

Education Philosophy of Sir Muhammad Iqbal: A Historical Perspective

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Abstract

Iqbal put forward his theory of education which, primarily, catered the needs of Islamic students as it was based strictly upon his own Pan- Islamic thought that the students should be taught Religion, History, Science and Technology, Home education (women) and Character(Moral) education. He emphasized the women pupils to develop educationally but curriculum should not include that content which worked against their unique '*nisaiyat*' (character). His theory revolved around the concept of '*khudi*'(self) as it would help the students to distinguish between '*khair*' (good) and '*sharr*' (bad); and between '*haqq*' (just) and '*batil*' (unjust) and ,thereby, made them '*maumin*' (a true personality) who believed that Islam was a complete way of life with Muhammad being its last Prophet. The students needed to develop an ideal character by cultivating courage, tolerance ,'*faqr*' and leadership qualities who wanted '*amn*' (peace), *adl* (justice),and '*falah-o-behbud*' (overall welfare) of the community by showing the utmost respect towards their teachers. Iqbal wanted the teachers to be the persons of exemplary character who possessed '*admiyat*' (humanity) and '*ihtram*' (respect) for all and had mastery over their subjects. The teachers should diagnose, polish and activate the hidden talents of students and channelize them towards the right path with their impartial evaluation by providing an overall healthy and congenial atmosphere in educational institutions. All this would stand the students in good stead in future for acquiring an original thinking and farsightedness. But Iqbal believed that intellectual secularism and 'Value-free School Environment' destroyed the moral integrity of the students and teachers.

Key Words: Khudi, Sunnah, Marde Momin, Intellectual Secularism, Curriculum, Instructional Methods, Learning by doing, Islamic Ideology, Creative abilities

1. Introduction

Iqbal was, neither, an educationist in the true sense nor he did present any specific educational technique or methodology, but his contribution to education had certainly attracted the attention of Islamic Word of the Indian Subcontinent. Being a follower of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan(1817-98) , the pioneer of Aligarh movement for modern education among the Muslims and their political domination over Hindus in British India , Iqbal followed his political guru's footprints both in propagating his 'Two- Nation Theory' in politics and spreading his Islamic Educational Philosophy vigorously. He was displeased with '*Madrassa*' and '*khankah*' where he neither witnessed the zest for life or knowledge nor the ardor of love and idealism. [1] Allama Iqbal asserted the modern education was an evil because it neglected both the mental and spiritual development of the young generation, blunted the soul and rendered it, virtually, lifeless.[1] So Iqbal came out with own idea of education.

2. Methodology

The research material was collected both from the official and non-official agencies. An historical and analytical approach was taken into consideration while using primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are available at National Archives of India, Delhi, Punjab State Archives, Chandigarh, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, Dwarka Das Library, Chandigarh and The Museum Library, Delhi. Among the important official documents, mention was made of some, such as, Proceedings of the Government of India (Home Dept.), (Political Dept.), Proceedings of Indian Historical Record Commission, Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, Fortnightly reports, Punjab Government Gazetteers, The Modern Review and Asiatic Review. The secondary sources such as the relevant Journals, newspapers, magazines, articles, books, frequent use of internet for updated material published by Iqbal Academy, Pakistan as well as unpublished theses were assessed to present an objective work.

3. Discussion

Since Sir Allama Iqbal was a staunch believer of the philosophy of Quran and an ardent follower of Islam. His priority always remained to be revitalization of Islam. So he put forward his own Educational Thought which, primarily, catered the need of Islamic students. It was based strictly upon his own Pan- Islamic thought since he believed that education could be used to bring about a veritable renaissance of thought in the Muslim world. [2] Since a lot many Islamic Terms were used during this discussion, therefore, their equivalence in English were given at the end.

3.1 Educational Ideology: Islamic

His chief contribution to the educational ideology was the emphasis on “din”, as the main subject of study. In one of his poems *Pir-oMurid*, the poet discussed the various problems of the day concerning contemporary education, soul and other things. [3] We would discuss it under the following headings with emphasis on Iqbal’s idea of ‘Islamic Education’.

3.1.1. Significance of Education: Become ‘*Marde Momin*’

According to Iqbal ,Education signified the development of personality with respect to the problems of individual and society; cultural heritage; knowledge and idea of socio-political implications to the young members of the social groups so that they developed much wider outlook than the narrow system of education that goes on within the precincts of schools and colleges.[4,5]

Iqbal’s theory of education revolved around the concept ‘*khudi*’ that strengthens the individual’s innate powers to help in making choice between *khair* and *sharr*; and between *haqq* and *batil*.[6] by unfolding the

hidden best potentials of the individual so that it developed a view point to attain *khair*. [7] This was possible only by meeting the right and natural needs of *ruh* (spirit), *aql* (mind), and *jasad* (body) together, [8] as all of them helped the youth to develop a balanced and healthy personality, otherwise the youth might develop a split personality.

Iqbal enlightened the Muslim youth of their inner potentials and capacities and exalted them to become *Marde Momin* (complete Muslim) of high mental caliber who was morally strong and a true Muslim. [9]

Iqbal advised youth to remain focused on the overall development of human potential that included the intellectual as well as physical strength and was willing to move forward to develop creative activity and struggle endlessly by adjusting even in the adverse circumstances.

3.2. Four Essential Elements of Education

According to Iqbal, the whole process of education has four essential elements as follows:

3.2.1. Purpose: No Intellectual Secularism

According to Iqbal, the education should be imparted with a purpose to:

- (i). Develop the concept of *khudi* which strengthens the individual's innate powers and makes him '*maumin*' (a true personality) who can face different and difficult challenges of all times. [10]
- (ii). Develop an everlasting attachment and *ishq* (great love) with the last Prophet (*Saws*) and to practically follow him (*Saws*) as a role of ideal character in every domain of life. [11]
- (iii). Eradicate intellectual secularism (Iqbal forbade secularism) right from the early childhood. [12]
- (iv). Produce such '*mujtahideen*' (intellectuals) in all fields who reflect and interpret the sciences ('*ulum*') on the belief that Islam is a complete way of life.
- (v). Regain leadership of the world ('*imamat-e-alam*') having insight and vision for the future to establish '*amn*' (world peace), '*adl*' (justice), and overall welfare ('*falah-o-behbud*'). [13]

3.2.2. Curriculum: Five ingredients included

According to Muhammad Iqbal, Education curriculum should include Religion, History, Science and Technology, Home education (women) and Character (Moral) education. These five essential ingredients named 'KNOWLEDGE' by Iqbal represent the five senses and should be placed under the command of Religion lest they become '*satan*' (devil). [14]

For producing a balanced personality in a student, the curriculum which incorporates the following ingredients was essential to deal with both the ‘requirements of life’, but also with the ‘objectives of life’.

(i). Quran and ‘*Sunnah*’ [15] were compulsory components, i.e. the nuclei of the whole curricular scheme.

(ii). Moral education was an obligatory part of the curriculum.

(iii). Subjects relating to humanities and social sciences were essential for the social, material, and spiritual betterment of humanity and the understanding the Islamic culture and the cultural languages, particularly Arabic.

(iv).

‘Sciences and Technologies’ were helpful in acquiring material benefit and for bringing world peace and ‘*rahmat*’ (divine blessing).

(v). History should be a compulsory subject at all levels of education. But instead of depending upon its materialistic philosophical interpretation, the moralistic philosophical interpretation should be given preference for understanding the causes of a nation’s rise and fall (‘*uruj-ozawal*’).

(vi). Religion, Philosophy, and Science needed to live in harmony, i.e. find out mutual agreement.

(vii). Philosophy and Science were rooted in religion and should be engrained in the minds of present and future generation.

(viii). In all areas, the atheist or secular notions needed to be rejected since both pollute the human mind. [11]

(ix). Iqbal emphasized that for better and healthy development of women, the curricular scheme should not include that content, which works against woman’s unique character (*nisayiat*). [16]

Iqbal had a great respect for women and his criticism was only against her ultra-modernism. [17]

(x). Finally, he made it clear that “the only course open to us was to approach modern knowledge with a respectful but independent attitude and to appreciate the teachings of Islam in the light of that ‘KNOWLEDGE’. [18]

3.2.3. A Teacher: Needed ‘*Aadmiyat*’ and ‘*Ihtram*’

Iqbal stressed the fundamental point that the educator should, necessarily, inquire into the nature and function of the self in relation to the environment in which it is placed. [19]

(i). According to Iqbal, a teacher, being the architect of the soul of students, occupied a unique position and would play a pivotal role in the overall shaping of the personality of the students with respect to their all-around development in academics, character and morality. The teacher should be the master of his subject

instructions but should refrain from using such ‘Instructional Methods’ having no relevance with the character building of the students. This was possible only if the teacher, himself, acquires himself as a role model, i.e. he would be a man of high moral character and possessed ‘*aadmiyat*’ (humanity) and ‘*ihtram*’ (respect) for all including his students.[20]

(ii). A teacher should be able to diagnose, polish and activate the hidden potentials of his students and channelize them towards the right path which would stand them in good stead in future.

(iii). The teacher should not, just ‘vomit out’ the ‘bookish knowledge’ which brought about ‘no original thinking’, i.e. no ‘*taddubaar*’ (farsightedness) in the minds of the students.

3.2.4 Students: Faith in Prophet essential

(i). Iqbal called young student as ‘*Shaheen*’ (eagle) and wanted them to inculcate courage, tolerance and contentment (‘*faqr*’) in themselves.

(ii). Their foremost duty is to respect their teachers; rather the mutual respect is the key to the effective teaching-learning process as it creates a congenial environment for the teaching.

(iii). They had the freedom to gain the thorough knowledge of Quran as Khalifa of Allah and should draw inspiration from Islamic Ideology such as Unity of God (‘*tauheed*’) and ‘Prophet-hood (‘*risalat*’) with the faith that Muhammad (S.A.W) was the last Prophet and ‘*Khudi*’ that strengthened the individual’s innate powers to realize his full potentials towards goodness.

(iv). But the students must realize the responsibility on their shoulders as a Khalifa of Allah and try their level best to rise above their ‘human’ weaknesses.

Such students had epistemological beliefs or blessed with ‘*ilm ul asma*’ [21] i.e. get divine revelation of Quran and Sunnah which could help identify the impact schooling may have on an individual’s beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning.

3.3. School Environment: Against ‘Value-free’

The students should be taught in an overall healthy and congenial atmosphere in the teaching institutes as it would transform the student to attain excellence in the academic field of his choice. But Allama Iqbal believed that ‘Value-free School Environment’ destroys the moral integrity. [22]

3.4. Methods of imparting teaching

Iqbal followed the Prophet who suggested that a good way to educate your children by playing around the age of seven first and plant their discipline in the next seven years, i.e. till they turn 14 and then invite them to discuss the time when they reach the age of 21 years before they can take a stand for life on their own.[23]

Although depending upon the age and grade level of the students, methods like lecture, dialogue, discussion, study of nature, and research projects were very effective. Sir Muhammad Iqbal had suggested the following methods:

3.4.1. Self- activity

It is an open method which students can develop themselves by doing something according to their potential (brain or physical technique) by some self- activity and, thus, arrive at the result or the end point or conclusion.

3.4.2. Learning by doing

Here the students are exposed to some new situations which invite them to work with the awareness of the purpose of gaining the sources those are available in their environment. This is analogous with Iqbal's statement: "Raise the observation and experiment method is not only theoretical"[24] which means that experiment method is, no doubt, needed to develop the knowledge, while knowledge is not only theoretical, but also need authentication and actualization.

3.4.3. Question and Answer

According to Iqbal education should be able to make you a critical person which means that keep on asking questions is not simply to accept the one, based on the beliefs of your educators.

3.4.4. Unit Method

It is a way of presenting the lesson starting from something of a problem, and then discusses it in terms of relating to that of the solution as a whole which is meaningful. This method starts from the assumption that the solution to the problem must be viewed from different aspects by thoroughly involving the subjects (basics) that are related as the source of the problem solving. Here we rely on the activities which are mapped to the target. We are more likely to develop a proper intellectual attitude than the traditional method which may be mere memory as well as a passive way of learning.

3.4.5. Problem Solving

This is a method which involves a lot of thinking and the problem solving may need some other method/s with which we started with by looking at the data to draw conclusions.

3.5. Evaluation: Teacher most trustworthy

Since a teacher is the master of his students and is also in touch with them for most of the time, he is the only capable and trustworthy person to evaluate the students [25] rightly and thoroughly. So it is expected of the teacher to sincerely evaluate them both in the transmission and transformational parts by focusing more on examining their reflective and creative abilities based on practical learning and the participation in the social

work along with the progress made in the formative and summative parts especially in maintaining the subject excellence.

4. Conclusion

Education, according to Iqbal, is a means to an end and not an end itself. Since it is based on the Islamic Ideology and Culture which aims at strengthening 'khudi'; 'tauheed', 'risalat' and 'Saws'(individuality; unity of God, prophet-hood and faith that the last prophet is Muhammad), the ultimate role model that upholds the rational and empirical knowledge under the 'wahi'(divine revelation) and cultivates values shaped under absolute knowledge in students. It also produces reflective, creative, and responsible teachers who refrain from borrowed ideas and value-free instructional practices. While the teacher's mastery on the subject ('salahiyat'), his uncompromising behavior regarding morality ('salihiyat') and overall healthy institutional atmosphere will inspire the students to do their best, but they should forbid intellectual secularism. Contrary to Rousseau, [26] who preached 'freedom free' atmosphere for the students in their institutions, Iqbal was of the firm belief that 'Value-free School Environment' destroys the moral integrity of the students. Again, Iqbal wished that both the teachers and students to eradicate intellectual secularism. But it should be borne in mind that, no doubt, Iqbal was all for propagating the Islamic Concept of Education leading to 'self-Realization' but at the same, he wanted that Muslims should, also, pay equal attention to learn science and technology.

Table: Islamic Terms and their Equivalence in English

S. No.	Term	Equivalence in English
1.	Allah	God. Allah is the creator of the universe
2.	S.A.W.S	When writing name of Prophet Muhammad, Muslims follow it with abbreviation "SAWS." These letters stand for Arabic words " <i>sallallahu alayhi wa salaam</i> " (May God's prayers and peace be with him)
3.	Khalifa	Khalifa or Khalifah is a name or title which means "successor", "ruler" or "leader". It, most commonly, refers to the leader of a Caliphate, but is also used as a title among various Islamic religious groups and orders
4	Nisaiyat	Intellectual
5.	Khudi	Self
6.	Khair	Good
7.	Sharr	Bad
8.	Hagg	Just
9.	Batil	Unjust
10.	Maumin	A true personality
11.	Amn	Peace

12.	Adl	Justice
13.	Falah-o-behbud	Overall welfare
14.	Admiyat	Humanity
15.	Ihtram	Respect
16.	Madrasa	Madrasa is an Arabic word for any type of educational institution, secular or religious, whether for elementary instruction or higher learning
17.	Khankah	A place for spiritual retreat and character reformation
18.	Ruh	Spirit
19.	Aql	Mind
20.	Jasad	Body
21.	Mujtahideen	Intellectual
22.	Uloom	Who reflect and interpret science
23.	Imamat-e-alam	Leadership of the world
24.	Rahmat	Divine blessing
25.	Uruj-ozawal	Rise and fall
26.	Nisaiyat	Unique character
27.	Taddubaar	Farsightedness
28.	Faqr	Contentment
29.	Tauheed	Unity of God
30.	Risalat	Prophet-hood
31.	Wahi	Divine revelation
32.	Salahiyyat	Mastery on subject
33.	<i>Salihiyat</i>	Morality

5. References and Notes

[1].Ahmed, “Modern Education System /Western Education System by Iqbal” (In ‘Modern Education’)

[2]. Imran Khan, “*Pakistan - A personal History*”, Transworld Publishers, London, England

[3].Amir Siddque, “Educational profile of eastern educationists” Noorish Press, Pakistan, 1998

[4]. Abdullah Faruqi, “Educational Ideas of Iqbal”, See Dr. M. Rafiuddin in “First Principle of Education”, Iqbal Academy, Karachi

[5]. Ajaz lone, “Allama Iqbal as a Multi-dimensional personality,” Chapter-III

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- [8]. Mushtaq ur Rehman Siddiqui, *op. cit.*, 297
- [9]. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1930), "The Reconstruction in Religious Thought in Islam"
- [10]. Mushtaq Ahmed Goraha, "Allama Iqbal bahasiyat-e-mufakar-eitaleem", *Taleemat*, 11(9),1989, pp.84-88
- [11]. Muhammad Rafiuddin, "Baykhudda science kay khilaf Allama Iqbal kee jang", *Taleemat*,167-73
- [12]. *Ibid*
- [13]. *Ibid*
- [14]. Satan, also known as the Devil, is an entity in the Abrahamic religions that seduces humans into sin or falsehood. In Christianity and Islam, he is usually seen as either a fallen angel or a *jinn*, who used to possess great piety and beauty, but rebelled against God, who, nevertheless, allows him temporary power over the fallen world and a host of demons. In Judaism, Satan is typically regarded as a metaphor for the yetzer hara, or "evil inclination", or as an agent subservient to God
- [15]. Sunnah, also *sunna* or *sunnat*, is the body of literature which discusses and prescribes the traditional customs and practices of the Islamic community, both social and legal, often but not necessarily based on the verbally transmitted record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about Muhammad's companions. The Quran and the sunnah make up the two primary sources of Islamic theology and law. The sunnah is also defined as "a path, a way, a manner of life"; "all the traditions and practices" of the Islamic prophet that "have become models to be followed" by Muslims.
- [16]. Farrogh Ahmed, "Taleem-e-niswan kee asal surat", *Taleemat*, *op. cit.*, 174-82
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- [19]. Ayan Anwar (1993), "*Educational philosophers of contemporary society*", Adam Publishers, New Delhi, India, 1993, p.34.
- [20]. Muhammad Iqbal, "Javed Nama: Kuliyaat-e-Iqbal Farsi" Lahore: Shiekh Ghulam Ali & Sons, 1992, 384
- [21]. *ilm ul asma* is a divine knowledge given to Adam by Allah almighty on the basis of which Adam considered as lord on all the creatures of Allah almighty
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- [23]. Sir Dr. Allama Iqbal, "Philosophy of Education," Published by foundation of education on 29 March 2014
- [24]. Ghulam Nurul Widdan (2013), "Muhammad Iqbal: Thought in Education"
- [25]. Attash Durrani, "Iqbal aur asatizah", *Taleemat*, *op. cit.*, 207-11; see Also Muhammad Hanif Shahid, *Taleemat*, *op. cit.*, 228-32
- [26]. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), author of "Education Philosophy on Child Education" as: "Leave the child alone. Let him be natural man rather than a civilized man. Let him have a state of nature rather artificial surroundings that stunt the proper growth and arrests his natural development"