

ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC REHABILITATION AND SELF-RELIANCE: ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This paper intends to discuss issues relating to the impact of teacher education on economic rehabilitation and reliance from Islamic perspectives. Discussions were made on the position of knowledge in Islam, teacher education and the position of teacher in Islam was also highlighted. The relevance of teacher education rehabilitation and reliance in Islam were also discussed. *Quran* verses and *Ahadith* (traditions) of the prophet (SAW) are quoted where necessary also quoted were the sayings of some eminent Muslim scholars on the issue in order to buttress the topic under discussion.

Introduction

Islam as a comprehensive and complete way of life urges its adherents to work hard and partake in the economic rehabilitation of the poor in the society. It also laid emphasis in achieving self-reliance for overall development. In this regard, Muslims are expected to work tirelessly in order to see to the growth and development of their society. There are various institutions in Islam which are all established so as to enhance economic rehabilitation and self-reliance. Among agencies used to achieve the above objective are *Zakal* distributions, *Waqaf* {public endowment} *Sadaqah* (charity) etc. The poor section of the populace is rehabilitated through the judicious use of the resources provided by these agencies. -It is indeed very true that no society will ever prosper and achieve economic reliance, if it is confronted by high level of illiteracy and absence of proper guidance by teachers. Both economic rehabilitation and reliance would only be achieved through the hard work and dedication of teachers. This is because teachers are those saddled with the task of guiding the people. Teachers are therefore the pivot of any meaningful economic development.

Position of Knowledge in Islam

Islam as a Deen (complete way of life) has accorded a lofty position to knowledge. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was commanded by Allah to ask for knowledge and not worldly mundane. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"And say oh my lord! Advance me in knowledge (Quran 20:114) that is why, the noble prophet (SAW) in most of his prayers asked Allah to bestow on him knowledge. It is with this knowledge, that the prophet was able to persuade his people to accept Islam. The companions of the prophet (SAW) also took the task of spreading Islam to nooks and corners of the world by using knowledge and education to advance their cause . The position of knowledge in Islam, the holy prophet said:

For the one who goes in the path of (pursuit) of knowledge, Allah opens for him the path to paradise Reported by (Muslim and Tirmidhi).

In another tradition, the prophet (S.A.W) was quoted saying: "Scholars are the successors of the prophet" (Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah).

The duty assigned to all the prophets by almighty Allah was to call their people to the worship and services of Allah the sustainer, protector, and shun from the servitude of others. Allah messengers of Allah have delivered this message to their people. After their death, the disciples they left took

upon themselves, the task of spreading the messages to other people and nations. They thus serve as their teachers and tutors in their respective areas.

Position of a Teacher in Islam

As discussed above Allah (SWT) is the first teacher of mankind. His Messengers and Prophets who were sent to various nations as teachers, including the last noble prophet of Islam Muhammad bin

Abdullahi (peace be upon him). A teacher in Islam is one, who imparts knowledge on individuals, instills Allah's consciousness in them and inculcates in them the right attitude. Thus, a day when one will be asked to account for his deeds/actions. A good teacher therefore, not only trains individuals, but also makes sure that one is productive, industrious and self reliant. The Holy Qur'an contains instructions from Allah (SWT) urging Muslims to strive hard, to earn their livelihood through lawful means. Allah says: "And give glad tidings (O Muhammad) not those who believe and do good works, that there are garden" (Qur'an 2.23).

In another verse, the almighty says: Oh you apostle! Enjoy (all) things good and pure and work righteousness..... (Qur'an 23:15).

Imam Ibn Kalhir (1992:1:248) while commenting on this verse, quoted a Hadith of the prophet (SAW) which was reported by Abu Huraira saying:

O mankind certainly Allah is clean (pure) and will not accept (any act), except the clean (acts) and so Allah commands the believers, on what he commanded the Messengers....

The position of teacher in Islam therefore, is next to the Messengers of Allah even though; they (teachers) will not receive revelations from Allah. Rather it is the messages of the Prophets that they (teachers) are disseminating and expounding to their communities/people.

Furthermore, Muslims are commanded in the Qur'an to ask teachers, on any aspect of human endeavour that is not made clear to them. Allah says:... So ask the follower of the reminder if you do not know" (Qur'an, 21:7). This verse explains the lofty position a teacher is endowed with in Islam. In addition to that, the prophet (SAW) said:

"Scholars (teachers) are the heirs (inheritors) of the prophets reported by (Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).

A great Muslim jurist Imam Al-Ghazali as quoted by Atiya (1967:27-22) had this to say: Knowledge is acquired like money... whoever learns, works and teaches is called great is the heaven. He is like *musk* which perfumes others while it is perfumed itself. He who learns and does not use his learning is like a notebook which is useful to others but is itself empty of knowledge or like a grindstone which sharpens other things but cannot cut or a needle which clothes others but is naked itself or the wick of lamp which provides light to others while it is itself consumed. As it is said: He is only a wick which ignited lights to people as it becomes consumed.

The aforementioned quotations are explaining the position of a teacher in Islam and what is expected of him. A teacher should serve as a model for his students. Al-Ghazali also said as quoted by Atiya (1967:29) "whoever is concerned with education has taken up on himself a great matter of enormous gravity and must look after his manner and functions".

An Islamic studies teacher should therefore regard himself a model, worthy of emulation by his students. He should see himself as a father to his pupils. He shall be patient, so that he can be able to restrain himself and suppress his anger, his work shall be for the sake of Allah. He shall be sincere in his work and fear Allah in all his endeavours.

To sum it up, a teacher in Islam is respected and revered in the society for his numerous and viable services to humanity.

Economic Rehabilitation and Reliance

Either by design or default there is the tendency for some citizens to be economically bankrupt. And economic crunch and bankruptcy produces social and economic setback. In this regard a way has to be sought so that the poor being subjected to economic hardship will be rehabilitated. Economic rehabilitation could simply be referred as coming up with programmes and strategies which are aimed at alleviating the problems and hardship being experienced by the poor.

Islam negates dependency. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also discouraged dependency in one of his sayings. It is reported that he (SAW) advised that it is better for one to take a rope and enter in to the forest and gather wood for sale and obtain means of livelihood than to depend on others for his sustenance. In this regard teachers help to shape individuals in the society by providing them with basic skills, attitudes, and awareness.

Relevance of Teacher Education to Economic Rehabilitation and Reliance in Islam

The relevance of teacher education to economic relations and reliance in Islam cannot be overstressed. An Islamic studies teacher imparts on his students some qualities which are determinants in the economic rehabilitation and self reliance. Some are these qualities are: -

1. **Al-taqvva (Piety):** A student is taught to fear Allah (SWT) in all his endeavours, as Allah sees him while he cannot see Allah. In addition to that sincere deeds are rewardable by Allah.

Allah says;

... And for those who fear Allah, he (ever) prepares a way out. And he provides for him from (sources) he could never imagine....

(Qur'an 65:2-3).

Ibn Katheer (1992:4:381) quoted Imran Bin Hussain reporting from the prophet (SAW) who said:

Whoever surrenders to Allah will find him as ultimate helper and he will provide for him from a (sources) he could never imagine...' (Qur'an 65:2-3)-

Ibn Katheer (1992:4:381) quoted Imran bin Hussain reporting from the prophet (SAW) who said:

Whoever surrenders to Allah will find him as ultimate helper and he will provide for him from a source he never expects. Arid whoever puts his trust on worldly affairs, will find it unbleeful and fruitless reliance.

2. **Altawakkul AlAHah (reliance on Allah):** A teacher should inculcate in the minds of his disciples that Allah (SWT) is the sustainer and the provider of all man's needs. And that his conscious shall be whatever he gets is from Allah. Allah says:

If anyone put his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him Qur'an (63:3).

3. **Al-amana (trust):** This is another quality which a teacher teaches his students and encourages them to imbibe. His life style and interactions are determinants to imbibe it.

Allah says:

Allah doth command you to render back your trusts to those whom they are due ...

Qur'an

Sumrah reported that, the prophet (SAW) said:

Give back the trust to those who entrusted it to you. (reported Ahmed).

4. **Industriousness:** A Muslim is expected to be hardworking and industrious. To this laziness, idleness, sycophancy and so on is Islamically condemned. The prophet (SAW) said: as reported by Usman bin Affan saying:

The best of you who learns the Qur'an and teaches others" (reported by Bukhari).

He also says the best of mankind is he who brings benefits to them. (Baihaqi).

5. **Accountability:** A Muslim is accountable to Allah for all his good or bad deeds. Will accordingly be rewarded or punished for it. A teacher should train his students on how to be accountable, by showing good examples of his action. Allah says:

Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it. And anyone who has done an atom of evil shall see it. (99:7-8).

6. Another important aspect which an Islamic studies teacher should do is to encourage his students to give out of *Zakat*, *Waqf* (public endowment) and *Sadaqa* charity as a religious duty and also a protection against fire outbreak, armed robbers and other disastrous misfortunes.

An Islamic studies teacher who is able to inculcate in his students the following qualities would certainly lead to increase in the productivity and subsequently metamorphose to economic rehabilitation and reliance.

Furthermore, students who are instilled with the virtue of self reliance will make themselves productive and of course leads to economic rehabilitation and self reliance.

In addition to that, a good teacher produces well-informed, educated and composed students which mean a decline in crime rate or establishing a crime-free society thus citizens become self reliant and economically developed too. It will certainly do away with the problems of unemployment, idleness, sycophancy, and so on.

Moreover, a teacher who is able to instill Allah's consciousness among his students and that they are individually accountable to Allah for their deeds in the hereafter, will lead to productivity, transparency and trustworthiness in the society. Each member will feel duty bound to uplift the society.

Conclusion

In this paper attempt was made on the impact of the teacher education in economic rehabilitation and reliance from Islamic perspectives.

The paper discussed issues relating to the position of knowledge in Islam. It focussed discussion on the definition of the term-teacher education and also its position in Islam. Another issue discussed, was the position of a teacher in Islam. On the relevance of teacher education in economic rehabilitation and reliance, the paper enumerated some qualities which are expected of an Islamic studies teacher to imbibe unto his students. If such qualities are inculcated among the students, we are optimistic, that our society will become viable and prosperous, void of fraud, treason and so on.

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