

**Principles of**  
**ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

**By**

**KHURSHID AHMAD**



**ISLAMIC PUBLICATIONS LTD.**  
LAHORE . DACCA . KARACHI

# PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

KHURSHID AHMAD

**ISLAMIC PUBLICATIONS LIMITED**

13-E, SHAHALAM MARKET, LAHORE (PAKISTAN)

(All Rights Reserved)

---

Copyright By  
ISLAMIC PUBLICATIONS LTD., LAHORE

---

1st Edition	September, 1962	2,000
2nd Edition (Reprint)	July, 1966	2,000
3rd Edition (Reprint)	Sept., 1967	3,000
4th Edition (Reprint)	Aug., 1968	3,000
5th Edition (Reprint)	Aug., 1974	2,000

Printed by  
M. NASEER BAIG  
Jadeed Urdu Type Press  
39, Chamberlain Road, Lahore

Published by  
AKHLAQ HUSAIN  
Director, Islamic Publications Ltd.  
13-E, Shahalam Market, Lahore

*Dedicated*

*to*

*THE LOVING MEMORY*

*of*

*MY PARENTS*

*at whose feet I had my real education.*

—K. A.

## CONTENTS

	Page
1. What is Education ?	... 2
2. Education and Culture	... 5
3. The Failure of Liberal Education	... 9
4. Purpose of Education	... 14
5. Individualism and Social Sense	... 18
6. The Need for Integrated Knowledge	... 22
7. Character Building	... 24
8. Towards Life Fulfilment	... 25

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Principles of Islamic Education

The importance of education hardly needs any emphasis. It is the 'knowledge of things' as such which distinguishes man from the rest of the creation and which according to the Qur'an establishes his superiority over all others.<sup>1</sup> 'Ilm is an essential quality for leadership<sup>2</sup> and is one of those factors of prime importance which lead to the rise and growth of civilization.<sup>3</sup> That is why the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The acquisition of knowledge is incumbent, on every Muslim" and "Acquire knowledge, for he who acquireth it in the way of Allah performeth an act of piety; he who speaketh of it, praiseth the Lord; he who seeketh after it, adoreth God; he who dispenseth instruction in it, bestoweth alms, and he who imparteth it to others, performeth an act of devotion to Allah."

Such being the importance of knowledge and education, it is very essential that we should clearly understand the nature of education and the principles on which it should be based.

---

1. Al-Qur'an, II : 30.

2. *Ibid.*, II : 247.

3. See : Durant. Will, *The Story of Civilization* : Vol. I.

## (I)

## WHAT IS EDUCATION ?

Education is not mere public instruction. It is a process through which a nation develops its self-consciousness, through developing the self-consciousness of the individuals who compose it. It consists in the training of the new generations in the art and crafts of living and in making them realise their mission and duty in life. Through education a people communicate their culture and intellectual heritage to the future generations and inspire them with their ideals of life. Education is a mental, physical and moral training and its objective is to produce highly cultured men and women fit to discharge their duties as good human beings and as worthy citizens of a state. This is the nature and purport of education and is borne out by a careful perusal of the views of the leading educationists of all the ages.

Etymologically, 'education' is derived from the Latin *e, ex* meaning 'out' and *ducere duc* meaning 'to lead'. Literally it means 'pack the information in' and 'draw talents out.'<sup>4</sup> Essentially the word is associated with the concept of giving information and knowledge and of developing latent talents of the object.

John Stuart Mill was among the western pioneers who tried to give wider frontiers to education. He said :

"Not only does education include whatever we do for ourselves and whatever is done for us by others for the express *purpose of bringing us nearer to the perfection*

---

4. Shipley, Joseph T., *Dictionary of Word Origins*, Ames, Iowa, 1957, p. 114.

*of our nature* : it does more in its largest acceptation : it comprehends even the indirect efforts produced on character, and on the human faculties by things of which the direct purposes are quite different.”<sup>5</sup>

John Milton defines education as follows :

“I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.”<sup>6</sup>

This is the broadest possible view of education.

The American philosopher John Dewey regards education as “the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, towards nature and fellow men.”<sup>7</sup> Dr. John Park is of the view that : “Education is the art or process of imparting or acquiring knowledge and habits through instruction or study.”<sup>8</sup>

Another educationist, Professor Herman H. Horne, writes that :

“Education is the eternal process of superior adjustment of the physically and mentally developed, free, conscious human being to God, as manifested in the

5. Mill, John Stuart, *Inaugural Address* as Rector of St. Andrew's University 1867, vide Smith. W. O. Lesser, *Education*, Pelican, 1958, p. 9.

6. Milton, John, *Areopagitica and other Prose Works*, Everyman's Library, p. 46.

7. Dewey, John, *Democracy of Education*, Quoted by Hughes A. G. and Hughes, E. H., *Education : Some Fundamental Problems*, Longmans, London, 1960, p. 81.

8. Park, Dr. Joe. “Introduction”, *Selected Readings in the Philosophy of Education*, Macmillan, New York, 1958, p. 3.



intellectual, emotional and volitional environment of man.”<sup>9</sup>

Professor Niblett asserts that :

“The end of education is not ‘happiness’ but rather to develop greater capacity for being aware ; to deepen human understanding—perhaps inevitably through conflict ; struggle and suffering—to make right action natural.”<sup>10</sup>

Thus, education is a continuous process through which moral, mental and physical training is provided to younger generations, who also acquire their ideals and culture through it. Educationists use the word in two senses : in its broader sense it designates all those influences, physical, biological, moral and social, which fashion the course of life of the individual and the nation and in its narrower sense it designates only those special influences which are organised and devised by teachers in schools, colleges and other places of education. In any way, however, education is an all-embracing process and influences all aspects of the life of the pupil. That is why the life of a nation depends on its education. A Chinese proverb rightly puts it this way :

“If you are planning for a year, plant grains ;  
If you are planning for a decade, plant trees ;  
If you are planning for a millennium, plant men.”

It is through education that men are ‘planted’ and millenniums are built.

9. Horne, Herman, H. “*The Philosophical Aspects of Education*” *Ibid.*, p. 176.

10. Niblett, W. R., *Education and the Modern Mind*, Quoted, Hughes, *Education : Some Fundamental Problems*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

## (II)

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Education is a part and parcel of the culture of a people and is the instrument through which a culture perpetuates itself. The two cannot be separated from each other in just as the flesh cannot be separated from the bone. There is a widespread misconception that a people can emulate without injury the educational system of any country or nation. Unless a people spurn their own culture—something tantamount to national suicide!—they cannot indiscriminately avail themselves of foreign systems of education.

Every system of education basically consists of a set of certain social ideals, norms and values and is based on a specific view of life and culture. It is in this realm that imitation is suicidal. On the other hand as far as techniques and methods are concerned, one country can safely profit from the experiences of others. But great care should be taken in respect of values, principles and ideals, for a conscious or unconscious adoption of them may destroy the entire fabric of a nation's culture.

Iqbal is very clear on this point. He says :

ز خاک خویش طلب آتشے کہ پیدا نیست

تجلی دگرے در خور تقاضا نیست

(Look into thy own clay for the fire that is wanted  
The light of another is not worth striving for.)

اٹھا نہ شیشہ گران فرنگ کے احسان

مفہمال ہند سے مینا و جام پیدا کر

(Seek not the bounty of the glass-blowers of the West  
Make your own world from the clay of *India*.)

رزق خویش از نعمت دیگر مجو  
موج آب از چشمه خاور مجو

(Seek not thy bread from the bounty of another  
Seek not the waves of water from the fountain of the  
Sun).

تا کجا در تہ بال دگران می باشی  
در ہوائے چمن آرا در بریدن آموز

(How long wilt thou abide under the wings of others ?  
Learn to wing thy flight freely in the garden breeze.)

And perhaps the clearest statement comes when Iqbal criticises the generation which has been brought up under the influence of alien education—education which was opposed to our culture, distasteful to our civilization, affronting to our traditions and insulting to our history. He says :

علم غیر آموختی اندوختی	روئے خویش از غازه اش افروختی
ارجمندی از شعارش می برید	من ندانم تو توئی یا دیگری
عقل تو زنجیری افکار غیر	در گلوئے تو نفس از تار غیر
بر زبانت گفتگوها مستعار	در دل تو آرزوها مستعار
قمریانت را نوآبا خواسته	سروہایت را قباہا خواسته
باد می گیری بجام از دیگران	جام ہم گیری بدام از دیگران
آفتاب ہستی یکے در خود نگر	از نجوم دیگران تا بے خبر
تا کجا طرف چراغ محفلے	ز آتش خود سوزاگر داری دلے

(You have learnt and amassed knowledge of others and  
brightened your face with rouge borrowed from others,  
You seek honour by aping the manners of others.

I know not, whether you are 'yourself' or just "another's self."

Your intellect is chained in the thoughts of others ;  
The very breath in your throat comes from the strings  
of others.

Borrowed speeches are on your tongue ;

Borrowed desires in your heart.

Your canaries sing borrowed songs ;

Your cypresses are clad in borrowed mantles.

The wine in your cup—you get from others ;

The cup, too, you borrow from others.

You are a Sun ; look for once into your own self ;

Seek not your light from the stars of others

How long will you dance around the candle of the  
assembly ?

Lit up your own light, if you have a heart.)

Thus it is clear that Iqbal was opposed to borrowed education and made a fervent plea for the adoption of that system of education which is the product of our own history and culture and which is in tune with our traditions and ideals. This exactly is the approach which is being advocated by the leading educationists of our day. John Dewey says : "Since education is a social process and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies *a particular social ideal.*"<sup>11</sup>

Prof. Niblett, puts it very beautifully when he says :

"It (education) is a continuation of the process of growing into a fully human being which took place

---

11. Dewey, John, *Democracy of Education*, Macmillan, p. 115 (emphasis mine).

physically in the nine months before we were born. *But now it is the culture of the society which is the womb, and the spirit not the body which is gestated.*"<sup>12</sup>

Professor Clarke makes this significant observation :

"For, whatever else education may mean, it must mean primarily the self-perpetuation of an accepted culture—a culture which is the life of a determined society."<sup>13</sup>

And the American educationist, Dr. J. B. Conant, raises this point in another significant way when he says :

*"I do not believe that educational practices are an exportable commodity. I fear the contrary assumption has been implied to some extent in our dealings with Germany and Japan since World War II. At times in our own history, attempts to import a British or European concept have done more harm than good."*<sup>14</sup>

The above discussion brings home the point that education is inextricably connected with the culture and the social ideals of a people and any attempt to strike a divorce between the two would defeat the very purpose of education. Education must represent the culture of the people and should preserve it for the future generations. Education which poses a neutral attitude towards culture and ideals of the society, will act as a force of disintegration and destroy the social fabric of the society. Education does more harm than good to a society if it does not represent and embody its culture.

12. Niblett, W. R., *Education and Modern Mind*, Quoted Hughes, *Education : Some Fundamental Problems*, p. 84 (*emphasis mine*),

13. Clarke, *Year Book of Education*, 1936, p. 249.

14. Conant, Dr. J. B., *Education and Liberty*, Harvard University Press, 1953, p. 2 (*emphasis mine*).

## (III)

## THE FAILURE OF LIBERAL EDUCATION

The modern concept of liberal education is the very antithesis of the approach discussed above. Originally liberal education was the kind of education that was regarded as suitable for freeman as distinguished from the one adequate for the slaves or the serfs. Greeks as well as the Romans regarded arts liberal as studies appropriate for the free citizen. In the Mediaeval period the same view prevailed. Liberal arts were divided into two groups—*Trivium* and *Quadrivium* consisting of grammar, rhetoric and logic, and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music respectively.

In the modern age liberal education gradually became apurposive and neutral towards ideals. Individuality was emphasised at the cost of all other considerations. Education was divorced from religion and moral values. Freedom became the catchword. Elective system was introduced in respect of subjects and syllabi. It was asserted that a student should be given ample freedom to grow and develop according to his latent faculties and no external influence be allowed to cast his thinking or character into specific moulds. This kind of education became very common in the United States and gained ground in European countries as well.

The results which liberal education has produced are in no way encouraging. Some of the important results are as follows :

- (a) Education has failed to develop social ideas among the students. And when a people lack ideals which may inspire them to action and sacrifice,

they gradually lose their grip on history and their decline follows. In the words of Iqbal :

زنده فرد از ارتباط جان و تن      زنده قوم از حفظ ناموس کہن  
مرگ فردا از خشکی رود حیات      مرگ قوم از ترک مقصود حیات

(Life of the individual depends on the relationship of the body and the soul

Life of the nation depends on the preservation of its tradition and culture.

Individual dies if the life-flow ceases, Nation dies if the ideal of life is spurned.)

- (b) Such an education fails to instil moral values in the hearts and souls of the new generations. It deals merely with the demands of the mind and fails to cater to the demands of the soul. A dichotomy occurs between the two and this results in a great national loss. As Iqbal says :

علم را بر تن زنی مارے بود      علم را بر دل زنی یارے بود

(Knowledge is a snake for you (i.e. your poison) if you use it to increase your (material) body (alone).

If knowledge is used for the emancipation of the soul, then it is your best friend.)

- (c) This kind of education has resulted in the departmentalization of knowledge. Liberal education fails to organize or integrate knowledge into any one consistent whole. Students begin to see life and the world in small, unrelated fragments and fail to develop a sense of their unity and meaning. They only see the trees, not the wood !

- (d) Liberal education, in the last analysis, produce men who do not have any grip over the basic and

living issues of life. In actual practice their knowledge proves too superficial to be of any empiric value. From the national viewpoint, such education fails to deliver the goods.

These basic drawbacks of the modern liberal education are now becoming more and more manifest. Dr. Frank Adylotte says about American education : "The exclusive pre-occupation with techniques, with means as opposed to ends, is depriving the study of literature, or philosophy, or history or religion of any liberal element."<sup>15</sup> Walter Lippman, the famous social philosopher, in a speech on "The State of Education in This Troubled World" says :

"The schools and colleges have been sending out into the world men who no longer understand the creative principles of the society in which they must live . . . . Deprived of their cultural tradition, the newly educated western men no longer possess in the form and substance of their own minds and spirits, the ideas, the premises, the rationale, the logic, the method, the values of the Western Civilization . . . . the present education is destined, if it continues, to destroy Western Civilization, and is in fact destroying it."<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Albert G. Sims, Vice-President, Institute of International Education, in a recent article writes :

"The central problem in United States Education to which all others are tangent, is that of defining and giving effect to objectives and philosophy. It is no

15. Adylotte, Frank, *Breaking the Academic Lock Step*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1944, p. 7.

16. Lippman, Walter, "The State of Education in This Troubled World" *Vital Speeches for the Day*, Jan. 15, 1941, p. 200.



answer to say to this that the educational system mirrors in these respects the society which it serves. Education is also the means by which a community must deliberately project the image of its future."<sup>17</sup>

The recent Rockefeller *Reports on U.S. Education* clearly points out this deficiency :

"They (the students) want meaning in their lives. If their era, and their culture and their leaders do not or cannot offer them great meanings, great objectives, great convictions, then they will settle for shallow and trivial meanings. People who live aimlessly, who allow the search for meaning in their lives to be satisfied by shady and meretricious experiences, have simply not been stirred by any alternative meanings—religious meanings, ethical values, ideas of social responsibility, high standards of self-realisation. This is a deficiency for which we all bear a responsibility.

We must assume that education is a process that should be infused with meaning and purpose ; that everyone will have deeply held beliefs ; that every young man will wish to serve the value which have nurtured him and made possible his education and his freedom as an individual."

In a book entitled *The Crisis in the University* which grew out of a series of studies in England, Sir Walter Moberly says :

"Our predicament is this : Most students go through universities without ever having been forced to exercise their minds on the issues which are really momentous.

---

17. *Current History*, Sept. 1958, p. 174.

Under the influence of academic neutrality they are subtly conditioned to unthinking acquiescence in the social and political *status quo* and in a secularism on which they have never seriously reflected. Owing to the prevailing fragmentation of studies they are not challenged to decide responsibility on a life-purpose or equipped to make such a decision wisely . . . . . Fundamentally they are uneducated.”<sup>18</sup>

Professor Harold H. Titus, after reviewing the entire educational perspective, writes :

“Even more serious than the lack of common store of knowledge is the lack of common ideals and conviction. Education too frequently fails to build up any vital affirmations, convictions and disciplines. There has been dangerous separation of science and research from human values and loyalties . . . . . Education has divorced itself from the spiritual heritage of the past but has failed to supply any adequate substitute. Consequently, even educated persons are left without convictions or sense of values as well as without a consistent world-view.”<sup>19</sup>

M. V. C. Jaffreys complains that :

“The most serious weakness in modern education is the uncertainty about its aims. A glance over history reminds us that the most vital and effective systems of education have envisaged their objectives quite definitely ; in terms of personal qualities and social situa-

18. Moberly, Sir Walter, *The Crisis in the University*, London, 1949, p. 70.

19. Titus Harold H., *Living Issues in Philosophy*, New York, 1953, pp. 420-21.

tions. Spartan, Feudal, Jesuit, Nazi, Communist educationists have had this in common, they knew what they wanted to do and believed in it. By contrast, education in the liberal democracies is distressingly nebulous in its aims."<sup>20</sup>

These new thought-currents clearly show that the concept of the ideological neutrality of education is on the wane and decidedly this concept is injurious to culture and progress.

#### (IV)

#### PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

Education should be ideologically oriented. It is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The end is the ideology and the culture of the people it is going to serve.

زندگی سرمایه دار از آرزوست  
عقل از زائیدگان بطن اوست

(Life is full of riches by ideals.

Intellect is one of those which are born from the inside of its body.)

زندگانی را بقا از مدعاست  
کاروانش را درا از مدعاست

(Life is preserved by purpose and idea ;

Because of the goal its caravan bell tinkles.)

Education must instil those beliefs and ideals for which the nation stands. Preservation and promotion of the Religion and Culture of the people should be the purpose of education.

---

20. M. V. C. Jaffreys, Glaneon, *An Inquiry into the Aims of Education*, Pitman, London, 1950, p. 61.

A. N. Whitehead emphasises this point when he says that "the essence of education is that it be religious."<sup>21</sup>

Iqbal held the view that Islam should be the purpose of our life and education. He writes in a letter to K. G. Saiyidain :

"علم سے میری مراد وہ علم ہے جس کا دارومدار حواس پر ہے ، عام طور پر میں نے علم کا لفظ انہی معنوں میں استعمال کیا ہے ، اس علم سے ایک طبعی قوت ہاتھ آتی ہے جس کو دین کے ماتحت رہنا چاہیے ۔ اگر یہ دین کے ماتحت نہ رہے تو محض شیطنیت ہے . . . مسلمان کے لیے لازم ہے کہ علم کو مسلمان کرے "بولہب را حیدر کرار کن" اگر یہ بولہب حیدر کرار بن جائے ، یا یوں کہیے کہ اگر اس کی قوت دین کے تابع ہو جائے تو نوع انسانی کے لیے سراسر رحمت ہے۔"

"By 'Ilm I mean that knowledge which is based on senses. Usually I have used the word in this very sense. This knowledge yields physical powers which should be subservient to *deen* (i.e. the religion of Islam). If it is not subservient to *deen* then it is demonic, pure and simple . . . . . It is incumbent on Muslims to Islamize knowledge. "Abu Lahab should be metamorphosed into Haider." If this Abu Lahab becomes Haider-i-Karrar, or in other words, if it (i.e. knowledge and the power it wields) become subservient to *deen* then it would be an unmixed blessing unto mankind."<sup>22</sup>

21. Vide, Hughes, *Education : Some Fundamental Problems*, op. cit., p. 86.

22. Saiyidain, K. G., *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, Lahore, 1942, p. 99.

From this observation of Iqbal, it becomes clear that he wanted to give education an ideological orientation and regarded that knowledge and education as satanic which are neutral towards religion. In his famous Presidential Address of 1930 he said :

“If today you focus your vision on Islam and seek inspiration from the ever-vitalising ideas embodied in it, you will be only resembling your scattered forces, regaining your lost integrity, and thereby saving yourself from total destruction.”<sup>23</sup>

He also says :

نقش بر دل معنی توحید کن  
چاره کار خود از تقلید کن

(Make the imprint of the meaning of *Tawheed* on your heart, Seek solution of your problems by adherence to your traditions).

Thus the primary purpose of education should be to imbue the students with their religion and ideology. They should be taught the meaning and purpose of life, man's position in the world, the doctrines of *Tawheed* (unity of God), *Risalah* (Prophethood), *Akhirah* (Life hereafter) and their bearing upon individual and social life, the Islamic values of morality, the nature and content of Islamic culture, and the obligations, and the mission of a Muslim. Education should produce men with deeply-held convictions about the Islamic ideals of individual and collective life. It should develop in them the *Islamic approach* so that they may carve out their own way in the light of Islamic guidance.

---

23. Iqbal, *Statements and Speeches*, Lahore, 1948, pp. 35-36.

The Qur'an says that the men of knowledge are the witnesses of the Truth. Education which is designed to produce 'men of knowledge' should regard the cultivation of the knowledge of Islam as the primary goal. The Qur'an says :

"Allah (Himself) is witness that there is no god save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witness of this fact)."<sup>24</sup>

According to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) :  
 "Men of learning and *Mujahideen* are nearest to the prophetic status : for the men of learning direct the people in the ideals and objectives for which the prophets were raised and the *Mujahid* wields his sword in that cause."

Now, the question is : What is the mission for which the Prophets have been raised ; a mission which is to be discharged by the men of learning and the academies which are to produce these men of learning ? According to the Qur'an this mission is the propagation of the Message of Islam and the establishment of a just and healthy social order. The Qur'an says :

"He it is who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own : to recite unto them His revelations and to make them grow and purify, and to teach them the Scripture and Wisdom, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest."<sup>25</sup>

And :

"We verily sent our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe justice and right measure."<sup>26</sup>

24. Al-Qur'an, III : 18.

25. *Ibid.*, LXII : 2.

26. *Ibid.*, LVII : 25.

Thus the basic objective of education in the framework of Islamic Culture is *to discharge these prophetic functions to educate the people in the religion of Islam, to imbue them with the spirit and ideals of this religion and prepare them for a fully-grown life.*

This objective is to be achieved by permeating the entire education with the spirit of the Islamic ideology. Compilation and introduction of new books will have to be done from this viewpoint. An overhauling of the entire curricula and the creation of an atmosphere which is conducive to the achievement of these objectives will also be called for. It will also be necessary that in the teaching of each and every subject—particularly in respect of social studies the viewpoint of Islam should be explained to the student and at every stage of his education proper care should be taken to arouse his sense of moral responsibility. This in my view, would be the proper purpose of Education.

## (V)

### INDIVIDUALISM AND SOCIAL SENSE

A very basic issue of education is : What importance is to be given to the development of individuality of the student? There are conflicting theories about it. Some regard the development of the individuality as the fundamental value and do not give any importance to the growth of social sense and collective responsibility. On the contrary there are some other theories which regard conformity to the social form as the basic value and do not lay any emphasis upon the growth of the individual personality. Both these extremes are incorrect and unrealistic. A unique feature of Islam is that it establishes a balance between

individualism and collectivism. It believes in the individual personality of man and holds everyone personally responsible and accountable to God. It guarantees fundamental rights of the individual and does not permit any one to tamper with them. It makes the proper development of the personality of man as one of the prime objectives of its educational policy. It does not subscribe to the view that man must lose his individuality in the social-collective or in the state. According to the Qur'an :

“Man shall have nothing but what he strives for.”<sup>27</sup>

“And whatever suffering ye suffer, it is what your hands have wrought.”<sup>28</sup>

“God does not change the condition of a people unless they first change that which is in their hearts.”<sup>29</sup>

“For each is that which it hath earned and against each is only that which hath deserved.”<sup>30</sup>

“Unto us are our deeds and unto you are yours.”<sup>31</sup>

Iqbal has laid great emphasis on the proper development of the individuality of man. He says that the Qur'anic concept of the ego stresses “the individuality and uniqueness of man and has a definite view of his destiny as a unity of life.”<sup>32</sup> The development of ego is of prime importance in his way of thinking. He condemns imitation because it curbs one's individuality. He is against drama and *Tamtheel* for in them the actor has to adopt the role of someone else and the repetition of it leads to the assassination of one's own personality. His view was that :

27. Al-Qura'n, LIII : 39.

28. *Ibid.*, XLII : 30.

29. *Ibid.*, XII : 11.

30. *Ibid.*, II : 286.

31. *Ibid.*, XXVIII : 55.

32. Iqbal, Sir Muhammad, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 90.



پیکر ہستی ز اسرار خودی است  
 ہر چہ می بینی ز اسرار خودی است

(*Khudi* is the determinant of the entire gamut of existence,

All that Thou seest is due to the secrets of *Khudi*.)

وآنمودن خویش را خونے خودی است  
 خفته در ہر ذرہ نیروے خودی است

(It is in the nature of *Khudi* to manifest itself.

In every particle lies slumbering the powers of *Khudi*.)

Thus the development of the individuality of man should be a basic tenet with education.

This is only one aspect of the problem. On the other hand, Islam also awakens a sense of social responsibility in man, organizes human beings in a society and a state and enjoins the individual to subscribe to the social good. Prayer, in Islam is offered in congregation which inculcates social discipline among the Muslims. Everyone is enjoined to pay *Zakat* and it has been laid down in the Qur'an that : "In their wealth the beggar and the destitute have their due right." (Al-Qur'an, LI : 19): *Jihad* has been made obligatory, which means that the individual should, when the occasion arises, offer even his life for the defence and protection of Islam and the Islamic state. The Holy Prophet said :

"All mankind is a fold every member of which shall be a keeper or shepherd unto every other, and be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold."

"Live together, do not turn against each other, make things easy for others and do not put obstacles in each other's way."

“He is not a believer who takes his fill while his neighbour starves.”

“The believer in God is he who is not a danger to life and property of any other.”

Iqbal emphasises this point when he says :

فرد قائم ربط ملت سے ہے تنہا کچھ نہیں  
موج ہے دریا میں اور بیرون دریا کچھ نہیں

(Individual is what he is through his association with the community. He is nonentity without that association.

He is like a wave in the river—outside the river the wave has no existence.)

A healthy educational policy will always aim at the achievement of balance between the development of the individuality and the social consciousness of the pupil. For

فرد می گیرد ز ملت احترام  
ملت از افراد می یابد نظام

(The individual derives his honour from his nation

A nation is organised when the individuals are united together.)

The development of the individuality can be achieved only if the child is treated with love and affection—even with a certain degree of respect for his individual self—and if his latent faculties are given ample opportunities for self-expression. He should breathe in an atmosphere of freedom. Education should become pupilcentred, giving him all possible opportunities to develop his creative faculties and inherent talents and aptitude. The teachers should guide him and help him in his pursuit for the development of his

personality but should not overshadow him to the extent that he becomes only a reflection of the teacher's personality. There should not be any compulsory drafting in different fields and occupations of the child who should be given the chance to make his own choice. The school atmosphere should be permeated with freedom, then alone can the proper development of the pupil's personality take place.

The primary emphasis on individuality does not mean that there should be any lack of social sense and collective responsibility in the students. The virtues of social consciousness and responsibility should be installed in them from the very beginning and they should be prepared for healthy social life and responsible citizenship.

## (VI)

### THE NEED FOR INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

Another principle of education is that students should be imparted balanced and integrated knowledge. They should be able to visualise the unity of the universe and the life in the diversity of the world phenomena. *The Report of the University Education Commission of India* asserts that :

“The purpose of all education, it is admitted by thinkers of East and West, is to provide a coherent picture of the universe and an integrated way of life. We must obtain through it a sense of perspective, a synoptic vision, a *samanvaya* of the different items of knowledge. Man cannot live by a mass of disconnected information. He has a passion for an ordered intellectual vision of the connections of things. Life is one in all its varied manifestations. We may study the factual relations of the different manifestations but we must have know-

ledge of life as a whole. It cannot be a collection of distracting scraps but should be a harmony of patterns.'<sup>33</sup>

Islam stands for the golden mean and its ideal is the development of a balanced personality. Balance in thought and behaviour is, according to a saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him), one of the characteristics of prophethood. Education should, therefore, make it a point to see that the student gets a wide perspective of knowledge, and develops a balanced approach to life and its problems before he enters the stage of specialisation.

Moreover, it seems that Islam views knowledge as an integrated and correlated whole. This may be inferred from the fact that the Qur'an is the mainspring of all knowledge and it is this Book which will mould the mind and the approach of all the seekers of knowledge, whatever be their fields of inquiry. This automatically leads us to the concept of integrated knowledge. Knowledge will not remain split into small, unrelated fragments, but will be integrated into a single whole. This will also eliminate the evils of fragmentation and departmentalisation. Perhaps it would be more in consonance with the approach to start specialisation only at a higher stage of education. In the lower stages education should remain non-specialised. This will go a long way in broadening the outlook of the youth and in cultivating in them the virtues of intellectual tolerance.

---

33. *The Report of the University Education Commission*. (Dec. 1948 --Aug. 1949) Volume I, Government of India Press, Delhi, p. 34.

## (VII)

## CHARACTER BUILDING

Iqbal says :

آہ اس راز سے واقف ہے نہ ملا نہ فقیر  
وحدت افکار کی بے وحدت کردار ہے خام

(Ah ! Neither the Mulla nor the Jurist is aware of the fact,

The unity of thought without unity of character is incomplete and wanting.)

Education must lay prime emphasis upon the character-formation of the child. Unless it goes to build up good character as well, it will never achieve its real purpose. "Character-training", says Professor W. O. Lester Smith, "is closely linked with the conception of school as a society."<sup>34</sup> This view is now being emphasised on different hands.

In Islam the importance of good deeds is primary. The Qur'an simultaneously stresses the need of *Iman* and '*amal salih*'. One of the basic missions of the Prophet is stated to be *tazkiyah*, i.e., the purification of human life and soul.

It is a psychological fact that the fundamental character-traits are laid in the early stages of life and the school and the college can play a significant role in building up the character of man. It is for education to mould the character of man. It is for education to mould the character of the child into the Islamic pattern. Al-Ghazali said :

---

34. Smith, W. O. Lester, *Education : An Introductory Survey*, Pelican, 1958, p. 25.

“Education must not only seek to fill the young mind with knowledge, but must, at the same time, stimulate the child’s moral character and stimulate him to the properties of social life”. The ideal character before us is that of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). As the Qur’an says : “Verily in the life of the Prophet of Allah you have the best example to follow.”<sup>35</sup> At all stages of education students should be taught the life-example of the Holy Prophet and his Companions. The teacher, by the examples of his own life and behaviour, should inspire the child to develop a good life and the atmosphere of the academic institutions should be conducive to character-formation. It is only then that we would be able to produce the *mumin* (true believer) as envisioned in the Book of God.

### (VIII)

#### TOWARDS LIFE FULFILMENT

Islam stands not for life-denial, but for life-fulfilment. This means that our education must prepare our youngsters for life, train them in the arts and crafts of living and cater to the multifarious needs of the society.

Islam disapproves of life-renunciation and wants men to live with justice and equity in the midst of rough and tumble of life. The Qur’an teaches us to seek for the best of the world and the best of the Hereafter. Allah strongly censures those who refuse to enjoy His blessings : Says the Holy Qur’an :

“Say (to them) by whose order have you denied yourself those amenities which Allah created for his bond-

---

35. Al-Qur’an, XXXIII : 21.

men and those good things to eat and use (which He made for them ?”

Islam's attitude is reflected in the Qur'anic verse : “Eat and drink but exceed not (and become not extravagant).” Islam highly values human labour. It forbids begging and dole-seeking and puts a premium on productive efforts so much so that according to a *hadith*, “God loves the hand that works for the attainment of livelihood”. Islam wants to enable every person to earn his living and the Holy Prophet has even said that “hunger comes close to infidelity”.

Iqbal says :

هر که محسوسات را تسخیر کرد  
عالمی از ذره تعمیر کرد

(Anybody who conquers the physical world  
Constructs a new world from an atom.)

جستجو را محکم از تدبیر کن  
انفس و آفاق را تسخیر کن

(Lend strength to thy search by practical contrivance  
Conquer the worlds of the self and the cosmos.)

Iqbal believes in the education which teaches life-affirmation and the conquest of the world and not in the one which leads to life-renunciation. According to him :

“Only that truly exists which can say ‘I am’. It is the degree of the intuition of I-am-ness that determines the place of a thing in the scale of being.”<sup>36</sup>

About education he explicitly says :

علم از سامان حفظ زندگی است      علم از اسباب تقویم خودی است

---

36. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 53.

علم و فن از پیش خیزان حیات      علم و فن از خانه زادان حیات

(Knowledge is an instrument for the preservation of life :  
 Knowledge is a means of establishing the self  
 Science and Art are servants of life :  
 Slaves born and bred in its house.)

From the above discussion we can infer a few other aims of education ; *viz.* :

- (a) Education should enable a man to earn an honest, just and reasonable living ;
- (b) Education should cater to the economic, social, scientific and technological needs of the community. I should not only neglect them in any way ; but should positively work for their fulfilment ; and
- (c) There should be a practical and vocational bias in education, so that everyone should be able to attain economic stability and social independence.

An educational system reared in accordance with these aims will embody the aspirations of Islam and will prove a blessing to mankind.