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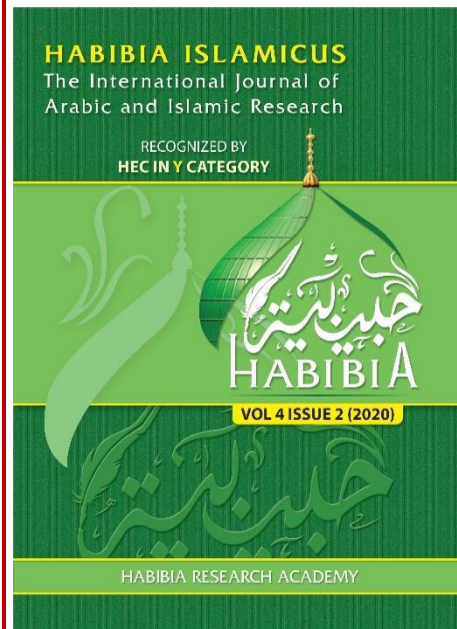
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**TOPIC:**

**CRITICAL EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, PURPOSE AND PRACTICES IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN**

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## CRITICAL EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, PURPOSE AND PRACTICES IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN

Altaf Hussain      Najmunnisa Khan.

### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to find out the purpose of Islamic Schools and to investigate that if the practices are aligned with the purpose. Farther more to explore the challenges, Islamic school's administrations are facing and how they are coping with these challenges. Finding of the study suggest that being a Muslim and being a Pakistani citizen, these Institutes are offering education which is fulfilling the educational need of the society. Their purposes, curriculum and other daily practices are very much aligned with the constitution and the Ideology of Islamic republic of Pakistan. However, the goal of a complete framework for a balance Islamic Educational System, which was presented and discussed in the six world conferences on Muslim education held in various Islamic Countries, after almost fifty years, has not been completely achieved yet. Islamic Schools have managed to adopt modern educational trends in education, such as student centered, cooperative, and activity-based teaching and learning. Islamic schools are working individually to achieve their goals, they need to work together for the common purposes as Ummah to take benefits from the expertise of each other and can save their resource.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Islamization of knowledge, Islamic education, Islamic schools, Faith based schools.*

### INTRODUCTION:

According the Pew Research Center, Islam is the second largest and fastest growing religion in the world, the study estimates that in the second half of 21st century Islam will be the largest religion in the world.<sup>1</sup>

All Islamic countries has a Western type educational system up to university level.<sup>2</sup> “The current educational system in the Muslim countries is an imitation of Western education which is secular in nature”.<sup>3</sup> With increasing number of Muslims all over the world the demand for an educational system according to the vision and philosophy of Islam is also increasing not only in Pakistan but also in the west, The rise of private Islamic schools that are intended to provide an “Islamic” alternative to the mainstream secular educational system has been noticed in every major city in the west.<sup>4</sup> For instance, in Britain a significant number of Muslim parents are inclined to send their children to Islamic Schools.<sup>5</sup> In this study. Islamic School means an educational institute that provides formal contemporary education integrated with Islamic values or formal education with additional Islamic value-based curriculum. These institutes are registered with the education and literacy department of government of Sindh and affiliated with Board of Secondary Education Karachi, Cambridge Universty Board UK or any other educational board recognized by the government of Pakistan. To meet the demands of the society, Islamic Educational Institutes are being established, for example, there are 660+ Branches of Dar-e-Arqam School with more than 175,000 Students,<sup>6</sup> [188 branches](#) of [Iqra Roza-tul-Atfal Trust with more than 80,000 students](#),<sup>7</sup> [36 branches](#) of Usman Public

School [with more than 10,000 students](#),<sup>8</sup> [and 17 branches](#) of The Inspiration School Karachi.<sup>9</sup> [There are many other with large number of students](#).

Education is seen as means of transmitting knowledge, skills, expertise, values, civilization, language, culture, customs and religion from one generation to the other.<sup>10</sup> Western educational system which is mostly followed in all over the world including Islamic countries, has many differences with Islamic Education System, the world has become a global village, managing these differences is a challenging task for the administration of Islamic Schools.

**Background of the Study:** There has been a significant growth in number of schools as well as the proportion of students enrolled.<sup>11</sup> The demand for education is high in Pakistan, reflected in the mushrooming of private schools.<sup>12</sup> The need for private educational institutions is enhancing all over the world. With the growth in private sector a noticeable share of faith-based Institutes is also enhancing in the west.<sup>13</sup>

A large number of children getting enrolled in private schools for quality education but with that they are receiving secular culture, values and they are adopting the secular way of life, Parents who want quality education for their children have no choice, either they compromise their values or the quality education and privilege that comes with receiving education from well-known private schools or institutions of higher education.

**Problem Statement:** There is a need to study the practical aspects of Islamic schools on ground with reference to the theory in literature. According to researcher knowledge no study has been published on Islamic schools in Pakistani context.

The purpose of this study is to find out the reasons behind the increasing number of Islamic schools, why they exist, what is the nature of Islamic Schools Including philosophy, curriculum, teaching methods and distinctiveness and how they are practically satisfying the need of students, other stake holders and as a whole, need of the society. how their practices are aligned with their purpose, what global educational challenges are they facing and how they are coping with these challenges.

**Research Objectives:** To find out the perceptions of Islamic School's administration about the existence of these schools.

- To find out the alignment between the purpose of Islamic Schools and their practices.
- To find out what are the global educational challenges that administration of Islamic Schools is facing.
- To find out how the administration of Islamic Schools are coping with global educational challenges.

**Research Questions:** What are the perceptions of Islamic School's administration about the existence of these schools?

- How the practices of Islamic schools are aligned with their purpose?

- What are the global educational challenges that administration of Islamic schools is facing?
- How the administration of Islamic Schools is coping with the global educational challenges?

**Scope of Research:** This study provides insights about the new trends of Islamic schools in Pakistani society to educationist, policy makers and Islamic schools administration. It helps administration of Islamic schools to analyze their practice in accordance with their basic purpose and with global educational practices to make positive changes and improve their practices if needed.

**Significance of the Study:** Islamic schools are new phenomena, much research has been done on the madrasa education system of Islamic education, but according to the researcher knowledge no research has been published on the purpose and practices of Islamic schools in Pakistani context, the existing Islamic Schools and their students are large in number as stated in the introduction.

**Literature Review:** In this chapter the researcher has presented the existing research about the philosophical background, reasons and purpose of Islamic schools on national level in Pakistan and on International level in the world. The researcher has also presented the literature definition of key words like Islamic schools, Islamic education, Tarbiyah, Tādīb, Tālīm and some important concepts like Concept of man, Concept knowledge. Aims of Islamic Education and Global Educational Challenges for Islamic Schools in existing literature to gather background information of the study.

**Philosophical Background of Islamic Education:** In order to understand the need for Islamic schools or Islamic education we need to understand the philosophy of Islamic education, its differences from western philosophy of education and the distinctiveness of Islamic Education System.

**Islamic Worldview/ Philosophy:** For the formulation of education, it is very important to understand the philosophical foundation on which the whole system is based, Sayed Muhammad Naqeeb Al-attas explained every detail of the philosophical foundation of Islamic Education System and the aim it wants to realize. In this chapter preference is given to Syed Muhammad Naqeeb Al-Attas, because he has presented the most complete model of Islamic education. Professor Wan Daud considered Syed Muhammad Naqeeb Al-Attas, the first and a very Important figure in the contemporary Muslim world to define, conceptualize, and elaborate the meaning, scope and content of Muslim education in a systematic and philosophical manner.<sup>14</sup>

“From the perspective of Islam, a ‘worldview’ is not merely the mind’s view of the physical world and of man’s historical, social, political and cultural involvement in it.”<sup>15</sup> Muslim educationists have presented a very clear distinction between Islamic philosophy or world view and secular world view. Islamic worldview is the vision of reality that talks about not only the existence but also the reason why it exists? According to Al-Attas,

(2005), What is meant by ‘worldview’, according to the perspective of Islam, is then the vision of reality and truth that appears before our mind’s eye revealing what existence is all about; for it is the world of existence in its totality that Islam is projecting. Thus by ‘worldview’ we must mean *ruyāt al-islam li al-wujūd*.<sup>16</sup> The differences between western and Islamic worldview is that, westerns see the world only as a physical world without relating it to the spiritual world, on the other hand Muslim although give importance to the physical world but they prefer spiritual aspect of the human life. Muslim take into account the visible as well as invisible world, these two parts make the perspective of a whole life. The world view of Islam represents the metaphysical belief and answer to the question of what is real? And what is true?<sup>17</sup> Al-Attas (2005) argues that, Islam does not believe in the dichotomy of profane and sacred, Islam concede to both this world (*al-dunya*) and the hereafter (*al-ākhirah*) and both are not separated but the hereafter has more importance and preference because of its ultimate and final significance compare to this world. The *Dunya* is not neglected because it is the preparation stage for the hereafter.<sup>18</sup> Islam has a very clear justified answers to the philosophical questions “who am I? What is right? What is wrong? And what is my destiny?” this very clear philosophy must be incorporated in the Islamic education system. On the other hand, western civilization is constantly changing having no clear reality to fix its vision on and no valid scripture to confirm its actions with, no perfect human example to follow as a role model. Each and every individual must look for his or her identity and meaning in their life.<sup>19</sup>

The result of ever changing of the worldview and not having an absolute ultimate destination is the reason for western civilization’s confusion and a critical problem of identity as Al-attas states; Western society is thus divided by gaps between the three generations: the youth, the middle-aged, and the old. Each separate generation moves within the confines of its own attempts at finding a meaning for its own self and life in an ageless search for the answers to the questions Who am I? And what is my destiny?<sup>20</sup>

Because of the continues change in western society the youth who is experiencing change in their lives consider the values handed over to them by their fathers, whom are now middle aged, no longer Important and relevant to their life style. So, the middle aged are not the role model for the youth to seek guidance from and they demand their freedom to find their own destiny. The middle aged also realizes that the values they chose in their youth did not help them in guiding their lives and they know the reality of that they are also unable to guide their sons and surrender freedom which the youth demands. Hoping that they may find a way where they the middle aged failed.<sup>21</sup>

The youth whom demand freedom also know that they need guidance which is not available even from their parents. The situation creates uncertainty and confusion in the youth specially in finding the answer to “who they are and what their destiny is”.<sup>22</sup>

**Concept of Man:** According to the perspective of Islam, human being is created to be a vice-regent of God on the earth and God has given Instructions to human being through his prophets from Adam (a) to the last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), about how to live a life on earth. It is therefore obligatory for every Muslim to acquire knowledge.

Seyd Ali Ashraf elaborates the idea as follows; According to Islam the responsibility of man is to become a vice-regent of God on the earth. To fulfill his responsibility, man must have knowledge and must use that knowledge for his own good and the good of the entire creation, including mankind, other creatures, and external nature. Islam therefore encourage its followers to acquire knowledge, use that knowledge and be able to distinguish between useful knowledge and useless and harmful knowledge. This cannot be done on the basis of majority opinion or personal choice, experiments and analysis without any norm, but on the basis of the fundamentals provided in the Quran and the Sunnah. Those fundamentals cover all branches of life.<sup>23</sup>

The Islamic perspective of man's nature is that, man is composed of soul which is a spiritual divine everlasting entity and body which is material entity. The Islamic concept of education is wholistic, based on the development of soul and body.<sup>24</sup>

According to Al- Attas, God created man in his own image, man has a dual nature, spiritually he has soul and physically he has body his body is governed by his soul like God governs the Universe.<sup>25</sup>

The definition of man is that man is a rational animal and he has a body and two souls, soul is also called "al-nafs" in Arabic. Man has two souls, (al-nafs al-naṭiqah) or Rational soul and (al-nafs al-haywaniyyah) or Animal soul, the rational soul controls the animal soul, rational soul is higher and animal soul is lower in level. Because the rational soul governs the animal soul and acts like king in the body so actually it is rationality that define man and rationality refers to "reason".<sup>26</sup> The concept of (Dīn) applied here, man's rational soul must use its power rules over its subject (animal soul) as al-Attas states; The effective power and rule exercised by the rational soul over the animal soul and the subjugation and total submission of the latter to the former can indeed be interpreted as (Dīn), or as Islam in the subjective, personal, individual sense of the relationship thus established. In this context it is the animal soul that enslaves itself in submission and service and so 'returns' itself to the power and authority of the rational soul.<sup>27</sup>



**Islamization of Knowledge:** Taha Jabir al-Alwani defined Islamization of Knowledge as follows; The Islamization of Knowledge undertaking seeks to develop an Islamic paradigm of knowledge that will serve as an alternative to the secular positivist paradigm that presently dominates the arts and science.<sup>28</sup> Mohd Kamal Hassan, a strong proponent of the Islamization of Knowledge Movement, elaborates the concept as follows; Islamization of Human knowledge is an alternative paradigm for pursuing, teaching, developing, organizing, disseminating, utilizing and evaluating contemporary human knowledge [as contrasted with the Divinely revealed knowledge], in accordance with the worldview, fundamental principles, ethical values and norms of Islam.<sup>29</sup> Islamic schools are generally the result of the process of Islamization of knowledge which was started in 1977 after the first world conference on Muslim education in Makka, Saudi Arabia. The world conference on Muslim education was a significant event for the reform in Muslim education after the colonialism era. The first world conference on Muslim education which was held in the city of Makkah in 1970, considered the first and significant step. 350 renowned Muslim scholars from different countries were there, the main purpose was according to (Saqeb, 2000), to diagnose the problems facing education, determine aims and objectives and to chalk out policies and programmes for the reconstruction of Muslim education to meet the challenges and to satisfy Muslim's social and cultural needs. The reason behind the world conference on Muslim education was that Muslim scholars realized the crises that initiated from the decline of Muslim rule and specially during the colonial period. Saqeb, (2000), explaining the background of this significant event, states that; At the background of this historic event, there was the realization among Muslim scholars of the major crises that had beset their education over time. These crises had sprung initially from the Muslim decline that had started to set in during the terminal periods of Muslim rule especially towards the latter part of the Middle Ages, and reinforced during the two centuries of the colonial hegemony. Consequently, at the dawn of their independence in the post-war years, in the 1950s and 1960s, the larger Muslim Ummah found their national education systems suffering from serious problems of backwardness, widespread ignorance and illiteracy in all Muslim countries.<sup>30</sup>

According to (Saqeb, 2000) the world conference on Muslim education focused on planning to reconstruct the education system of Muslim for the future, especially the spiritual and moral element which was ignored or forced to be Ignored for a long time during the colonial era. Plan to regenerate the way of the life, culture and civilization of Muslim ummah. The other purpose was to articulate the aims of education for the current era and to construct and classify knowledge according to Muslim scholars like al-Farabi, al-Ghazali and Ibne Khaldun in accordance with Islamic epistemology.<sup>31</sup> After the first world conference which was held in 1977 at Makkah, the second conference was held in 1980 at Islamabad to prepare the integrated Islamic curriculum for all subjects and levels.

In 1981 the third conference held at Dhaka to examine the question of preparing text books to be used In Muslim and Non-Muslim schools according to the Islamic Integrated curricula. The fourth conference was on the topic of teaching methods from the Islamic perspective, this conference was held in 1982 at Jakarta. The other world conference held in 1987 at Cairo on Muslim education was on reviewing the achievements of the previous conferences and how to implement all the resolutions which was passed previously. Finally, at Cap Town in 1996 the sixth world conference held to prepare guidelines and lesson plan for teaching various subjects according to the Islamic view point, in this conference working sessions were conducted where subject specialist guided class room teachers to devise lesson plans according to the various subjects.<sup>32</sup> The research papers which were presented in the first world conference on Muslim education at Makkah, and then published in six books consist of the following titles;

(i) Crisis in Muslim Education, (ii) Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education, (iii) Curriculum and Teacher Education, (iv) Philosophy, Literature and Fine Arts, (v) Social and Natural Sciences: the Islamic Perspective, and (vi) Education and Society in the Muslim World.<sup>33</sup>

The research papers played very significant role in setting up the philosophical grounds and formulating a complete Islamic education system according to the current need of Muslim Ummah.<sup>34</sup>

**Concept of Knowledge:** Faith is a spiritual gift and knowledge is an intellectual acquisition through the use of man's intellect 'aql therefore Faith and knowledge have a close relation, knowledge cannot be separated from religion. Islam does not allow the Muslims to divide and dichotomize life into that which belongs to God (Divine) and that which belongs to Caesar (secular).<sup>35</sup> Muslim Educational Institutes at school and college level make distinction between secular and religious knowledge, this distinction has no base in Islamic concept of knowledge. Muslim Scholars divided knowledge in to two types, first; Traditional(' lūm-e- naqliyyah) and second; Intellectual(' lūm-e-aqliyyah) this distinction have a positive impact that all knowledge is Important whether it is given by revelation directly or acquired by human Intellect or sense perceptions, on the other hand the distinction of knowledge between religious and secular has a negative connotation because the word secular is often associated with philosophy of secularism.<sup>36</sup> Following Important points can be presented about the concept of knowledge that form the basis of education in Islam;

1. All knowledge originates and comes from God.
2. knowledge is two types ether about God (theological traditional knowledge) or about God's creation (acquired by human Intellect).
3. Islam epistemologically recognizes various source of knowledge acquired by direct revelation as well as acquired by sense perception and reason.



4. The study of empirical world leads to the creator, that's why it obligatory upon Muslim to acquire both religious and scientific knowledge.<sup>37</sup>

al-Attas, (2006) farther states that;

The Muslim scholars and thinkers of the past who worked in the various Muslim educational institutions discussed above never neglected knowledge on the grounds of their origins. Instead, they were opened to, and even enamoured by, the scientific contributions of the Greeks, Indians and Persians. They translated and studied whatever they could find of the pre-Islamic heritage and incorporated these into an Islamic philosophy of education .... They did not neglect the rational and intellectual sciences and certainly did not relegate them to the status of secular knowledge".<sup>38</sup>

**Criticism on Islamization of knowledge:** There is a verity of approaches from Muslim educationist about knowledge and Islamization of knowledge the vast majority of Muslim scholars believe that there is a distinct Islamic position with regards to education (al-Attas,1980; al-Faruqi, 1987; Sardar, 1989; Iqbal, 1996; Wan Daud, 1998; Ali, 2000).

The advocates of a distinctive Islamic position on knowledge also have difference of opinion among themselves on various matters (Hassan, Abiddin, & Ahmad, 2011).

Despite the difference of opinion on the definition and the process of Islamization of Knowledge, all contemporary Muslim scholars agree to the need of Islamization except for a handful of critics, namely Fazlur Rahman, Ziauddin Sardar, Yasien Mohamed.<sup>39</sup>

**The Modernists' Views on Islamization of Knowledge:** According to Hoodbhoy (1991), science is a secular pursuit and the validation of scientific truths does not rely on any form of spiritual authority as he explained as follow; At the heart of the dispute is the fundamental issue: science is a secular pursuit, and it is impossible for it to be otherwise. The secular character of science does not mean that it necessarily repudiates the existence of the Divine. But it does mean that the validation of scientific truths does not rely on any form of spiritual authority; observation, experimentation, and logic are the sole arbiters which decide what is true or false. Scientists are free to be as religious as they please. but science recognizes no laws outside its own.<sup>40</sup> The modernists are in agreement on that there is no need to Islamize knowledge. They think that the modern scientific knowledge is culturally neutral and universal and as such, it cannot be infused with the value system of any particular culture. Hoodbhoy and Abdus Salam totally reject the concept of Islamic sciences.<sup>41</sup> Another prominent Muslim scholar Fazlur Rahman argued that, the modern world has been developed and structured upon knowledge which cannot be considered Islamic". Instead, Rahman (2011), viewed that, there is nothing wrong with knowledge but the modern world has misused knowledge.

Fazlur Rahman, elaborated his philosophy of education in his phenomenal book, Islam and Modernity and his philosophy of education is constituted by at least three dimensions: first, to analyze Qur'anic meanings and its relevance to socio-historical conditions. second, the socio-historical contexts in which Muslims find themselves ought

to be constantly re-examined so as to rethink the guiding rules of the Qur'an vis-à-vis such situations; and third, to attempt at finding meanings responsive to particular situations and it should be looked at without erroneously separating what is considered as religious or traditional from what is rational or secular.<sup>42</sup>

According to Rahman, Islamic foundational sources are not close ended but it should be critically examined and changes can be made to in line Islamic source with social historical context.<sup>43</sup>

**Response to The Modernists Views:** Contemporary Muslim scientists, debated and rebutted the secularist-modernist's views of the neutrality of science. For instance, Kirmani argues that in reality "there is nothing neutral or value free about modern science, its priorities, its emphases, its method and process and its worldview are dictated by the narrow concerns of Western society or culture. Sardar, a physicist, argues that by divorcing ethics and morality from its epistemology, Western civilization has produced a body of knowledge that does not concern itself with the Islamic concerns of trusteeship of man, sacredness of nature, social justice, public interest and seeking the pleasure of Allah. He further asserts that this body of knowledge and its associated disciplines promote the interest and wellbeing of Western civilization.<sup>44</sup> Both Wan Daud (1997) and Ahmed (1989) consider Rahman's thesis on the Islamisation of knowledge as a "promising intellectual agenda of Islamic resurgence and one of the most controversial issues that has captured the imagination and elicited strong reaction of Muslim intellectuals and activists across the globe since the late 1970s"<sup>45</sup>

Since knowledge exists in minds (things that exist out there being merely objects of knowledge) the nature of the knowledge depends on the spiritual, moral and intellectual qualities of the mind or soul that has received or created it<sup>46</sup>

al-Attas argues that "knowledge is not neutral and can indeed be infused with a nature and content which masquerades as knowledge."<sup>47</sup>

al-Faruqi points out that, The West claims that its social sciences are scientific because they are neutral; that they deliberately avoid human judgment and preference; that they treat the facts as facts and leave them to speak for themselves. This, we have seen, is a vain claim. For there is no theoretical perception of any fact without perception of its axiological nature and relations.<sup>48</sup> He further argues that modern knowledge is not universal but is ethnocentric, in particular Eurocentric, and consequently it is not universally applicable. Since knowledge is not neutral, modern knowledge cannot be applied in toto to the Muslim community which has certain values and beliefs that differ from Western civilization.<sup>49</sup> Abushouk, (2008: 39) states that, Contemporary knowledge is neither value-free nor universal because it has been designed by western scholars who have their own cultural, historical and secular worldview so Islamization is crucial and it is a revivalist response to modernity and its secular impact on Muslim society.<sup>50</sup>

**Concept of Education:** Education has a crucial position in Islam from the very early days because of the centrality of Quran as word of God so Muslim always obliged to learn and recite Arabic. Muslim from all over the world including those whose mother tongue was not Arabic but used Arabic script for their language. This was the reason of higher literacy rate among Muslim from the early days of Islam.<sup>51</sup> A lifelong pursuit of learning is a characteristic ideal of Islamic piety and underlies the concept of “Islamic” education. While the primary focus of this concept was the nurturing of religious belief in the individual, its scope broadened to incorporate various secular disciplines, literary and scientific, as it aimed at developing within the Muslim community fully integrated personalities, grounded in the virtues of Islam.<sup>52</sup> Al-Farabi was among the first Muslim scholars to suggest an integrated curriculum for the higher learning of both the “foreign” and “religious” sciences, with the foreign being those grounded in Greek philosophy and science and the religious being those based on the Quran and its interpretation.<sup>53</sup>

**Definition of Islamic Education:** According to Ashraf; Education is, therefore, a process that is concerned with the pursuit of knowledge. It is the development of mind, be it skills or virtues or other characteristics that leads man to the realization of the ultimate principles that is considered the greatest good for the man and the job of education is to help man in reaching this limit.<sup>54</sup> A formal definition of education according to Islam as given by al-Attas is: “Recognition and acknowledgement, progressively instilled into man, of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition and acknowledgement of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence”<sup>55</sup> This recognition creates self-awareness in the human being that he should consider himself part of big plan and that he has a role to play.

al-Attas, (1980) further elaborates that,

“The recognition and acknowledgement of the proper places of things in the order of creation, must primarily apply to man’s own recognition and acknowledgement of his proper place that is, his station and condition in life in relation to his self, his family, his people, his community, his society.”<sup>56</sup>

**Concept of Tādīb, Ta’līm and Tarbiyah:** Three Arabic terms usually used for education, to analyze Islamic Education, these terms are considered starting point.<sup>57</sup> The root word of Tādīb is aduba which means to be disciplined, cultured and refined. The word aduba refers to character development process and acquiring sound basis for moral and social behavior within the family, community and society at large.<sup>58</sup> The second word which is used for education is Ta’līm, comes from Arabic root word ‘lima (alima) which means to know and be informed. Ta’līm refers to the receiving and Imparting of knowledge through training, Instructions and other means of teaching.<sup>59</sup> Tarbiya comes from the Arabic root word raba (to grow, increase) and it refers to the development of individual potential and to the process of nurturing and guiding the child to a state of completeness or maturity.<sup>60</sup> Halstead, after analyzing the three Arabic terms as one

concept states that; The different emphases of these three terms suggest a possible analysis of Muslim education in terms of (i) aiding individual development, (ii) increasing understanding of society and its social and moral rules and (iii) transmitting knowledge, though of course such an analysis is by no means exclusive to Islamic thinking. What creates a distinctively Islamic view of education is the application to these three dimensions of the principle that no aspect of a Muslim's life can remain untouched by religion.<sup>61</sup>

**Aims of Islamic Education:** In Islam the purpose of education is to enable man to fulfill the purpose of his creation, of his coming to this world. The purpose of the creation is to become a wholehearted servant of God.<sup>62</sup> According to Ashraf the development of good man is more important than producing good citizen as he explained as follows; A balanced development of the total personality is not possible unless we again realize the interrelationship between the spirit, the intellect, the reason, the heart and the senses, and reassert the norm of human conduct that creates a balanced between the power that generates the love for Good and the power that desires the fulfillment of passions and selfish hankerings.<sup>63</sup> According to the first world conference on Muslim education the aims of education is as fallow; Education should aim at the balance growth of the total personality of man through the training of man's spirit, intellect the rational self, feeling and badly senses. Education should therefore cater for the growth of man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively, and motivate all these aspects towards goodness and the attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Muslim education is in realization of complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large. (Recommendation of the five world conferences on Islamic education, 1983, cited in Hassan, 1989).<sup>64</sup> Education from the Islamic perspective may be described as life long process of preparing an individual to actualize his role as vicegerent (khalīfah) of Allah on earth and thereby to contribute fully to the reconstruction and development of his society in order to achieve wellbeing in this world and wellbeing in the hereafter (Al Quran 2: 201, 7:156, 16:122) cited in (Hassan, 1989).<sup>65</sup>

**Global Educational Challenges:** Islamic school's administration faces various types of challenges, parents do not satisfy just to see their children nurtured and developed according to the basic principles and values of Islam but they also demand quality in contemporary education of the current time. To meet these demands Islamic School's administration, need to adopt students centered learning and teaching approaches of Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Learning, Experiential Learning, Project Based Learning and Team Based Learning. These modern methods of teaching and learning are essential for student's creativity and effectiveness. Educational Institutes In 21<sup>st</sup> century, must provide the environment in which students should be actively engaged with each other and in learning activities, cooperative learning environment provide practical means

for crating engaging and exciting social environment to help learners to develop creative and interactive skills as well as traditional knowledge needed in today's society and economy.<sup>66</sup> There has been a dramatic change in our understanding of learning, we have moved away from the behaviorist concept of considering teachers as purveyors of information and students as passive receivers. Current humanistic, cognitive social and constructive learning stress the importance of creating new knowledge and formation of meaning.<sup>67</sup>

**Student Centered Learning:** Teachers are not the only authority on the subject matter and not just [container](#) of Information in Student Centered learning but they are aware of that, they are facilitators of learning. Teachers facilitate students through discussion, mentoring and consultation. Classroom lectures is only used when necessary and more focus is placed on student's participation.<sup>68</sup> In student centered learning environment student take responsibility of their own learning and they accept that their teachers are not walking encyclopedias to provide them the correct answer all the time, instead they are motivated to come up with their own answers.<sup>69</sup> There are various methods to implement student centered learning in a school but Collaboration is a prime feature of a student-centered learning environment. Students share information, help each other out and provide support for each other's learning.<sup>70</sup>

**Cooperative Learning:** Cooperative Learning is a structure of Instruction design to facilitate learner for the achievement of specific end product (Panitz, 1999). It involves a small group of students who work together to solve a problem, complete a task or achieve a common goal.<sup>71</sup> (Artzt & Newman, 1990, cited in Panitz, 1999)

Lie (2002) states that; "The research clearly indicates that cooperation, compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, typically results in: (a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem".<sup>72</sup> By one of the strongest traditions in education with thousands of studies conducted having a wide range of age group, subject areas, ability level and social background, the result suggest that cooperative learning improve interpersonal relation, enhance motivation and develops high order thinking skills (Slavin, 1985, cited in Lie, 2002).<sup>73</sup>

**Collaborative Learning:** Collaboration is a philosophy of Interaction and personal lifestyle where individuals are responsible for their actions, including learning and respect the abilities and contributions of their peers.<sup>74</sup> Rockwood concludes: "In my teaching experience, cooperative represents the best means to approach mastery of foundational knowledge. Once students become reasonably conversant, they are ready for collaborative, ready to discuss and assess ".<sup>75</sup> Students-students and teachers-teachers collaboration are essential for successful learning so every opportunity of collaborative experiences should be encouraged although some lecture is necessary either to clarify complex informational ideas or to present material not readily available. Collaborative experiences are necessary for learning but this does not imply that there will be no traditional lecture formats.<sup>76</sup>

**Experiential Learning:** In its simplest form, experiential learning means learning by doing or learning from experience, Experiential Learning involve students in an experience and then encourage them to reflect on their experience to create new meaning, develop new skills and attitudes. Experiential Learning approaches are fundamental to meaningful learning and appear to be more effective in developing communication skills, the ability to work in team and other necessary skills that employers need.<sup>77</sup>

Estes (2004) states that; The Association for Experiential Education's (AEE) definition of experiential education, which includes a number of principles that support student-centered learning such as, throughout the experiential learning process, the learner [*italics added*] is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning (AEE, n.d.).<sup>78</sup> In experiential Learning learners have the ability to relate theory to practice and analyze real-life situations in light of course material.<sup>79</sup> (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

**Project Based Learning:** According to the project-based Learning handbook for teachers, projects are based on challenging problem or questions that engage learner in decision making, problem solving and Investigative activities.<sup>80</sup> (Thomas, 2000).

To decide that either it is an example of project-based learning or not? The five criteria are centrality (projects are the curriculum not optional to the curriculum and project is the central strategy of teaching), driving question (projects are focused on questions or problems), constructive investigations (involve the construction of new understanding new skills and knowledge), autonomy (emphasis on student's freedom, variety, challenge, student choice), and realism (the central activities must be realistic, not school-like).<sup>81</sup> (Thomas, 2000).

**Team Based Learning:** Team Based learning is a unique pedagogical strategy that facilitates students to develop individual accountability, problem solving, communication skills team work, organizational skills and a variety of skills related to the future professional life. Team Based Learning provides the opportunity to develop these skills



as students engaged in team activities.<sup>82</sup> Team based learning requires that students are accountable to Instructor as well as their peers, in contrast to traditional learning where students are only accountable to Instructor.<sup>83</sup> Evaluation by peers provides motivation to produce high-quality performance then the assessment of a single instructor. Students when spent their time with peers discussing ideas and concept and when they are accountable to each other, they become more productive, Furthermore, when students become assessors, they show a more thoughtful understanding of the processes involved in the activity.<sup>84</sup>

**Summary:** With all the research which is presented in literature review it is cleared that Islam as a major religion has his own philosophy of education including the metaphysical belief, source of knowledge or epistemology and a distinctive value system which is deferent from the secular system of education. The efforts which has been made and continuously being made is to provide to Muslim children an Educational System according to the Sharia guidelines and Islamic philosophy of education.

#### **Research Method**

**Research Design:** The researcher employed, constructivist worldview and used qualitative approach in this study. The research design was multiple case studies and seven schools were taken as cases.

**Population:** Papulation for this study was all Islamic Schools in Karachi, Pakistan.

#### **Sample Size**

The seven prestigious Islamic Schools were selected as representative of the systems of schools through purposive sample design.

There were thirty-seven participants, they were school's heads, academic coordinators, three members of teaching staff and two experts from the field of Islamic school systems.

**Sample Technique:** It was purposive sampling because these institutes had many campuses and same practices and it was convenient in this sense that they were the representatives of many other campuses.

**Data Collection Technique and Procedure:** The researcher used in-depth interview technique to collect the data. The researcher e-mailed the consent and permission letters to the Islamic school's administrations and requested them for the first face to face meeting to further clarify and explain the study and asked for their participation in the study and when they agreed to participate, the researcher asked the participants to sign the consent form and asked for convenient date and time for the interview meeting. The researcher also asked the administration of the school for the names and contact information of other participants (academic coordinators and teaching staff from the same school. After receiving the names and contact information of participants other than the school heads, the researcher called on their cell numbers and briefed them about the study mentioning the school head's permission of allowing them to participate in the study and asked them for their convenient time for the interview.

**Data Collection Tool:** A semi structured interview questionnaire was prepared as a tool for the interview the questionnaire were sent via e-mail and other means to the respondent and the researcher made it clear that the participants received the questionnaire before the Interview and understood all the questions well.

**Research Protocol:** The researcher informed the participant that this research study would maintain highest research ethics. Participants' name and other personal and demographic information would be kept confidentially. The researcher followed all the protocol of meeting the school heads to take necessary appointment for the meeting. The researcher reached the research site with all the necessary resources and reached well before time and explained the procedure to all the teachers before the data collection. Participants of the study were given the right to participate or withdraw. There was no single question from questionnaire to harm the participants psychologically or reduce their self-esteem.

**Data Analysis Technique:** The researcher applied thematic qualitative data analysis technique by making basic themes in accordance with research questions and subthemes under the basic themes data analysis was done on the data received from interviews, written reply to questionnaire which was sent to the respondents before the interviews and data retrieved from the official web and other printed documents such as prospectus and pamphlets etc.

**Ethical Considerations:** The researcher followed the research procedure of seeking consent or permission from the Islamic schools' administrations and other respondents involved in this study. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher prepared a letter addressed to the respondents. It contained the supervisor's validation that the researcher currently doing MS research in the Department of education in the Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) together with the title of the study. The letter mentioned that interviews would be conducted and the respondents were communicated that the findings from the research are solely for the academic purposes assuring them that they would remain anonymous. The researcher also prepared personal letters that clarified the purpose of the study and the general content of the interview and showed them to the respondents. The researcher also reached to a very clear understanding with respondent's data, whether they preferred it to be treated as personal, confidential or could be shared with others. Individual identity was remained confidential unless the participants showed their willingness to be known by the public. The participants were also given the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving any reason.

#### **Findings and Interpretations**

**Data Analysis:** Data has been collected from Interviews, written responses of questionnaire, official website and other documents such as prospectus and pamphlets etc. to find out the purpose of Islamic schools and the alignment of practices with schools 'purposes and the challenges they are facing in their daily operations internally as well as globally. The study was focused on the following three major themes;

- a) Purpose of Islamic Schools
- b) Alignment of the practices of Islamic Schools with their purposes
- c) Global educational challenges faced by Islamic Schools

Under each major theme there are also sub themes.

**Summaries Findings Conclusions and Recommendations:** In this chapter finding of the Interviews and data analysis is compared, discussed and linked with the literature. Conclusions are made and recommendations are given for the policy makers, text books publishers and the administration of Islamic schools.

**Summary:** This study was a case study which was done to find out the association between the purpose and practices of Islamic schools and to investigate that if the curriculum of Islamic schools is aligned with the purpose of Islamic school. Farther more to explore what type of global education trends and challenges, Islamic schools are facing and the strategies they are using to cope with these challenges. Data was collected through Interviews using questionnaire as tool. One school from each system of Islamic schools were selected as representative of the system. Data analysis is done by thematic analysis.

Islamic Schools exist to provide high quality contemporary education integrated with Islamic values, basic Quranic education, accuracy of Islamic creed, to develop Muslim intellectuals and provide Islamic environment for the Tarbiyah of students where the practice of all the Islamic Values become easier. All the Islamic schools have created such an environment that helps the schools to achieve its main purpose, many activities are Included in the school's daily routine in morning assembly, during the school's hours. With the help of motivational speakers, they try to increase students Interest in religious worship, prayers and to live their lives according to the teaching of Islam. Islamic schools' leadership are aware of the fact that they can only gain parent's confidence by nurturing the students and inculcating values of Islam and preparing students for higher grades in the national and International examination. To achieve the goal of high quality in contemporary education, Islamic Schools need to adopt more effectively, student centered teaching and learning approaches, including cooperative learning, collaborative learning, experiential learning, project-based learning and team-based learning to enable students to take responsibility of their learning and prepare them for higher achievement and greater productivity. Islamic schools are facing many other challenges including financial problems, limited choices of selecting Islamically Integrated curriculum and non-availability of sharia compliant learning resources. But as whole they are contributing to increase the literacy rate and providing education which is aligned with their purpose and with the constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

**Discussion:** In the discussion the data collected from Interviews and other sources is analyzed and matched with the literature. The discussion on the results is as follows;

**Theme One: Purpose of Islamic Schools:** Theme one of data analysis was about the purpose of Islamic Schools. Respondents asserted various reasons of why Islamic Schools exist, results are as follows;

**Contemporary Education with Islamic Values:** From the data analysis it is found that one of the purposes of Islamic school is to provide sufficient religious knowledge to students while providing contemporary education. Islamic school's administration claims that traditional schools are providing religious or Islamic education only as one subject and unfortunately that subject is the less focused and the most ignored subject in the school. One of the respondents from Islamic School stated that In Pakistan we have two parallel systems of education, one is provided by Madāris and the other by schools. The 'Ulamā coming out of Madāris have completely separate domain of their own in the society, while the schools are constantly churning up secular and materialistic minds, controlling almost all of the business affairs of the society. The vision behind Islamic schools is actually bringing these two worlds together at certain point.

According to the Islamic Schools 'administration Islamic Schools are the solution for the problem of the secularization of education and dichotomy of knowledge, according to them they brought together religious and contemporary knowledge in one place.

**Imparting Qurānic Education:** There are two kinds of Islamic schools one with the providing Hifz-e- Qurān (memorizing the Holy Qurān) and the other with only providing Nāzira (simple recitation of the holy Qurān). One of the respondents stated that; “the main goal in the Islamic institutes is to provide basic Qurānic education and memorization of The Holy Qurān”

**Islamic Values, Culture and Civilization:** According to Islamic Schools administration one of the purposes of Islamic Schools is upbringing students with Islamic manners in supporting environment. To learn Islamic manners and practice them in daily life that is the goal, but that goal cannot be realized by only providing theoretical knowledge to students. it needs an environment where the importance of Islamic values can be felt in real sense and the values need to be in practice for a long time so students become habitual with applying these values in their lives even after school.

**Tarbiyah and Tādīb:** Almost all the respondents were agreed upon that only transferring knowledge is not enough but recognition by practicing the knowledge is crucial element of Islamic education. One of the campus heads stated that “contemporary education should be given to children but preference must be given to the Islamic upbringing”

**Theme Two: Alignment of the Practices of Islamic Schools with their Purposes:** To know about the Alignment of the purpose and practices of Islamic schools, Respondents were asked if the practices of Islamic schools are in line with the school’s purpose? results are as follows;

**Alignment of the Curriculum of Islamic Schools with their Purposes:** Islamic Schools prefer Islamically Integrated text books a well-known personality for establishing more than fifty Islamic Schools nationwide and working as executive director of Educational Research Institute (ERI) who has published text books for Islamic Schools described some of the key features of Islamically Integrated text books.

“Educational Research Institute (ERI) has developed books that are based on Islamic ideology, they are big help in achieving of our purpose”

- In all these books children are well introduced to their ‘creator’ and develop love of Islam and Islamic heroes.
- They are given awareness of current situation through our social studies books.
- Islamiyat books are very comprehensive transfer all the ‘Ilm’ that comes under ‘Farz-e-Ain’ according to Imam Ghazali.
- Our science books channelize our students thought to the wonders of creations of Allah (S.W.T) and leave them in ‘awe’ for their ‘creator’.

Islamic Schools administration and literature on Islamic education are in agreement on that secular and traditional system of education cannot fulfill the needs of Muslims and they call for Islamization of knowledge in all areas of education system.

**Alignment of Co-curricular Activities with their Purposes:** Co-curricular activities are also arranged in school like poetic symposium (Mushārah), a verbal game and a genre of urdu poetry (bait bazi), speech competitions for improving language skills and sport day is arranged regularly.

**Alignment of School's Environment and Culture with their Purposes:** All the Islamic schools have created an environment by arranging morning assembly according to their special need, arranging Quran classes of recitation and memorization, motivational speeches on monthly and yearly basis and by hiring role model teacher, putting up Islamic themes on the softboards, promoting Islamic mannerism like Asalāmu ‘alaikum, instead of good morning and Jazākallah, instead of thank you, Subhānallāh, Mashā Allāh, instead of saying only well done. Regular Hadith and Qur'an sessions are conducted and dress code is followed to help students to adopt Islamic values and make it their habit to live the Islamic way of life.

### **Theme Three: Global Educational Challenges Faced by Islamic Schools**

**Adopting New Educational Trends:** Global Educational System has been changing for the past few decades from teacher centered to student centered, various approaches of student-centered teaching and learning are used including cooperative learning, collaborative learning, experiential learning, project-based learning and team-based learning to enable students to take responsibility of their learning and prepare them for higher achievement and greater productivity.

All the Islamic Schools administration are aware of the importance of using technology in class rooms and they have made arrangements for the class rooms according to their financial soundness but some of the schools are using the technology more effectively than the others in class rooms.

**Non-availability of Sharia Compliant Staff:** Islamic Schools are new phenomena and two parallel systems of Madrasa and contemporary education are the main reason for the non-availability of competent and sharia compliant staff. The gap of knowledge and skills on both side of the education systems need to be bridged at the state level and at private level which is going on although not going as expected because private schools are not state funded Institutes in Pakistan.

**Non-availability of Sharia Compliant Audio Visual Aids:** Islamic Schools have a different philosophy of education according to the research Islamization of educational institutes is a necessary step to fulfil the needs of Islamic Schools. An Islamic University can develop such audio-visual aids and research scholars of the university can be assigned to do empirical research on what kind of aids can be made available or based on their research private business organizations can be encouraged to produce audio visual aids and other educational resources for Islamic Schools.

**Social Media:** Almost all of the respondents were very much concerned about social media effects which are undermining all the efforts which are being done for the spiritual



development of students. According to the respondents with carefully planning, counselling and training students how to use social media positively social media's negative effects can be reduced.

**Significance of the Study:** This study was conducted to explore the existing situation in Islamic Schools in Karachi and to find out its relationship with what exists in the related literature. The significance of this study is to examine the reality in accordance with theory. The findings of this study will help policy makers Islamic School's administration to understand strength and weaknesses of their organizations and they will either modify their purpose or improve their practices.

**Conclusion:** Finding of the study suggest that being a Muslim and being a Pakistani citizen, these institutes are offering education which is fulfilling the society needs. Their purposes, text books and other daily routines are very much aligned with the constitution of Pakistan and the Ideology of Islamic republic of Pakistan. However, the goal of a complete framework for a balance Islamic Educational System which is given in the remarkable work of Syed Muhammad Nqeeb al-Attas and which was presented in the recommendations of six Muslim world conferences on Muslim education held from 1977 to 1997 in various Islamic Countries<sup>85</sup> is after fifty years has not been achieved yet, because of the adaptation of secular educational system by Islamic countries.

Muslim intellectuals also need to come out from the situation of blaming western education system. Instead they need to present a complete and workable education system to fulfil the need of twenty-first century's Muslims 'educational requirement, not only in theory but in practice as well. Islamic School administration and teaching staff are well aware of the modern methods of teaching and learning. Student centered, experiential, project based and activity-based learning has been applied. All the Islamic Schools administration are aware of the importance of using technology in class rooms and they have made arrangements for the class rooms according to their financial soundness but some of the schools are using the technology more effectively than the others in class rooms.

#### **Recommendations:**

**For Islamic Schools 'Administration:** Islamic school's leadership should include those International demands from Muslim community in the interdependent global village which are in accordance with the teaching of Islam to take part in the world Peace.

- Usually Islamic schools are working individually to achieve their goals, but all the Islamic schools should also work together for the common purposes as Ummah for the betterment of Ummah.
- With working together Islamic schools can take benefits from the expertise of each other and can save their resource.

- The administration of Islamic schools should do more efforts to increase the participating of their students, teaching and non-teaching staff in national level welfares activities to inculcate Pakistani citizenship.

**For Islamic Text books Publisher:**

- Islamic schools are facing problems in finding quality value-based text books, especially publishers have not gained the confidence in English, Science and Mathematics. The text books for these subjects should be prepared on research based.
- All the text books should organize the content according to the latest teaching learning theories and should be outcome based and activity based in both Values and academics quality.
- Publishers should also prepare the value-based learning audio visual add by preparing companion CDs for each text book, videos and animation etc. to be used for individual purpose and for class room activity to support learning and increase students Interest.

**For the Policy Makers:**

- Private schools share is increasing tremendously and the share of private schools in increasing the literacy in Pakistan is getting higher and higher, so Government of Pakistan should allocate funds for the private sector so they could improve the quality and reduce the fee-structure.
- Private schools are mostly running in buildings acquired by monthly rent which is big part of their expense, Government can help them providing buildings on providing good educational services to the society. Which basically the responsibility of the Government.
- Policy maker should make policies for reducing the dichotomy of knowledge in secular and religious. Which is ultimately leading the society to the division.
- Islamic philosophy of education should be inculcated in the education system as a whole not only as a subject.

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