

Islamic Philosophy of Education and Our Challenges Ahead

Dr. Md. Maimul Ahsan Khan*

“....Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endued with understanding that receive admonition.”

- (Quran, 39: 9.)

“Read in the name of thy Sustainer, who has created – created man out of germ-cell! – Read- for thy Sustainer is the Most Bountiful One -- who has taught [man] the use of the pen -- taught man what he did not know!”

-- (Quran, 96:1-5.)

Restraint of discipline, emulation, examples of virtue and of justice form the education of the world.

-- Edmund Burke

Capacity without education is deplorable, and education without capacity is thrown away.

-- Sheikh Saa'di

Guidance is not attained except with knowledge and correct direction is not attained except with patience.

--Ibn Taymiyyah

Abstract: *Philosophical foundation of any area of study or discipline is very important aspect to deal with before undertaking comprehensible plans and programs to implement. Education is a quite undefined and ever expanding area of human resource development directly related to the nation-building, national security, and overall emancipation of the masses. Creating highly professional and skilled human resources is indeed one of the prime goals for any education system. However, at the ground levels, our failure to disseminate minimum knowledge based on objective assimilation of required information may endanger the survival of the entire nation. Feeding the nation with only greed for money, wealth, and power may cause tremendous damage to the psyche of a nation leading to disastrous*

* Professor of Law, Islam, Human Rights, International Commerce; University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

consequences for educational policies as well. Finding right kind of balance for educational and cultural system is a very big challenge. This complicated challenge with many ideological, social, and economic dichotomies can only be met by reforming education at its core. Any Morally sound and economically viable system of education needs technical support all the way from top to bottom. Simple mechanical and rote learning of anything may be good for some individual drives to be fulfilled immediately. But those drives as a whole may not be befitting to save a nation from ignorance, moral decadence and arrogance. Thus we can hardly overemphasize the importance of building a comprehensive philosophical foundation based on some universal and Islamic values directed to creating humble souls with cutting edge technological know-how beneficial for the entire ummah, human race, and major causes of environmental protection. The major objective of writing this paper is to articulate some of the challenges we have been confronting in our education system as a whole and to endeavor finding a few approaches to address at least some of those problems to help ourselves in making us better equipped to bring happiness, prosperity, and humility around us all, and also to keep trying to leave the planet a better place for the generations to come for their safety, security, and spiritual salvation in worldly life and hereafter.

Keywords and concepts: *Globalization, Islamization, Educational Philosophy, Islamic Moral Values, Balance between Body and Soul, Creation of Human Resources, Interests of ummah, Survival of Human Race,*

Introduction

It is now quite fashionable to claim that we live in an information age. And we love to call our earth as Global Village¹. Moreover, we

¹ **Global Village** (GV) is a concept related to the process of intense globalization of all aspects of international affairs. Marshall McLuhan in his famous book titled *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964) has popularized the concept of GV based on the miracles created by worldwide information technology and all kinds of media outlets. Still today we can simply take the term GV as a metaphor rather than a reality of reaching to everywhere by everyone at his or her sweet will. Of course, in that Internet Age and electronic dominance over everything physical distance is not a factor in reaching out to the public at large, who might appear very powerful and sometime completely helpless to do anything about their surroundings and fortunes. In the

propagate that as educators our main task is to create knowledge and disseminate it among the students. On the other hand, because of our education and knowledge we can easily claim ourselves as civilized human beings. If I am not educated, then my claim to be knowledgeable, creative, and productive may not be taken seriously at all by any powerful or influential quarter. People in different governmental circles of establishment and administration may not at all consider me to be worthy for any job that might be beneficial or helpful for any good cause or task. However, if I ask who makes me educated, I cannot expect to hear one concrete or definitive answer. In our time of globalization now we can give almost exclusive role to the educational institutions, including universities, to make us educated.

Thus we can simply say that people with educational and professional degrees are the best educated people among us. Can we take it granted that highly educated and skilled people are the best educated people among us? Do the degrees and certificates awarded by the world-reputed educational institutions and universities can make us genuinely educated in terms of honesty, integrity, patriotic behaviors, and commitments to the higher causes of humanity and humility both at national and international levels? Do the educated folks are posing less danger and threat to the ongoing efforts of the preservation of human dignity, racial equality, women's rights, of caring children, sick, and old-aged people, preservation of environment and eco-systems, and so-forth? Why the academic degrees and governmental powers and accumulated wealth, not the self-less contribution to the society, family, and state should be regarded as the final measurements or yardsticks determining educational status of human being? This paper will address some of these issues along with a vital question how far our educational system should be value-based i.e., morally and spiritually sound to tame our greedy mind and instinct at individual as well as collective levels.

Classification of Education

Not long ago we could divide our education system into religious and secular or Islamic and Western. Now division of education into such classification is rather an easier job. However, these kinds of divisions

areas of genuine education and intellectual development and reaping the benefits of modern amenities, sociological upliftment, and cultural enlightenment of the entire human race GV is more of a myth rather than reality.

of education in religious and secular lines cannot help us in identifying any real problem related to education, information, knowledge, and so forth. Classification of education has now been following a general rule of dividing skill and professionalism in the line of specific areas of training and expertise.² Either you are a physician or an astronaut, an engineer or a lawyer; you have to deal with some knowledge of basic sciences. The area of basic sciences is called natural science without which no areas of knowledge can stand by themselves. Closeness between the natural and social sciences has been becoming increasingly intimate and complex to deal with at the occasions of their application in real material life.

In this highly specialized world, our individual area of specialization has now become very precise, narrow, and apparently unconnected to rest of the areas of knowledge and expertise. However, at the time of its application it is very much interrelated with almost all other areas of studies and knowledge. Is it a paradox that the more I like to be specialized in any individual area of study, the more ignorant would I remain in all other areas of knowledge? Here we are not talking about different areas of natural or social sciences. We are trying to take a note of our specialization within our own field of expertise. A medical engineer is not at all a physician-like doctor in any consideration. But the best surgeons of the world cannot work without the direct help and cooperation of a good team of medial engineers. The same scenario of interdependence of various types of professionals with diverse expertise can be observed now in every field of knowledge.

“Included in creation, human life has a tendency
towards progress that arises from his tendency toward

² “The first integrated solution to the Kantian problem and the Cartesian dilemma was provided by Max Weber (1864-1920). Weber was a German economist and historian. His methodological thinking was mainly influenced by the “Methodenstreit” in economics between the leader of the German historical school Gustav Schmoller (1838-1917) and the leader of the Austrian school of economics Carl Menger (1840-1921). This debate about the correct methods started in 1883 after Menger’s strong attack on Schmoller historical school. Menger proposed an economic approach as a pure theory, which should be based on general universal concept of human action, antecedent conditions, and a deductive method. Schmoller on the other hand argued for an economic approach based on concrete historical on the macro level, and an inductive method. Weber took an intermediate position in this debate (Fusfeld 1887: 454)” In: Etzrod, Christian, “Combined Methodology of the Natural and Social Sciences.” In: *Ritsumeikan Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3, 2005, pp. 112-3.

perfection. This tendency toward progress becomes possible through opinions and theories being built upon one another over the course of centuries. Opinions and theories develop by means of the results attained-facts; then axioms or principles become established, and means to implement the principles learnt are invented. Established facts and principles impregnate the seeds of sciences that emanate from the “ribs” of creation in the womb of time, where they grow through experience and experimentations.”³

The best judges and lawyers of any country may become simply helpless in analyzing the engineering or medical data downloaded from any information system without adequate, honest, and professional judgment provided by competent authorities and personalities in respective fields. Under these circumstances, professional degrees in any particular field of study and knowledge must have various organic and functional relationships with many other fields of information-system, expertise-development, and knowledge.

However, the interdependence between diverse areas of studies and knowledge in no way undermine the role and importance of specialization in any particular area of study and expertise. A jurist may not become an engineer or a doctor so easily and a reverse argument is also equally true. But cooperation between them may lead us to discovery of new horizons of truth that may rather be used more effectively in making our society better in terms of its humane nature and productivity, and distribution system.

“With sociology the verdict is quite different...In a popular introductory volume, *The study of sociology (1873)*, Spencer argues eloquently for the recognition and development of the new science. If determinism is correct in psychology, there must be regularities of cause and effect in social phenomenon; and a thorough student of man and society will not be content with merely chronological history, like Livy’s nor with a

³ Nursi, Bediuzzaman Said, *The Reasonings: A Key to Understanding the Quran in Eloquence*, Tughra Books, First Edition, 2008, p. 14-15.

biographical history like Carlyle's; how will look in human history for those general lines of development, those causal sequences, those illuminating correlations, which transform the wilderness of facts into the chart of science.....Society, he believes, is an organism, having organs of nutrition, circulation, coordination and reproduction, vary much as in the case of individuals."⁴

The organic relationship between mankind and environment is not unknown to a modern man. However, with modern technology, present-day human race appears to be a major threat to the very existence of our planet. Individual greed and unscrupulous ruling elite has been posing dangerous threat to the entire eco-systems that surround us everywhere. Moreover, destruction of societal ethos, cultural ways of living, balances in distribution of wealth and resources by the privileged few is unimaginably widespread and colossal. Without some kind of overhauling the entire education system including the way we exploit one another for just material gains, we cannot hope much improvement in any of these concerned areas of our common interests and destiny.

Major Objectives of Education

The major function of any educational system may sound almost the same. But at individual, group, and collective levels, persuasion of education, knowledge, skill, and wisdom may be driven by so many different types of purposes and objectives that cannot be confined within some kind compartmentalization. The mere cost-benefit analysis of any causal relationship and its subsequent impact on overall benefits and losses of a society cannot be the major indicator of progress and prosperity as an integrated whole.

However, in course of interactions, any society or state is always in need of a good number of specialists and professionals to satisfy the demands of the citizenry. Many argue that human needs and necessities know no bounds. This argument may apparently be very true, but it does not command any absoluteness either. The crave for getting valuable things, wealth, money, and powers is limitless, but

⁴ Durant, Will, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, 1933, pp. 376, 377, 378

human necessity (*darura*)⁵ has always been constrained by so many limitations that we often even cannot foresee.

Capability of foreseeing the necessity of the entire society, state or *ummah*⁶ is not easy to acquire. It is a complex process of gaining knowledge, experience, and wisdom. However, none can or should challenge to the God-Almighty's full supremacy over the entire universe and beyond. "The sovereignty on that day will absolutely belong to the all merciful, (which He will exercise then with no intermediary veil of cause and effect). It will be a hard day for the unbelievers."⁷ The objective of any education or educational system in its fundamental or broader connotation is supposed to deserve an extensive inspiration of creative and wisdom-based transmission of heavenly knowledge to mankind.

It is more important that not only handful specialists would see the necessity of a particular group or community, but most members of the concerned community would be able to foresee the basic needs of masses and prudent ways and means to meet those necessities. This can be regarded as one of the fundamental objectives of the entire education system.

In general, education makes human soul enlightened. However, many may claim that such a spiritual enlightenment is neither necessary nor can have any tangible goal for any educational policy. If something is not tangible or not attainable under some material measurement, then that should not serve as a purpose of some state policies, be it educational or otherwise. Apparently, that is a very strong argument for not taking any step to address any spiritual needs of any society. But in regard to cultural enlightenment of any group of people,

⁵ Apparently this is a way to make an unlawful act as a permissible one for the time being. In reality it is a breathing space for a weak and incapable believer to live up to his faith despite the fact that he or she needs to break the boundaries of permissible acts under the *sharia* law.

⁶ In general Muslims believe that Muslims of all nationalities and ethnic groups form a united community of followers of Islam i. e., *ummah*. In other words, all Muslims of the planet taken together can be regarded as Islamic *ummah* (*ummat al-mu'minin*) of the whole world. In literary sense *ummah* refers to a kind of union of nations. This is why in the western literature *ummah* has been taken as a term to be replaced by Arabism or Pan-Islamism.

⁷ Quran, 25: 26.

collective or community, we cannot argue in a similar fashion. Problem here is not the cultural issues by themselves; challenging task is how to define the cultural standard and its growth or development.

The standard of culture of a state or nation matters hugely for the political and economic development as well. What type of culture we are talking about here? Is it the lifestyle adopted by the majority of the people of a nation? What is, then, lifestyle itself? We all have born in this world in almost in a similar fashion by following similar kinds of natural and social rules. Death is also inevitable for all of us. We may lead a very successful and unsuccessful life on earth depending on our choices and the ways of pursuit of happiness. But successes and failures of life cannot be measured by only one yardstick. Who makes the yardsticks of successes and failures of life? This is the most vital question for any education system.

An individual claiming *taqwah*⁸ (piousness in thoughts and deeds) as the main purpose of his or her education cannot use the same yardstick of success in life with another person whose main goal in life is to increase the bank balance at home and abroad with different banks and companies. Accumulation of capital in any group of individuals, groups, and communities by itself is not a sinful act. But the ways of accumulation of wealth are allowed and how they might be used may become too vicious a circle leading a nation to moral bankruptcy.

As a consequence of that a whole region and even the entire humanity may suffer tremendously. Maybe at present also we have been witnessing same phenomenon all over the world. This is the failure of the modern education and cultural systems, and yardsticks of successes and failures that we have been using to evaluate human endeavors on earth to bring happiness and prosperity ay our own home forgetting the dare need and necessity of survival of other human beings and species living around us.

⁸ Linguistically *Taqwa* means forbearance, fear and abstinence, but in the Islamic terminology, *Taqwa* has comprehensive meaning. *Taqwa* is a higher state of honesty, decency, and commitment for doing good deeds and abstaining from all kinds of sins, crimes, and wrongdoings. This is a permanent state of God-Almighty's presence in heart with an active quest for Knowledge, inventions, and implementation of those for the betterment of the entire human race and environment.

Human Resource Development

Without proper and timely development of human resources, no country or nation can thrive just by using its natural and mineral resources. The glaring proof of this argument is the level of development of the human resources and their misuse and abuse in many Muslim and Third world countries. In general, Muslim countries are abundant with unthinkable amount of natural and mineral resources, but poor state of human resource development has made most Muslim countries backward in terms of many parameters of life. Is it a problem of using wrong, flawed, incorrect or incoherent measurements of successes and failures of nation-building and contribution to the civilization development? Or is it simply an utter indifferent attitude to the vital affairs of our own people and nations in particular and the humankind in general?

“About 9 million children in Arab countries are unable to go to school at all; a huge number of children also do not attend secondary schools, jeopardizing economic growth and sustainable development. Arab countries do not allocate sufficient funds to research and development; this naturally affects innovation and invention. In most Arab states the funds allocated to research and development activities represent no more than 0.3 8 9

Competitive Job Market and Quality Education

We cannot expect that millions of university-students would work harder just to obtain good grades in their examinations without knowing well that those grades will speak for themselves in the competitive job market. In many Muslim countries still educational institutions operate for the sake of their own good or even just for their survival as governmental organizational set-up or governmentally approved educational institutes. Those educational institutions have very little to do with creating efficient workforce capable of undertaking specific jobs at specific workplace that may have their own job description. Not that the terms and conditions of the jobs are completely unknown to the job-seekers, the main problem is how to transmit the skill and know-how at the educational institution before entering into the real job to be undertaken after the completion of formal education.

Length of formal education should not be that long as it is now in many countries. Some prestigious educational institutions, including world renowned universities are capable of marketing their degrees and certificates efficiently that in reality has very little to do with the quality of the human resources they produce. This is in fact already an unfair conventional system that with the name of the university, the credential of the students carries a much higher weight automatically than job-seekers with less prestigious universities and institutions.

Very often native job-seekers with the degrees of less prestigious native universities get less attention from the employers, while foreigners with foreign degrees get the job unfairly in the name of special type of consultancy. This has been becoming something of a common phenomenon in many Muslim and Third World countries. Former colonial empires have been taking advantages in this regard and making their higher education a commodity to be bought and sold like any other product in the marketplace. We are now just emulating that colonial system of education without asking ourselves serious questions about the quality of home-grown human resources.

Apart from the scientific technicalities and knowledge derived from various schools of arts and social sciences, we need to impart good human qualities in the hearts and minds of the students. Why does every society need capable and honest professionals? Societal needs demand higher professional efficiency to be sellable and affordable. Striking balance between care-givers' price and care-takers' satisfaction is indeed a challenging task to accomplish. This is why we need to create a flow of creating sufficient number of capable professionals in every sectors of economy, including service sectors. Catering the need of the creation of avenues, human resource development is not a goal by itself. Creation of worthy citizens for any state has many purposes other than just giving or selling services. Ultimate goal is to produce quality human mind capable of thinking outside one's own box and be compassionate to fellow-citizens and human beings at large. Creation of inter-generational professional capabilities dedicated to the protection of national, environmental, and global interests throughout the entire life both at workplace and beyond is a pre-condition for all kinds of successes for all concerned parties.

However, neither patriotism nor honesty can be tested through any examination at formal school setting; it is the reality check that makes real difference in the efficiency of a professional or just a working man

or woman earning livelihood. It is presumed that highly professionals placed in prestigious posts would be less corrupt, but at present such an assumption appears to be quite untrue. Less qualified people engage in corruption to earn extra money bearing the burden of expenses of living, while crave for luxurious life-style makes the high-ups of our societies utterly corrupt and dishonest. The corrupt and dishonest sections of policy-makers can easily create many serious hindrances in the ways of earning livelihood for many millions of people.

Not the simple urge for getting economic benefits has led us to a society of global migration. It is now estimated that about 250 million people are migrating from country to country for getting jobs and earning livelihood every year. These migrants are capable of generating about 500 billion US dollars remittance to their native countries.¹² Their earning capabilities per year has been estimated more than a trillion dollars. Moreover, the movements of migrants and diasporas from one country to another also generate new energy in cultural and educational exchanges, which ultimately push the envelope of intellectual heights of human civilization.

Nation Building as an Agenda of Good Education

A great paradox of our so-called globalized system is that we are now more individualistic in terms of our attitude and life-style than even before. Many of us are quite happy to put the entire nation in deep crisis, endemic poverty, and wide-spread corruption and nepotism for their own financial interest. How far individualism should be blamed for this unprecedented selfish pattern of rule of our time? Even the collective goals of many groups are often detrimental to the national and *ummaite* interests of making peoples of different nationalities and ethnicities politically prosperous, economically independent, socially congenial, and culturally advanced. In many countries, national policies and educational strategies are not at all prudent or not even driven by any farsighted goals other than just creating ways and means to earn money on indulge in corruption.

Market-dynamics of creating jobs and putting professionals and working force of country in right places in right time are by themselves very good indicators of doing well with economic growth and development. How far those dynamics are related directly to the

¹² See Website of the International Organization for Migrations.

wellbeing of educational and cultural systems of a country is a difficult question to answer.

There is a universal logic of demand and supply relationship in almost every aspect of life. However, that so-called universal logic also has its own limitations. There might not be a great deal of enthusiasm in introducing and developing a quality education system in any particular country in a particular period of time. But every nation needs a higher standard of human resources as its economic development progresses with more scientific and technological advancement.

Implementation of more advanced and comprehensive economic planning is not possible without introduction of latest technology. But none of these objectives can be reached without the skilled manpower. Without the honesty and integrity of the policy-makers, urban-planners, designers and architects of all kinds, no advance technology can do any big help in bringing the educated work force in industrial and manufacturing sectors, which has been serving as a pre-condition of running a modern urbanized society. Finding yourself as urban dweller without adequate amenities of life may seriously jeopardize the very minimum decency of life required to be virtuous in daily lives. This is indeed a challenge to our future generation to come and their opening to a minimalist virtuous life worthy of living.

Contribution to Civilization-Building Endeavors

Keeping some nations and societies terribly behind in terms of economic progress and technological advancement, as a whole *ummah* or human race cannot achieve a higher standard of education, culture, peaceful co-existence, and maintenance of civility, humility, and ecosystems of all kinds that surrounds us. On the other hand, if some nations deliberately choose to cling to backwardness, ignorance, and arrogance, then their territories and resources would be occupied and looted by the foreign invaders as we have been witnessing during the entire period of colonialism and ongoing neo-colonialism.

The overall progress of human civilization is an integrated whole as an idea of development. Pushing some nations and countries to a sub-standard life-style, behavior, and mannerism, we have been taking serious risk of bringing down the entire human race to a cultural decadence not compatible with normal human decency and dignity. How come two billion people around the world practically lead a sub-

standard life with endemic poverty, lawlessness, and very poor standard of education? The sheer number of people living below the poverty line with no clean water, no minimum hygiene and sanitary conditions, no electricity, no access to good institutional education is a glaring example that we live in a chaotic world order and global system incapable of giving the right voices to the millions of voiceless people.

“Nigeria is Africa’s largest oil producing country, making it one of America’s biggest crude oil suppliers. But underneath the production of oil, lies a 50-year long brutal exploitation that has destroyed the ecosystem and affected the livelihood of millions of people.”¹³

In this regard Nigeria is not alone or only example. Situation is very similar with Mexico, Venezuela, Iraq, and many other oil-rich countries. Interesting enough that at present we love to blame only some superficial Muslim religious biasness for this devastating affect all over the world.

Empowerment of Poor, Women, and Underprivileged

In some countries, for some institutions and individual groups, it is quite fashionable to give a lot of lip services to the causes of women’s rights, empowerment of poor and underprivileged folks. In reality not many states are genuinely serious in safeguarding the interests of the entire society. The interests of the entire society and state are either ignored or misconceived as ideas to take care of the less unfortunate segments of population.

“The framers of the original Constitution were remarkably unrepresentative of the people as a whole. They were not chosen in any way sanctioned by prior national law, and a majority of the population, including women, slaves, and the poor, was excluded from the processes that selected them and ratified the constitution...Quite apart from these defects, fairness cannot explain why people now should be governed by the detailed political convictions of officials elected long

¹³ <http://stream.aljazeera.com/story/pph>

ago, when popular morality, economic circumstances, and almost everything else was very different.”¹⁴

In fact, the ideas of Welfare State ¹⁵ is either a myth or misconstrued in a way that we cannot hope to create an in-built pro-people system in catering the needs of the women, poor, and underprivileged people of any society. In fact, practically no state has been fully addressing the systemic problems they are in because the concern state machinery are engaged in either military build-up or just helping making more profits to extract more capital investments from the home-grown exploitative class and their foreign allies.

Weaker and smaller states have increasingly becoming helpless in making their state policies independently either because of the intense pressure of the stronger neighbors or multi-national companies. Without protecting the interests of big capitals coming from abroad along with the profits of local suppliers, state institutions feel vulnerability to collect their revenues to pay salaries to their own employees.

¹⁴ Dworkin, Ronald, *Law's Empire*, Fontana Press, London, 1991, p. 364.

¹⁵ The concept of Welfare State is no more a widely acceptable notion of governance. The idea of limited government has now become quite fashionable in the Western countries and many Eastern and Muslim countries have been following the directive of global capitalism and worldwide free-market dynamics of making profit rather than serving the future generations. During the second half of the nineteenth century many German authors tried to make the idea of Welfare State popular and the term *Sozialstaat*, had been used as a Social State of matured Statehood. In Germany in the name of *Sozialpolitiker* i. e., socially oriented and devoted politicians could be found in many pages of German history that did not long last. Pushing the Germans to the warfare one after another and making Hitler a historical legacy, English people named the German concept of State as Warfare State and claim that London had invented the idea of Welfare State, which is now simply a myth having no real impact for the ordinary or working masses anywhere in the world. However, only Scandinavian countries can claim that they still are sincerely trying to make themselves as Welfare States. Overall educational policies went wrong almost everywhere. As a result we can see how a Norwegian, Anders Behring Breivik, a 32-year-old far right Christian expressed his hatred against multiculturalism in Norway on July 22, 2011 by killing about 80 innocent young people of his own nationality. Prior to committing those cold-blooded killings in the name of saving Christianity from the hands of Muslims in Europe Breivik had posted a 1,500-page manifesto calling for a Crusade against the so-called aggression of Islam, Cultural Marxism, and Feminism in Europe. All kinds of extremism and fanaticism are just an outcome of flawed educational system.

State has increasing becoming just a revenue collector from the corrupt and rich people engage in unfair politics and business practices. From physicians to the lawyers, from politicians to the traders, and from casino owners to the match-fixing circles of all kinds of sports are the main customers and beneficiaries of the state mechanism opted for all kinds of morally value-neutral drives for big dazzling urbanized projects survival of which would be under serious scrutiny, if a genuine pro-people education system can be brought in place.

Compatibility between the Good Words and Deeds

Hypocrisy is the norm now both in national and international politics and in the formulation of numerous plans and programs apparently viewed as progressive ways of protecting human health, human rights, women's rights, and the rights of children, poor, and starving people around the globe. In reality words of our leaders do not match to their deeds, which may appear good, but disastrous for the interests of the people brought into the deadly spider-net of vulgar sexism and consumerism.

Many Muslim nations are also now easy prey of aggressive marketing of pornography, gambling, racketeering of drug and women trafficking. Just by tightening the belts around the policing system and harshening the criminal justice system, we cannot hope to do any headway in bringing moral values within state machinery and education system. We desperately need to change our attitude toward others' rights and wellbeing.

In life there are some very simple unavoidable truths we need to appreciate for our own wellbeing. We simply cannot ignore them by arguing that we do not have any responsibility to look after the people who are lagging behind in every test of parameter of modern life and amenities. At the end we are all the integral part of one society and one integrated human race. Denial to this universal truth has many consequences in our activities and actions. Many of us appear to be too naïve to appreciate fully that by harming others we ultimately bound to bear the burnt of the damages we have inflicted on others.

Our short-sightedness in reviewing our own actions is a source of many malice we consciously and unconsciously throwing in the ways of happiness and prosperity of our co-workers, neighbors, and people at large. This is a sadist mentality we acquire within our unfair and unjust family system and then make those mental diseases incurable in

the course of our institutional education system. One of the teachings here we cannot introduce is that we would never say things which we do not practice.

However, no positive progress should be ignored and future steps toward further progressive legal and educational development need to be put on the stronger and solid grounds based on reality as well taking into consideration the goal-based rights in the future to come. Most of the time, governmental machineries are of exploitative character and treat ordinary people very unfairly. But waging an isolated and disorganized ideological or religious war against the prevailing economic system and political regime may backfire to the ongoing progress in education and development.¹⁶

Challenges to be Appreciated with Full Seriousness

Ever increasing gap between the rich and poor at national levels and between the states and regions is just one of many glaring examples how we have been managing our resources and national treasures and allow a tiny section of people to dictate a life-style practically hated or disliked by any humble soul.

You do not need to be a noble person to think that millions of children left out in the street without any education and minimum sustenance to survive is indeed a curse for all nations and peoples of all ethnic groups. Here race, religion, and gender should not have any consideration. Only concern should be that the child needs education, food, clothing, and love from others, who are either responsible for them or just happens to be in the neighborhood and in power of making a difference to their lives.¹⁷ Generation gap has increasingly becoming an unforgivable crime committed by the policy makers and people operating and exercising state powers and resources supposed to be used for the overall emancipation for all.

“The name of the religion that God Almighty revealed
through all Messengers is Islam. Just as the laws

¹⁶ See for details, Khan, Maimul Ahsan, *The Basics of Jurisprudence: Law, Politics, and Morality*, Dhaka, 2010, pp. 392-413.

¹⁷ National Professor Abdur Razzaq rightly says that “the prospects of the nation, are in the details of the plans and programs concerning this rather small section (child) of the population” in Razzaq, Abdur, *Bangladesh: State of the Nation*, University of Dhaka, First edition, 1981, p. 20.

ordering and operating the universe remain the same and constant, and just as all people have the same basic characteristics, essential needs, and final destination regardless of when and where they live, it is natural for religion to be based upon the same essentials of belief, worship, and morality.”¹⁸

Challenges to be Faced Without Hypocrisy

After providing education and training to the younger generation, all kinds of state and non-state actors need to give a comprehensive attention to the ways and means to create jobs for all capable people willing to contribute to his or her family wellbeing or just to make his or her live worthy of living in terms of creativity and enjoyment of bounties provided by the God-Almighty.

The Prophet of Islam (sm) says: “Wisdom is like lost property of believers. Wherever they find it, they have a greater right to take it”.¹⁹

There are so many gifts from God to make our life comfortable on earth. No one should have any monopoly over any bounty of Nature, which is at the service of the entire mankind and other creatures all the time. A grave misconception is that we cannot do anything about our own miseries and the troubles we are in because of our own faults or misdeeds of others. It is true that there are some incurable diseases about which we can do almost nothing except put our figure crossed for their save exist from this planet. Similarly only a very few social and economic crises may put us in complete disarray.

Most of the natural disasters and environmental degradation are our own creation. Keeping balance in personal and family life is rather a very tough job to handle with success all the time. But in national life, with collective wisdom and knowledge we are supposed to be more prudent, beneficial, and humble as a nation-builder, educator, and preacher, as well as a catalyst of good will and protection of environment. However, individually we can do very little in any of these respects, if the state policies are not right. Without farsighted state policies and right kinds of educational systems we as individual

¹⁸ Buyukcelebi, Ismail, *Living in the Shade of Islam*, The Light, New Jersey, 2005, p.107.

¹⁹ Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, “Ilm” 19

citizens will not be able to make any difference to our national, regional, and international life.

“Hizmet for Gulen implies that a person devotes his or her life to Islam, serving for the benefit of others, which is beneficial for life after death. Gulen is a very restless person who is always asking himself if he might do more for God. Death is always present in his preaching to his followers, and the fear of judgment day is the motivation to work hard.”²⁰

Conclusion

Apparently every education system should have a set of concrete philosophical grounds to begin with. It is not that difficult to give some explanations why we need to educate ourselves and others. There is a proverb that it is always better to live with an educated enemy than dealing with an ignorant friend.

However, it has been increasingly difficult to recognize who is really educated and who is not. Neither the literacy rate nor the standard of higher education can now reveal anything substantial about the state of affairs of any nation, groups or individuals. Rather the economic condition and the rate of employment may send better signals about the level of socio-political, economic, and cultural development of concerned states and societies. Is it a good or bad phenomenon that instead of looking at people in terms of their educational level we are now more concerned about their economic conditions and employment situation? The average productivity rate and buying capacity of people now counts first to determine who are more progressive and who are ignorant.

However, the issues of human resource development have been occupying very important place in the check list of all governmental agencies around the world. Here again success rate depends on the employment rate of educated people in highly paid jobs. Why, then, we need to talk so much about the philosophy of education at all? In the past, it was believed that just acquiring good skill and technological know-how would bring sustainable prosperity to any society. However, it has now already been proven to be very one-sided

²⁰ Bekim Agai, “The Gulen Movement’s Islamic Ethics of Education”, In: M. Hakan Yavus and John L. Esposito, (eds) *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gulen Movement*, Syracuse University Press, 2003, p. 59.

look to the very approach to the sustainable economic development. The enlightenment of human soul and major goals of educational upbringing of human beings cannot be achieved by just distributing degrees of reputed universities and institutions. Without moral values at the core of all kinds of education, ultimately we would lose our dignity as human beings, who by their inherent qualities suppose to take care of others instead of exploiting other human beings at random just only for material gains or monetary profits.

In substantive matters, human beings are spiritual as well as material entities at the same time. By denying one, we may lose the attributes related to others as well. This is very similar to physical well being of human beings. Without adequate amount of food for the nourishment of human bodies, we cannot hope for a normal life to live. But food and drinks alone cannot make us fit to carry on our duties as human being as many aspects of mental health are much more important than just intake of foods on regular basis. Social interests of any group of people and public interest of any state cannot be protected just by imposing some national security laws. The educational and cultural levels a community can achieve and sustain make huge difference in securing public interests and national security for the overall emancipation of a state or nation. It is only a balanced educational system that addresses the necessity of human body and soul; at the same time can make a nation fit for challenging the problems at hand and overcome the hurdles of deterring the evil-doers to make the entire society or state bankrupt economically, politically, and morally.

