Islamic Education with the help of Information Technology: Advantages and Disadvantages

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Abstract:

One of the most important function of tranferring religious beliefs and teaching to the younger generation was performed by schools as well as parents and elder family members. Now in this age of techonology all these beliefs and cultural values, idelogies of life are transferred to the younger generation i.e. children through media which is solely dependent on Information Technology. We can say that the role of family members including parents and relatives have been significantly decreased that is why islamic education should be provided by means of Information Technology. Education is necessary for all Muslims and in Pakistan as well as in the Muslim world education has been divided into Islamic and Western Education. Our schooling system is very poor and old. In this paper, we will discuss about two main problem of our schooling system. One regarding the less subjects on Islam which causes lack of knowledge about Islam in our children, they do not understand Islam and happen to be far from Islam. Secondly, the technique of teaching and learning in schools is very old and poor and it should be modernized. Teachers and students both face difficulty in teaching and learning. Teaching and learning technique can be improved by IT. This paper is a qualitative and quantitative paper which highlights the role of Information Technology in Islamic Education. A survey was conducted among teachers of different schools in Karachi and based on those statitics suggestions were made to improve standards of Islamic education with the use of Information Technology.

1.   Introduction:

Islam is a complete way of life. Islam preaches about various fields of life, education is one of them. As Allah mentioned in Quran,

"Recite! In the name of your Lord. Who created man from a clot of congealed blood, Recite: and your Lord is Most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man what he did not know." (Ch:96, V:1-5).

Allah has blessed mankind with education, which was the reason why angels were ordered to prostrate Hazrat Adam. If a person continues to struggle for education Allah will surely bless him with the knowledge he did not have (Kaseer, 2006). These verses and the fact that these were the first verses revealed, show the necessity of education in Islam. Education can be divided into two parts, worldly or western education and Islamic education. Islamic education holds huge importance, seeking it, is mandatory for every Muslim. As the Prophet S.A.W.W. said,

"When Allah intends to do good to someone, He provides him a deep understanding of religion" (Nawawi, p.144).

This hadith shows the importance of Islamic education. Worldly education has given great importance as well. As in the battle of Badr, captives were set free on account of their worldly knowledge (Tiberi, 2004).[1] In conclusion, we can say that both worldly and Islamic education are important for Muslims.

If we take a close look of our schooling system we will find that worldly education is given priority over Islamic education. If a student does not even have the basic knowledge of Islam, he would never be able to be a good Muslim, thus it is very important to add more content from Islam in our schooling system's syllabus. Teaching technique is also very deficient, it should be changed as well.

World has evolved so much, for which IT is a significant reason. If we have a look around ourselves we will surely find some sort of tools related to

Information Technology used everywhere. It is involved in different fields of our lives and education is one of them. But various schools are devoid of IT which is causing children not getting appropriate islamic education. It can make Islamic education very easy to get understood as well. Thus, in today's world of IT it is becoming indispensable. Schools should use functions like video, audio, graphic to educate as it makes education fast and easy.

2.   Objective:

The main objective of this research is to point out inadequacy ad inappropriate Islamic syllabus in schools and to add more content in syllabus. Secondly,importance and causes to use modern techniques of teaching using Information Technology as a tool that developed countries are using for making their eductaion system better. Pakistan needs to comply this to make our standards f education better.

3.   Literature View:

Farideh Hamidi, Maryam Meshkat, Maryam Razaee and Mehdi Jafari discussed the ways for betterment of education system in 21st century in their article "Information Technology in Education".[2] The problem with developing countries is the unavailability of proper resources owing to which they are unable to make their education system according to the modern technique. Developed countries should use IT for their education system. It will make teaching easy for teachers and learning easy for students. They have discussed advancement of education in Iran through IT and suggestions involving it (Hamidi, Jafari, Meshkat & Razaee, 2011).[3]

Farideh Hamidi, Farhad Ghorbandordinejad, Maryam Razaee and Mehdi Jafri compared developing countries and developed countries with respect to IT in their article "A comparison of the use of educational technology in the developed/developing countries".[4] They have discussed education system in developed countries like England, America and Japan, where students are provided with personal computer (PC) and teachers use Information

Technology related tools to teach. Generally home works and assignments are given on word processing softwares. Moreover, they discussed education system in developing countries like Iran. Only 3% of GDP is used by the Government of China for education. 19 computers are available for 100 people. IT in education system is essential for development. Developing countries should spend more on IT. (Ghorbandordine, Hamidi, Jafari, & Razaee, 2011).[5]

Ghulam Rasool Memon conversed about condition and standard of education in Pakistan and its reasons in his article "Education in Pakistan". Literacy rate in Pakistan is 49% which is less than other countries in the district. Government of Pakistan just uses 2.2% of its GDP on education which is a big reason behind short literacy rate. Another reason for it is the low standard of teachers in primary schools as typically teachers have only had 10 years of schooling or they have become teachers by intercession or bribe which causes standard of education to be low. Literacy rate of girls is much less than literacy rate of boys in Pakistan which is another problem in Pakistan. 60% of girls and 84% of boys take admission in primary schools. Pakistan is going to face a lot of challenges in coming days (Memon, 2007).[6]

4.   Methodology:

It is a qualitative and quantitative research paper. A survey among school teachers is conducted, having questions on two topics, Islamic education in schools syllabus and condition of IT in schools that how private schools of Karachi utilize IT. We collected data from primary and different secondary sources then analysed it. Described its impact on Pakistani society. Reason behind the education system in Pakistan. Suggestions about reformation of school system in Pakistan is given and then conclusion of the discussion.

1.   Sampling:

Survey was conducted on private schools of Karachi, in which 40 teachers from different private schools participated. A single response is taken from each school as survey had questions about the school and every teacher would probably answer the same. And we selected private schools because through the recent years parents prefer private schools over government schools, as private schools have better standards of education. Thus, we selected private schools so

that we could survey how much IT is involved in education system in Pakistan and how much of our course consists on Islamic education.

Random sampling is carried out. 84.6% of respondents are females and the other 15.4% is male and their ages are from 18-50 and they teach in 38 different private schools in Karachi.

2.   Finding:

Three types of things are found through this survey. Firstly, the percentage of male and female teachers in school. 38 schools have a total of 1633 teachers in which 1327 (81.3%) are females and 306 (18.7%) are male. Second thing is sufficiency of Islamic content taught in schools. After analysing different questions related to this topic, it is concluded that 60.2% schools do not offer appropriate amount of Islamic education. And the third thing is how much IT is involve in the private schools. 56.7% schools do not use IT properly for education purpose.

5.   Education in Pakistan:

The main objective of this paper is to survey education system in Pakistan. Education plays an important role in the development of society. Pakistani society faces many problems due to the lack of education. Literacy rate of Pakistan is 49% which is less than other countries and Government spends only 2.2% of its GDP on education. Gender inequality is another problem in Pakistani society. Girl education is not given importance on account of which there is a quantifiable difference between literacy rate of boys and girls (Memon, 2007).[7]

Education in Government schools is just for name. Pakistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, with low formal schooling attendance and literacy rates whereas there are number of private schools currently. Fee structure is very high their thence the proletariats cannot afford it. Government does not pay attention to government schools which has effected education system in Pakistan. Surveys and visits have been done by the International Agencies, Journalist and Political Scientists to Pakistani Schools as well as madarsas.

There are many factors related to deficient education system we will discuss the below two factors:

1. Insufficient proportion of Islamic education in syllabus.
2. Betterment of schooling system through IT.

1.   Insufficient Proportion of Islamic Education in Syllabus:

Pakistan was founded on the name of Islam and the national religion of Pakistan is Islam. Non-Muslims have no right to become the prime minister of Pakistan and the full name of Pakistan is Islamic Republic of Pakistan. That's why Islamic education should be prime here but if we take a look at the syllabus of government schools there is just one subject regarding Islam i.e. Islamiat. Which comprises some historical incidents, the five pillars of Islam, some incidents of Seerat o Maghazi, some verses and hadith, which is very insufficient. Books of 9th and 10th standard from Sindh textbook has only some verses and hadith which is very inadequate for that age students.

Students of 9th and 10th are mostly grown up so they should be aware of the basic Masail of Islam such as Masail of Namaz, Rozah and Zakat. Essentials, Sunnats and Wajibat for namaz and rozah. When was Zakat declared as a fard, the kinds of people who receive Zakat. These are very basic masail of Islam which every Muslim should be aware of. But syllabus in our schools does not contain these topics that's why duties cannot be done properly.

a)   Consequences of Insufficient Proportion of Islamic Education in Syllabus:

Education system in Pakistan can be divided into two major groups, madrasa system and schooling system. These two systems are totally different from each other. Thus, the insight of students from these systems totally differs as well. Therefore, Pakistan is divided into two kinds of conceptions which is a barrier in the unification of Pakistan. Students of madrasa system have religious insight while students of schooling system have worldly insight, which causes strife in religious issues. Thence, Pakistan should only have one education system which should comprise both kinds of education. Or at least proportion

of Islamic education in schooling system should be increased so that misconception about Islam minimizes and common Muslims don't get effected by any propaganda against Islam.

b)   Importance of Islamic Education in Schools:

Education is very important in Islam as it is mentioned in Islam,

"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees." (Ch:58, V:11).

This verse shows the summit of people who get education after accepting Islam as at another point Quran mentions,

"Say, Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" (Ch:39, V:9).

This verse clarifies that those who have education about religion and those who does not are not same i.e. there is a significant difference between them. Which is why there would be a different in their rewards as well. As in Quran,

"Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge." (Ch:35, V:28).

Knowledge is not just accustom but it is obeying and fearing from Allah i.e. which we received from Prophet PBUH, his companions and scholars (Kaseer, 2006)[8]. Islam preaches us to obey Allah and have fear of Him but these habits can only be achieved by those who learn and teach religion. Hazrat Abu Hurera narrates that Prophet PBUH said,

"World is accursed and everything inside it is accursed except mentioning Allah and adherence with Allah and knowledge or those who seek knowledge." (Nawawi, p.146).

Many non-Muslims have turned into Muslims due to Islamic education because Islamic education effected them. But Muslims are getting far away from Islamic education day by day because they are not being taught Islam in a right

and complete manner. That's why they are being distrustful from Islam and getting attracted towards western education. Schools are being very effective in this matter as school is a child's basic learning platform and they are teaching them western personalities instead of religious personalities there. Therefore, a good Muslim is extinct nowadays. If Muslims study Islamic education properly and then implement it, then there would be no one better than them because Islam is a natural religion and through Islamic education Muslims can not only become successful in this World but also in the hereafter.

c) Suggestions for the Betterment of Islamic Education in Schools:

Quran and Hadith in Course: Quran and Hadith is the main foundation of every Muslim. Seeking education about it is our Islamic duty. Schools must have its education in its course because Islam instructs its education for both World and religion. The survey we conducted resulted as 30.8% schools have appropriate ratio of Hadiths and Verses and according to the student's mental level and 30.8% does not have it. Other 38.5% find its ratio satisfactory and increase better.

i. **Arabic Language:** Arabic is one of the most spoken language on earth and has the greatest number of speakers in excess of 200 million [9]. It is the basic source of education of Islam as Quran and Hadiths are in Arabic which are the basics of Islamic education. Other than that the initial scholars of Islam were also Arabic on account of which there are numerous Islamic books in Arabic. Thus, Arabic is essential to understand religion. According to our conducted survey 15 out of 38 schools have Arabic language as a course, which is a very low number of schools and should be increased.

ii. **Islamic Personality:** Survey shows that 82.1% of teachers believe that there should be an increase in the knowledge about Islamic personalities in the textbooks because children will follow the personality they'd be taught. So, Islamic personalities should be their role models.

iii. **Calibre of Islamiat teacher:** 29 out of 38 schools appoint Islamiat teachers on the basis of their Islamic qualification, according to the survey, which is a satisfying amount. But our aim should be to appoint teachers that are related and understand this field in every single school because only an expert can carry

out best work in his field. And in this way quality of Islamic education can be made   more   better.

iv.   **Appropriate Islamic Content:** According to the survey, only 30.8% teachers think that Islamic education in their school is appropriate according to respective level. 46.2% find it inappropriate and they think there should be an increase and 23.1% teachers do not have a strong opinion on this issue. The ratios show that Islamic education in schools is inappropriate and there should be an increase. Syllabus for Islamic subjects should be developed in accordance with an emphasis on Islamic Values.

Do you think Islamic information in the courses is enough for respective levels?
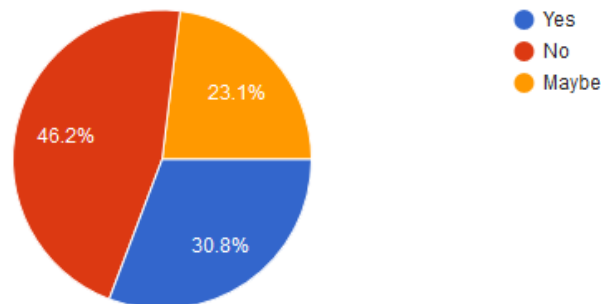
39 responses

Figure 1 Our Survey Result on Islamic Education

2.   Betterment of schooling system through IT:

It's the era of technology currently. Technology is being used around us in many ways. As days are passing new technologies are being invented. These technologies make human life easy. Technology is used in every field of life. Like every field of life it should also be used in the system of education. Implementing it in the system of education can make the system better.Even Smaller developed countries of the world use IT in their education [10] system but Pakistan's schooling system lacks in IT which causes difficulties for teachers in teaching and students in learning. Substandard system of education is one of the reason of Pakistan being a developing country. This system can be made much better through IT. Islamic books, literature, Islamic lectures, Islamic speeches by famous researchers, translation and interpretation of the Qur'an were converted into digital forms. Presently, several sites now offer Islamic material free of charge.[11]

6.   What is IT? :

Commonly a synonym for computers and computer networks but more broadly designating any technology that is used to generate, store, process, and/or distribute *information electronically, including television and the telephone (Chandler & Munday, 2011, p.211).[12] Information technology is referred to the knowledge process and its applying methods, processing, transferring and making information in progress (Hamidi, Jafari, Meshkat & Razaee, 2011, p.370).[13]

7.   Situation of IT in schools:

a)   Computer facility in Schools: Computer is essential for education in this era. Every work is being carried out through computer. 25 private schools among 38 have the facility of computer for teachers while, 5 schools give selected teachers this facility and the other 8 schools do not have this facility. Situation of computer facility in schools for teachers is satisfactory but for students it is not. As 28 schools do not have a computer for each student of the school due to which

students cannot learn properly in labs and teachers also find difficulties in teaching. Each student cannot perform lab on computer due to this problem and find problems in understanding. Only 10 schools among 38 have computers according to the strength of students.

b)   Use of Projector in Teaching: according to the survey 15 out of 38 schools use projector for teaching purpose. The other 11 sometimes and 12 never use projector for this purpose, which shows that in this matter schools are in good condition but it could be made much better as students can learn more and faster from audios, videos and graphics.[14]

c)   Uses of new Technology in Schools: Survey resulted in mixed answers about modern technology. 23.1% respondents answered in too much use of it and 19.2% responded in too low use of modern technology. And the other 57.7% answered in the moderate use of modern technology. Thus, we can conclude that private schools are using IT in a large extent which is satisfactory but there always would be a need of betterment in this matter.

d)   Graphic Use for Islamic History: Graphic makes teaching and learning much easier because listening is a faster way than reading. Therefore, on asking about the use of IT in teaching Islamic history a big amount of respondents (64.1%) declared it right to use IT for Islamic history and 28.2% answered in a may be and the rest 7.7% responded in a no.

8.   Why IT is important for school system:

IT can make school system better as it can provide the following:

- Present the material in more interesting and attractive way.
- Guide and help students in searching the qualitative material.
- Make best use of time.
- Coach the students as well as the Academic Staff [15]
- Provide individualized instruction.

▪ Direct the students toward cooperative as well as collaborative learning activities.

▪ Prepare learning material for students, rather teaching in conventional situations.

▪ Diagnose the learning problem of students and help them to overcome.

▪ Solve the study problems of students. (Saifee & Sheikh, 2012, p.284-285) [16]

Do you think IT makes teaching easy?
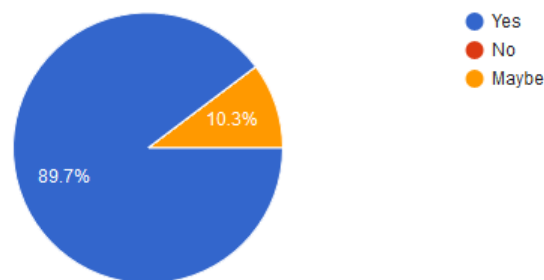
39 responses

Figure 2 Our Survey Result on IT in Education

Conclusion:

Education plays a very vital role in the development of any country. Developed countries use IT in their education system that's why their education have high standards. Developing countries should pay attention to their education system as it can be the reason behind their development. Pakistan is a developing country and like other developing countries Pakistan too has an unsatisfactory standard of education. In Pakistan, IT is being used in a good extent in private schools but there is still need of betterment as it is easy to teach and learn through IT. To make education system better and Pakistan a developed country, IT should be used in a greater extent in the education system of Pakistan.

Islam is the official religion of Pakistan. Therefore, betterment of religious education is as necessary as the betterment of worldly education is. There are two systems of education in our society, madrasas and schools. One offers religious education and the other offers worldly education, which has resulted in a marginable difference between the ideologies of these classes which is a big problem among all the other problems of Pakistan. Thus, there should be appropriate ratio of religious education in schools too so that the difference of ideologies in these classes could be minimized.

رَّبِّ زِدْنِیْ عِلْمًا "My Lord, increase me in knowledge."

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