



## Iqbal's Concept of Education and Modern Demands

Muhammad Rafiqul Islam<sup>1</sup>, Mohammad Iftikhar Shafi<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Asghar Sial<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chairman, Department of Iqbal Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Email: [rafiqul.islam@iub.edu.pk](mailto:rafiqul.islam@iub.edu.pk)

<sup>2</sup> Head, Department of Urdu, Government College Sahiwal, Pakistan. Email: [mohammadiftekarshafi@gmail.com](mailto:mohammadiftekarshafi@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Iqbal Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Email: [muhammadasghar@iub.edu.pk](mailto:muhammadasghar@iub.edu.pk)

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received: May 10, 2023

Revised: June 27, 2023

Accepted: June 29, 2023

Available Online: June 30, 2023

#### Keywords:

Allama Muhammad Iqbal  
Poet and Philosopher  
Modern Educational Demands

#### Funding:

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

### ABSTRACT

Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal the Great Poet and Philosopher was an educationist. It was his belief that education is the most important element which can make a society civilized and advance. He closely observed the educational system of East and West. He was full aware of advantages and disadvantages of both educational systems. Having witnessed the strengths and weaknesses of educational systems across cultures, Iqbal grasped the need to blend the best attributes of both Eastern and Western approaches. His deep understanding of these systems allowed him to envision a holistic education that would transcend geographical boundaries and harmonize the wisdom of diverse traditions. Iqbal recognized that a balanced education must nurture not only intellectual growth but also foster moral, ethical, and spiritual development. Through his poetry, lectures, letters and philosophy; he presented the education system, which will fulfil modern educational demands.

© 2023 The Authors, Published by iRASD. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License

Corresponding Author's Email: [rafiqul.islam@iub.edu.pk](mailto:rafiqul.islam@iub.edu.pk)

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Discussion

Any society survives on the basis of knowledge and experience. Education plays a fundamental role in shaping the personalities of immature people and their character tendencies. Living societies continue to acquire knowledge to save them from corrosion. Social life is actually another name for the transmission of knowledge. Every nation in the world has academic, spiritual, intellectual, or moral superiority over other nations in one way or another. It is a difficult national duty to convey these distinctions to future generations. It is one of the needs. Therefore, with the creation of Adam, He was taught the names of things. (1). It is impossible to deny the spiritual excellence of knowledge that is why the angels also prostrated to man. Knowledge gives mankind access to good morals. From its interpretations, the mouth of a strong horse is civilized, and it teaches manners to differentiate between reformation and corruption. Education is the method that is adopted for the acquisition of knowledge. In Islam, be it history and philosophy, science and technology, language, literature, medical science, or engineering, every word that is useful for human beings and humanity comes under the category of knowledge. How can such a religion not believe in knowledge whose Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the city of knowledge.

Hazrat Allama gives utmost importance to the role of the teacher for shaping the character of the new generation. In his opinion, the student has a heart and spiritual relationship with his teacher and tries to adopt his qualities in life, so it is very important for the teacher to be exemplary. (Iqbal's spiritual relationship with one of his teachers, especially Maulvi Mir Hasan, can be presented here as an example). The teacher should adopt purity of thoughts and ideas along with his character so that it can be a good practice for the generations associated with him. Iqbal writes about the teacher:

The teacher is actually the guardian of the nation. It is in their power to groom the future generations and make them capable of serving the country. The highest level of effort in all endeavors and the most valuable in all endeavors is that of the teacher. (2)

According to Iqbal, the human being is like a seed, despite being buried in the ground, it has the potential to grow into a shadow tree. The completion of human personality includes the will of nature, according to Iqbal's concept of education, the education of any individual starts from his early life. The initial stage of education is completed in the mother's lap. At this stage, Iqbal exhorts the Muslim woman to follow the righteous life of Sayyidah Tun-Nisa Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) so that the process of character building can begin from the mother's lap. Following the Lady of Jannah (RA) is the eternal life in the lives of nations. Such mothers can give birth to great personalities like Syed Imam Hussain (RA).

ز درویشے پذیرے اگر بند  
ہزار امت بمیرد تو نہ میر  
بتولے باش و پنہاں شوازیں  
کہ در آغوش شبیرے بگیری (3)

(If you pay a heed once, to this poor guy; may die thousand nations but ye won't die. Hid from this Age like Batool if you can; in thy lap too there may be Hussain.)

Although Hazrat Allama's educational ideas are related to a certain era, his educational discussions are still of Muslim status. His commitment to our education and education system was not without reason; he knew how the education system of the church people is gradually taking the young generation away from the sciences and arts of the ancestors, which is based on study, history and observation of the universe. There is a special diversity in the educational ideas of Allama Muhammad Iqbal. He also fulfilled the responsibilities of teaching and teaching honorably in the important educational institutions of his time, so it would not be wrong to say that observations in his educational concepts. And along with study, experience also became an important factor. He had a detailed view of the system (curriculum, objectives, madrasa, student, meaning, etc.) prevalent in the educational institutions of the East and West, so he compared both in his poetry and prose. It has become an important educational position. In a simple sense, Iqbal wants a system of education under which unity can be created in the young generation through harmony in mind, vision and action, the practical example of which we see in the teachings of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). By which a person gets practical freedom from grief and sorrow. Courage creates fun in it.

Iqbal's interest in education and its related matters is not due to theoretical debates and ideas; one of the proofs of his heartfelt commitment to education is that he started his practical life as an educator. Besides, the general theme of Iqbal's extended sermons delivered in Hyderabad, Deccan, Delhi, Aligarh, Allahabad and Mysore also became higher education. Hazrat Allama was a member of the curriculum committees of the universities; he was also invited as an examiner in the high-level examinations in various educational institutions. Apart from this, there are many aspects that can be presented as evidence of the young man's interest in educational pursuits and issues. The traces of thinking and philosophy in educational thoughts, especially the comparison of the philosophy of education and system of the East and the West, and the determination of the distance between the two introduced Iqbal as an educationist at the national and international level. According to Allama Iqbal, there are three sources of knowledge: nature, history and religion. First of all, the study of the phenomena of nature and the discovery of the laws of nature created by the creator of the universe. Through this means, man directly gained access to natural sciences. History also tells the stories of the rise and fall of nations in the vicissitudes of time. Without religion a true life of man is not possible in any field. In Iqbal's view, all the manifestations of the creation of the universe are actually God's verses. By meditating on them, divine knowledge is blessed. The intellectual pursuit of the arts of science is also a fundamental part of worship. According to Iqbal, it is very important to use the intellect to understand things and their essence. He writes:

"The beginning of the rational foundations of Islam, the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, said himself, you, the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, used

to pray: O Allah! Give me the knowledge of the real reality of things. After the Prophet, peace be upon him, the Sufis and non-theological what he did in this regard is a bright chapter in our history and culture. It shows the attachment of the heart to the system of thoughts; it reflects his sincere unity with truth" (4).

In the Holy Qur'an, the Creator of the Universe has repeatedly invited human beings to think deeply about the common and different aspects of life. Those who know these sciences have been honored with the position of God's grace. It was the Qur'anic Manhaj from which the Muslims laid the foundation of natural science. As the Holy Quran is the source of all sciences, therefore, in Iqbal's opinion, it should be considered the most important source of knowledge in our education system for the promotion and propagation of Quranic ideas:

گر تو می خواهی مسلمان زیستن  
نیست ممکن جز به قرآن زیستن

(If you want to live as a Muslim, It is not possible to live except by the Qur'an) (5).

The Qur'an invites access to the absolute reality and a scientist also searches for the truth to find the same reality. At this point he is no less than a seeker of the right path, Iqbal says:

The truth is that all search of knowledge is "essentially a form of prayer, the scientific observer of Nature is a kind of mystic seeker" in the act of prayer (6).

We still have the teaching of modern scientific sciences, but we are still unable to produce great personalities in the field of scientific research. Our education system does not meet the social and economic requirements of the present era. In Iqbal's opinion, the new generation should be equipped with the jewel of modern education and play their role in the development of the Muslim Ummah. In this regard, an incident is worth recording. Its narrator is Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi. According to him:

"When Allama Iqbal was in London, I went to meet him one day at eleven o'clock in the afternoon. A young man was sitting there before me. This young man probably belonged to a Muslim Kashmiri family in Amritsar and in 1923 he graduated from a university in England, Degree in engineering with honors. The young man said: My father has written to me that you have completed your studies and Dr. Iqbal happens to be in London. Consult him about your future. Allama looked at this young man from head to toe. Rather, he examined him and said: "You have come at the right time; there is a great need for young people like you." I had a letter from the librarian. He wrote that the Germans are putting a lot of pressure on me to get the recipe I have for breaking the atom. Therefore, I advise you to take my letter and go to Istanbul. Devote at least five years of your life to the important cause. To meet the expenses that will be incurred in this work, if I have to go and ask for it, I will definitely ask for it." (7)

Iqbal's secret and visible efforts in this effort to obtain atomic energy for the Muslim world are still shrouded in mystery (8). According to Iqbal, scientific sciences, especially natural sciences, have priority among all sciences. Gaining power and energy is necessary to achieve a distinguished and prominent position in the world. New inventions and inventions are needed to support the advanced research of scientific sciences and the speed of time. Muslim countries have been lagging behind in this field for the past few centuries. We are indebted to the developed countries for not being familiar with the modern requirements of medical science and engineering. These countries are traders of medicine, medical equipment, agricultural equipment and war weapons and other goods. Muslim rulers and people are its buyers. Buying and selling of modern technology should not be done in the form of sacrifice of our history, culture and religious values. Using Iqbal's thought, it is important for Muslim countries to maintain their identity in any case.

The level of knowledge has always been a secondary level with us; our education system gives lessons to the poor children. Due to having more than one education system, the foundation of class injustice was laid in the beginning, the results of which are now coming. Whatever the purpose of establishing modern foreign educational institutions. Due to

this, the new generation has lost its culture. It is important to consider the opinion of Allama Muhammad Asad on this subject, he says:

Western education of Muslim youth is bound to undermine their will to believe in the message of the prophet, their will to regard themselves as representatives of the peculiar, theocratic, civilization of Islam .

There can be no doubt whatever that religious belief is rapidly losing ground among the "intelligentsia" educated on western lines. (9)

Our modern educated class (trained on Western principles) is increasingly turning away from its past. The blind imitation of the West has more fatal effects than the educational backwardness of Muslims. Iqbal's thought is also similar to a particular style of education. These ideas are well expressed in his poetry:

گلا تو گھونٹ دیا اہل مدرسہ نے ترا  
کہاں سے آئے صدا لا الہ الا اللہ

(The schoolmen have strangled thy nascent soul, and stifled the voice of passionate faith in thee.) (10)

اور یہ اہل کلیسا کا نظام تعلیم  
ایک سازش ہے فقط دین و مروت کے خلاف

(The teaching that the English have devised 'gainst Faith and ties has great intrigue contrived.) (11)

اٹھامی مدرسہ و خانقاہ سے غم ناک  
نہ زندگی نہ محبت نہ معرفت نہ نگہ

(Monasteries and schools left me sad and dejected no life and no love; no vision and no knowledge.) (12)

These ideas are reflected in the proposed educational scheme presented by Iqbal for the welfare of the individual and the society. According to Muhammad Ahmed Siddiqui: He (Iqbal) took advantage of his God-given abilities and compiled an international code of life and revived the Nation of Islam with particularity and established an education system for Pakistan which will continue to be a beacon for future generations. (13)

Iqbal's educational ideas belong to a particular era but their usefulness is felt till the present era. It is mandatory for every Muslim man and woman to get education. When Mr. Gokhale proposed compulsory education in the Imperial Legislative Council, the subcontinent rallied in support and opposition. On February 8, 1921, a meeting was held in Islamia College Lahore under the chairmanship of Hazrat Allama. He said in the presidential speech:

"The word coercion is not intended to offend anyone, just as the vaccination of smallpox has been declared compulsory and forced. This compulsion cannot be harmful in any way to the person who is vaccinated. Likewise. Coercion this education is also a vaccine for spiritual smallpox, there is coercive education in Islam, Muslims are commanded to force their children to pray. Some people object that the law of this forced education. Girls will also come in the limit. But if we want, we can try to remove this clause from the law." (14)

## 2. Conclusion

In the light of Allama Muhammad Iqbal's poetry, sermons, letters and articles, his services related to education and education system can be discussed in this way.

A: History as a subject is not the basis of any one nation; rather it is the property of the entire humanity as a whole. In 1932, Professor J. F. Bruce joined the Punjab University as Professor of History. Some people proposed to exclude Islamic history from BA history

- syllabus and include history of India. Iqbal strongly condemned this process and termed this proposal as narrow-minded.
- B: Through his long correspondence, Iqbal highlighted his character by having long discussions about the curriculum and teaching of genealogy with domestic and foreign friends.
- C: He participated in academic conferences at the invitation of the British government and was appointed as a member of the sub-committee formed in London. In addition, he was invited to Kabul along with Allama Syed Sulaiman Nadvi and Sir Ras Masood on the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan, where he presented commendable suggestions regarding education.
- D: Iqbal wanted to establish a state-of-the-art educational institution where scholars of ancient and modern sciences could adapt the new generation to the modern requirements of the age. In this regard, his letter written to Sheikh Azam Allama Mustafa Al Maraghi of Al-Azhar University, Egypt can be seen.
- E: There is a special concept of society and history in Iqbal's poetry. This gives an idea of their views on the rise and fall of nations. Along with this, his fascination with these two sciences can also be seen.
- F: Iqbal wants an education system in which there is no distinction between religion and world, in this regard, building separate schools is against the spirit of Islam. Madrasahs are centers of connection between modern and ancient ideas so that the religious beliefs of the new generation are not shaken.
- G: Muslim students should be attracted to the civil, moral and political sciences of their nation so that they can be aware of the outstanding deeds of their forefathers. If this could not be done, the example of Tuan will be a dead body.

Allama Iqbal's ideas, with the help of education, it is necessary for the new generation to be exposed to modern education and civil sciences. Iqbal considers Islam as a dynamic religion, so it is necessary to study Islam in the light of new concepts in educational institutions. With this, we can not only become a bright Ummah, but also become worthy of leading the world at the global level.

## References

- The verse is: Translation: And we taught Adam the names of things (Al-Quran, Surah Baqarah). Muhammad Saeed, Hakeem, Nazria o Silsilah Taaleem Islami, Vol. 2, Hamdard Foundation, Karachi, 1985, p. 170
- Mohammad Iqbal, Allama, Jadeed Fikriyat Islam, translated by Dr. Wahid Ishrat, Maktabah Elm o Irfan, Lahore, 1996, p. 121
- Iqbal, Muhammad, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, compiled by Muhammad Saeed Sheikh, Stanford University Press, California, 1989 ad**
- Zubair Roheed, editor, Justjo, Allama Iqbal Aur Atmi Tawani ka Raz, Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi, Urdu Science Board, Lahore, 2007, p.32
- Efforts were made to find out about this. Experts in Iqbal started the search process through the Pakistani embassy in Turkey. Information was given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan on 01 May 1991. According to them, Allama Iqbal's good friend in Turkey, Khalil Khalid was a member of a well-known Turkish family. After completing his education at Oxford, he was a professor at Istanbul University. Suggest books and send a list of their names to Prof.A. Fischer of Lipzing for advice. Therefore, it has not yet been revealed whether Iqbal was attracting the Kashmiri Muslim youth of Amritsar to achieve nuclear education, whether he was a librarian at Istanbul University, or whether he was Professor Khalil. Khalid, with whom Iqbal had a close relationship, For details, visit:
- Justjo, compiled by Zubair Roheed, Urdu Science Board, 2007, Allama Iqbal Aur Atmi Tawani ka Raz, Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi, p. 32
- Asad, Muhammad: a road to the Mecca, Islamic Service, New Delhi, 2004 ad, p 80**
- Ahmad Siddiqui, Muhammad, Iqbal Kay Taalimi Nazriyat, Academy of Educational Research, Karachi, 1965, p. 239
- Rafiq Afzal, Guftar e Iqbal, Idara Tehqiqat Pakistan,Punjab University,Lahore,1969,p. 27**
- Ibid, p. 377
- Ibid, p. 599
- Iqbal, Dr. Muhammad, Kalyat-e-Iqbal Urdu,Iqbal Akademi Pakistan,Lahore,2018, p. 378
- Muhammad Ahmad Siddiqui, Iqbal kay talimi Nazriyat, Academy of Educational Research, Karachi, 1965, p. 5 Ibid, P.136