives a frame work to educate and train the students in modeling their life as more moral and spiritual with practical application in this life and success in the hereafter. The chief characteristic of the Islamic Concept of Life is that it does not admit a conflict, nay, not even a significant separation between life-spiritual and life-mundane. It does not confine itself merely in purifying the spiritual and the moral life of man in the limited sense of the word. Its domain extends to the entire gamut of life. It wants to would individual life as well as the social order in healthy patterns, so that the Kingdom of God may really be established on the earth and so that peace contentment and well-being may fill the world as water fills the oceans.

Key Words: Spiritual, Moral, Education, Knowledge, Islam.

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Introduction:

The quest of Knowledge is one of the basic needs of Human beings. Human beings are always curious to attain knowledge and information especially about their existence and porous of creation into this world. In order to attain this knowledge lead him to philosophy, logic, science but ultimate answer could only found in religion and most of all the religion of Islam.¹

At the same time a breakdown in moral values is afflicting mankind with many forms of distress, in all over the world. In particular, delinquency among the young, including violent crimes, illegal use of drugs and casual sex, strike developed and developing societies alike. It is a problem of global proportions which demands an urgent solution. There are clearly important and, in some respects, close relationships among 'moral, spiritual and religious' which will be explored to some extent in what follows. But they are not the same. To regard them as synonymous would be to make a category mistake similar to thinking that the terms 'knives', 'cutlery' and 'forks' could be regarded as referring to three distinct types of entity; whereas the truth is that knives and forks are cases or examples of cutlery. Cutlery embraces the whole range of normal eating implements: knives and forks are classified as cases of cutlery because of their inclusion within the range of items whose *raison d'être* is to serve this purpose. The relationships between 'moral', 'spiritual' and 'religious' seem to be akin to the relationships between the cluster 'social', 'human' and 'political'. In each of these clusters, only beings of the kind appropriately described by the middle term can engage in activities which could be properly described by the first and third terms. And it is the fact that the first and third terms, in each case, are (albeit usually implicitly) qualified by the second term that makes them authentically what they are.

According to Tritton (1957) religion is the base of morality If we want to save the moral values of society we should save the religion. To put the matter bluntly, morality and religion can both be mundane when and to the extent that they lose touch with their spiritual roots or core. This has to do with the intention or, at least, the motivation of the agent. The role of religion in educational institutions is one of the most responsive and explosive topics on the political and legal subject now a day especially in country like Pakistan which has been created on religious ideology. Along with other controversial issues that arise in the culture wars - particularly abortion and homosexuality - it raises not only policy questions, but triggers deep emotions as well as questions identity:" who are we as a human being."²

Spirituality, Morality and education:

Morality, spirituality and religion are closely tangled, exclusion of any one of them could damage the others as well (Durkheim 1973).³

In the absence of a clear understanding of this difference it often happens that when talking about the spiritual and neglecting religion or separation of spirituality, religion and education. Education system should give the training and understanding of spirituality and education. Such as the Ministry of education in Italy published which

has published in which the emphasis of religion was given to enable children about morality.⁴

Morality and religion are—or, rather, may be under certain conditions—forms or expressions of spirituality. Equally, important is the recognition that spirituality has many other forms. This is attested by many writers on the subject. Sir Alister Hardy (1978), for example, writes about: the spiritual nature of man.⁵

According to Constantin Regamey (1959) spirituality being expressed in disinterested moral feelings, demands for order, responsibility, freedom, justice, longings for immortality or unity with the whole, intuitions of beauty or truth, mental faculties, such as attention, abstraction, coherent reasoning, and quite generally the notion of non-utilitarian values.⁶

Doing the right thing is not necessarily evidence of a spiritual commitment. It is possible to do right in order to seem to be doing well, or even to avoid doing what is good! Similarly many overtly 'religious' actions are devoid of any spiritual awareness or faith on the part of the doer. Not that 'spiritual' activities are always consciously so; but, when the question of motivation is raised, it is concerned with the spirit in which the deed was done and the considerations which impelled the doer. Spiritual system of Islam which not only excel the dualism of spirit and matter but is the nucleus of the integrated and unified concept of life presented by Islam.

Islamic concept of Education:

'Learned people are the successors of prophets'; 'seek knowledge from cradle to grave'; seek knowledge even in [distant] China'-such scriptural sayings in praise of learning were key elements of Muhammad's legacy to the Muslim community and would become a cornerstone of Islamic educational thought. The quest for knowledge was regarded as a sacred activity and its neglect was denounced as ignorance. As a revelation religion claiming to shape human conduct, Islam defined its main purpose as ethical and moral. Its essence was keeping the faith, applying its imperatives and nurturing moral conduct as preconditions for a pure life in this world and happiness in the hereafter. As such, education had a strong affinity to the revered concept of *tahdhib*, i.e. shaping the pupil's personality. Religious experts in Islam, the scriptures and their interpretation became a vehicle of authority and the means to guide the believer in the right path, excluding all others from the communal fold. The ulema's early integration into the governmental establishment as preachers, judges, educators, bureaucrats and administrators of religious endowments paved their way to an influential status and to privileges.⁷ So the essential role of religious scholar and educators is to convey the message of Islamic system of spiritual morality trains the students about their real objective in this life and here after. Islam as religion had very rich traditions of educational material in the forms of Hadith, Fiqh, Logic, and reasoning.⁸

In Islam curiosity for knowledge is encouraged both in Quran and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). Even Islamic dynasty till Abbasids period was credited as golden period of education, information and scientific knowledge. Muslim scientists, philoso-

phers, scholars had contributed in all field of life to facilitate and enhance the curiosity of knowledge. ⁹

Moral and spiritual role of Islamic education.

Modern education system provides only knowledge that makes students skill full in material practices such as how to become doctor, engineer, lawyer, politician, businessman, social scientist and architecture. But these systems are producing good engineers, doctors, and social scientist not good human beings. These systems have separated the spiritual desires from the practices. Within Islamic domain of spirituality man has appointed by Allah Almighty as Khalifah in this world. He has been blessed by certain authority of freedom of action with the responsibility of accountable before Allah Almighty for every act he performs in this world. Unlike other philosophical ideologies body and soul are not different in Islamic spirituality rather both are combination of one soul. Body has been given authority to act but the soul is responsible for differentiating the right from wrong in order to correct the mistakes of body.

Spiritual knowledge in Islam is not something to benefit only to seeker rather it must benefit others and humanity at large. Through spiritual motivation in accordance with the laws of Shariah man must fulfill its purpose of creation in this world. Unlike other philosophies and ideologies in Islamic spirituality body is not a prison house for the soul but its workshop or factory, and if there is any possibility of its growth and development through the soul, than through the use of spiritual power machines and instruments workshop must be function accordingly.¹⁰ Therefore, this world is not a place of punishment for soul or soul in which the human being has been confined somehow but is grassland in which Allah Almighty has sent him to work and do his obligation toward Him. Incalculable things in this universe have been placed at the disposal of the human soul and many more human beings endowed with it have been created in this world to fulfill the duties of this Khalifah or vicegerent on earth.¹¹

But for this authority and its use human beings must attain knowledge of its creation and objective of creation. Islam therefore encourage Muslim men and women to attain knowledge. The spiritual expansion which is probable in this world should not take the form of man turning his face from the workshop and retiring in some unoccupied curve. Rather, the only form it should take is that man should live and work in it and give the best account of his performance for the cause of creation.

Spiritual and moral methodology of training in Islamic education.

Knowledge and especially the spiritual and moral learning has a central role in the Muslim's attitude and behavior in life. According to Husain and Ashraf, "As Allah Almighty is the ultimate and eternal creator and source of knowledge, the one who attain knowledge with this feeling can get near to creator and source of Knowledge".¹² If man is considered as Khalifah or vicegerent of Allah Almighty in this world than each and every act he performs must be for Allah because according to spiritual training of Islam life of human beings in this world is like examination center for them; every aspect and sphere of life is, as it were, like a question paper in this test the home, the

family, the neighborhood, the society, the marketplace, the office, the factory, the school, the law courts, the police station, the parliament, the peace conference and the battlefield, all represent 'question papers on different subjects which man has been required to answer. And if does not answer the question according to syllabus given to him through the Shariah then he must be unable to qualify for the degree of success in life here after. The only possibility of success and development would lie in man's sense of accountability for his question paper and his priority in giving his whole concentration to this examination and to attempt maximum answers all the question papers handed over to him. There is no concept to reappear in this exam. Once the death captures him than his answer sheet is submitted to the examiner. If the concept of this examination is taught to the students with empirical examples then it has an effective way of their moral training.

Findings:

Islamic system of knowledge morally and spiritually can be effective under following findings of whole discussion.

- The relationships between 'moral', 'spiritual' and 'religious' seem to be akin to the relationships between the cluster 'social', 'human' and 'political'. In each of these clusters, only beings of the kind appropriately described by the middle term can engage in activities which could be properly described by the first and third terms. And it is the fact that the first and third terms, in each case, are (albeit usually implicitly) qualified by the second term that makes them authentically what they are.
- Modern education system provides only knowledge that makes students skillfull in material practices such as how to become doctor, engineer, lawyer, politician, businessman, social scientist and architect. But these systems are producing good engineers, doctors, and social scientist not good human beings. These systems have separated the spiritual desires from the practices
- The moral and spiritual role of religion in educational institutions should be accepted and implemented especially in country like Pakistan which has been created on religious ideology.
- Spiritual knowledge in Islam is not something to benefit only to seeker rather it must benefit others and humanity at large. Through spiritual motivation in accordance with the laws of Shariah man must fulfill its purpose of creation in this world.
- Islamic system of spiritual morality trains the students about their real objective in this life and here after. Islam as religion had very rich traditions of educational material in the forms of Hadith, Fiqh, Logic, and reasoning.¹³
- If man is considered as Khalifah or vicegerent of Allah Almighty in this world than each and every act he performs must be for the Allah because according to spiritual training of Islam life of human being in this world is like examination centre for him; every aspect and sphere of life is, as it were, like a question paper in this test

the home, the family, the neighborhood, the society, the marketplace, the office, the factory, the school, the law courts, the police station, the parliament, the peace conference and the battlefield, all represent' question papers on different subjects which man has been required to answer. And if does not answer the question according to syllabus given to him through the Shariah then he must be unable to qualify for the degree of success in life here after. The only possibility of success and development would lie in man's sense of accountability for his question paper and his priority in giving his whole concentration to this examination and to attempt maximum answer all the question papers handed over to him. There is no concept to reappear in this exam. Once the death captures him than his answer sheet is submitted to examiner. If the concept of this examination is taught to the students with empirical examples then it has an effective way of their moral training.

Conclusion:

The relationships between 'moral', 'spiritual' and 'religious' seem to be akin to the relationships between the cluster 'social', 'human' and 'political'. In each of these clusters, only beings of the kind appropriately described by the middle term can engage in activities which could be properly described by the first and third terms. Islam as religion of spirituality and morality gives a frame work to educate and train the students in modeling their life as more moral and spiritual with practical application in this life and success in the hereafter. Unlike other philosophies and ideologies in Islamic spirituality body is not a prison house for the soul but its workshop or factory, and if there is any possibility of its growth and development through the soul, than through the use of spiritual power machines and instruments workshop must be function accordingly (Bakhtiar, 1991).¹⁴

Therefore, this world is not a place of punishment for soul or soul in which the human being has been confined somehow but is grassland in which Allah Almighty has sent him to work and do his obligation toward Him. Incalculable things in this universe have been placed at the disposal of the human soul and many more human beings endowed with it have been created in this world to fulfill the duties of this Khalifah or vicegerent on earth.

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