
CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS TO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN WESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the challenges faced by primary and secondary educational institutions in western Nigeria and their proposed solutions. The problems began with the colonization of the country by the British empire, the Christianization agenda implemented by the colonizers, the inferiority complex that followed, and the lack of zeal to present Western education from an Islamic point of view. There is also the problem of finding knowledgeable and qualified Muslim teachers to employ, whose primary objective would be to instill knowledge in students rather than the financial gains that come with it. Proprietors of Islamic schools are recommended to invest in their teachers by organizing workshops for them at least twice a year, inviting Islamic pedagogists to train them, thereby boosting their confidence, increasing their knowledge and work input, and reducing the unnecessary inferiority complex they might have towards the Western education. Islām came with all branches of knowledge ranging from economics, human relations, sciences, agriculture, trade, etc., and actualized by earlier Muslims, especially in the golden era when the Muslims ruled in Andalusia (Spain) and in Baghdad. The major problem is the will of the parents and Muslim schools to invest in Islamic pedagogy and to be determined to make its application effective and acceptable to the rest of the world. The qualitative research method was the main source of information for this research sourced from books and research papers written on pedagogy by renowned educators in Nigeria and other countries.

Keywords: Islamization, Pedagogy, Western Nigeria, Education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

‘Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching’ (Collis and Moonen, 2009). It is the method required by standard for teachers to impact beneficial knowledge to their students. It is the art of communicating a message effectively with a beneficial impact on students. ‘Teaching is not an art that requires reading from books and reproducing such in a classroom. It is rather a process that creates knowledge awareness and feelings in the thoughts of learners, and eventually positive behavioral changes in them. If this is achieved, it produces quality teaching that eventually assists in achieving academic excellence which in turn paves the way for learners to have a competitive edge/advantage that can assist them in adding meaningful value to the workforce’ (Roul, 2018).

Islām does not frown upon acquiring any form of permissible knowledge that benefits the bearer and others. Seeking beneficial knowledge is encouraged. ‘Human beings have the zeal to learn which is a pre-historic instinct in them. They want to analyze a phenomenon in order to achieve true knowledge about it’ (Ahsan et al., 2013). The problem is the effects of Western education on young Muslims. While Islām teaches humility, encourages the use of knowledge to benefit people, and frowns at any act of haughtiness, ‘the results over the years seen in students who were fully engrossed in searching for knowledge the Western way is nothing but pride, bad attitude, and arrogance by looking in disdain at their African culture as something backward and can never be of any benefit’ (Fafunwa, 2018).

This is the reason why knowledge must be presented in an Islamic way because only revealed knowledge is capable of providing humans with relief; spiritual knowledge which balances knowledge acquired in Western-oriented schools with the fear of Allāh and respect for His creation when putting the knowledge to use. This was the idea of Islamic educators like Syed Muhammad al Naquib bin Ali al-Attas, Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, and Isma‘īl Rājī al-Fārūqī proposed and worked on. Isma‘īl Rājī al-Fārūqī argues that ‘the whole legacy of human knowledge is to be restructured and seen from the Islamic point of view. To achieve this, he coined a 12-point work plan which aims at producing university-level textbooks recasting about 20 disciplines in accordance with the Islamic vision, and this is because of the backwardness and lowly contemporary position of the Islamic nation (Ummah) in all fields (Ahsan et al., 2013). Syed Muhammad al Naquib bin Ali al-Attas suggested two steps in which contemporary/modern knowledge can be Islamized. ‘First is to free knowledge from the Western culture and civilization which he called the isolation process, and the second is to infuse this knowledge with Islamic elements’ (Ahsan et al., 2013).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Western colonizers tried to impose their way of life and religion into the educational system of the Yorubas in western Nigeria which was not an absolute fusion. Local students after attending these Western schools try to shun the culture and traditions of their people, due to the teachings acquired from Western missionaries who encourage students to frown upon anything African and embrace the Western way of life. The aim was to produce educated Nigerians who are Nigerians by blood, but European in their thoughts, habits, and religion. These students became addicted to the Western way of dressing, habits, food, and music, and saw anything African as backward and medieval. This was an attitude that brought nothing but arrogance, shortsightedness, and pride and became a constant reference point for which Western Christian education was criticized. Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa in his book *History of Education in Nigeria* emphasized that education though wrongly perceived as a recently new phenomenon in Nigeria is as old as Man himself in the African continent, and al-Islām and Christianity are newcomers in the field (Fafunwa, 2018).

Dr. Samuel Amaele in his book *History of Education in Nigeria* (Amaele, 2009) classified education into three while discussing the history of education in Nigeria. the formal education which is received in normal school settings like primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. Informal education is a process where learning is achieved outside the formal system for example teaching at home, masājīd, churches, halls, etc. Non-Formal education has some characteristics of formal learning processes, but it is not formal because it is not within the regular school system. This is mainly received via seminars, workshops, television, radio programs, etc. Amaele (2009) discussed the philosophy of Islamic education and proposed that the aim of Islamic education is to produce a Muslim who will be the representative of Allāh on earth. Amaele (2009) also classified Islamic schools into four. The first category is operated in the house of the teacher with no specified syllabus. The second type has students sit on chairs and benches in classrooms but lack a standard uniform and rules. The third type functions like formal schools with approved syllabi by the government and students are taught Islamic and Western studies by preparing these students for external exams conducted by the government. Some of these schools teach using the Arabic language though. The last category is though referred to as Muslim schools but is run like formal schools and English is the main medium used to teach the students including Islamic studies. These are the most popular Islamic schools and produce the majority of Muslim students who gain admission into tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research method was the main source of information for this research sourced from books and research papers written on pedagogy and teaching by educators in western Nigeria. Content analysis method was applied which enabled categorization and discussion of the meaning of the words, phrases, and sentences used by authors of books and articles referenced. References were made also to the book of Allāh (Al-Qur'ān), ahādith (Sayings and teachings of prophet Muhammad), and the view of past and present scholars on related topics required.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Islam and Knowledge

The last messenger of Allāh, Muhammad b. Abdillāh ﷺ did not only teach humanity how to connect with their Creator, but he also taught them different forms of knowledge ranging from medicine, economics, mathematics, international relations, insurance, and many more practiced by those before him during the days of ignorance before Islam which were reformed and presented in an Islamized way. Without a sound knowledge of mathematics, it is practically impossible to distribute the inheritance. The Prophet ﷺ being a trader before prophethood taught all forms of permissible trade and the terms and conditions to enhance smooth transactions between the buyer and seller. He reached out to world leaders writing letters to them in a way that befitted their status as rulers and kings so much that even those who did not accept his call acknowledged his great personality and sometimes send gifts to him via his messenger.

Narrated by Khālid b. Sa'd: 'We went out (on a journey) with Ghālib b. Abjār fell sick on the way and arrived in al-Madinah while he was still sick. Ibn Abī 'Atīq visited him and said to us: "You should use this black seed; take five or seven seeds, crush them and drop them into his nose with a few drops of oil on both sides because I heard 'Aishah (may Allāh be pleased with her) tell me that she heard the Prophet ﷺ say: "This black seed is a healing for all diseases except as-Sām'. I asked him: what is as-Sām? He said "Death" (al-Bukhārī, 2012). Modern science confirmed that the black seed comes from a plant called Nigella and belongs to the plant family named Ranunculaceae with more than 20 species found worldwide, and three (out of the 20) are used in medicine which are: cultivated black seed, wild black seed, and Syrian or Damascene black seed respectively (Ahmad, 2010).

This is clear that the Prophet ﷺ laid the foundation for all branches of knowledge that are being developed today. Knowledge first started as an inspiration by Allāh, then it was developed by humans due to the gift of thought and intelligence given by Him. This was what earlier Muslims

after the Prophet ﷺ and his companions developed upon that led to the golden era of Islam and Muslims in history. ‘This is why Professor Ismail al-Faruqi, the only Muslim professor in modern times called for in-depth research to be carried out about pre-Hijrah Islām, by stressing the contextual importance of this research in enabling the worldview and civilization of Islam with emphasis laid on the reason behind the cause of the weak and marginalized state of Islamic studies in the area of knowledge being the neglect of this research (Yusuf, 2021).

4.2 The Golden Era of Islamic Knowledge

The two primary sources for information, knowledge, and guidance for Muslims are the Quran and the Sunnah (action, words, and affirmation) of the Prophet ﷺ. ‘It is not an exaggeration to state that Islamization of knowledge started from the revelations by Allāh to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the trusted messenger; angel Jibrīl’ (Ahsan et al., 2013).

‘The presence of Muslim rule in Spain started in 92AH when Tariq b. Ziyad and his army of twelve thousand men faced the Christians of Spain in a battle with the permission of Caliph Walīd b. Abdil Malik’ (Najībādī, 2001). With time, Spain was under the rule of Muslims as cities fell one after another. ‘During the 800-year rule of Muslims in Spain, which was autocratic-like but a righteous one, many achievements were made by Muslims in Spain. Justice was paramount, and developments like infrastructure, agriculture, engineering (they were the first to invent tools for dismantling forts), manners (they taught Christians the etiquette of behaving in a civil and respectable manner), social justice, and most important education were among their many achievements that history cannot write off. In cities like Seville, Malaga, Lisbon, Toledo, Jaen, Malaga, Cordova, and Saragossa, schools, universities, laboratories, and gigantic libraries were established and academic research was conducted on sciences and arts’ (Najībādī, 2001). Cordoba was the capital of Muslim Spain in the eighth century (756 AH) and the largest and the most social city in the whole of Europe at that time. It held the record and prestige of having the biggest library that even the Christian world could not boast of, with over 400,000 volumes of books. At the same time, ‘the library at the monastery of St Gall in Switzerland could only boast of few hundred volumes of books and was said to be the largest at that time in Christian Europe’ (Ahsan et al., 2018). ‘Students from places like France, Germany, England, Italy and other countries came to Muslim Spain to learn from Muslim scholars. These scholars translated many books on Greek philosophy into Arabic’ (Najībādī, 2001). They were educationists who saw themselves as Muslims first before tribe and culture. a positive effect that occurs when Islām is placed first before any other interest. In recent times, scholars like Professor Ismail al Farooqi also had this changing effect. He said 'Until a few months ago, I was a Palestinian, an Arab, and a Muslim. Now I am a Muslim who happens to be an Arab from Palestine' (Ba-Yunus, 1988).

4.3 Education in Western Nigeria and the Emergence of Islamic Schools

Before the arrival of the British in the 18th century, Christians had tried to come into the region. Penetration of Christianity into west Africa was halted at first due to the thick forest zone hindering easy passage and clean waterways. ‘The situation changed in the 15th century with the launch of missionary activities by the Portuguese. The African kings were the main target. They believe that if they (the kings) accepted Christianity, their subjects will easily do the same. Some Kings accepted the newly found religion and churches were built around their palaces. The conversion of the kings was symbolic though because they still worship their local gods. The strategy had to change in order to record a meaningful result’ (Thani, 2012).

The colonizers have this false belief that the African continent and Africans are ‘backward people’ hence the need to colonize them by being their rulers, teaching them that the only way to be civilized is through acquiring Western education. This is, of course, not accurate. They claim that the indigenous method of education cannot be compared with the Westernized system. Some see it through a myopic view that it is “barbaric, primitive, and savage”. ‘Such claims should be considered ignorance, and the result of an absolute misunderstanding of the value that informal education has to offer. After all, the aim of education is to see to the possibility of a young child, or adult in developing his or her abilities, character, attitudes, and all other forms of a mindset that will assist him or her in contributing positively to society at large. An avenue where knowledge is disseminated continuously to ensure social direction and control. An achievement all educational systems, whether traditional or Western-oriented thrive to achieve irrespective of the methods applied, or curriculum used’ (Fafunwa, 2018).

‘The study of the history of education in Africa cannot be accurate without adequate knowledge about the indigenous and traditional educational system in Africa even before the arrival of Islām and Christianity. In Nigeria, it is in history that Islām came to the region for well over 300 years before the arrival of Christianity through slavery, colonization, and missionary-run Western education’ (Fafunwa, 2018). This is not to undermine the impact and influence these two religions had on education in the region, but to establish that the indigenous system of education in Africa is as old as Man himself. Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa in his book *History of Education in Nigeria* stated that ‘every society has its own way for training and education its youth be it in a simple or complex way. This is because of the existence of man, education has always been his concern. What differs is the method applied, and the goal set by a people, society, tribe, or nation’ (Fafunwa, 2018). Even in the Western world, going back in history, the standard set to acknowledge who is educated or not differed. The Romans favored oratorical and military training. With that, you

are recognized as a first-class citizen and among the elites. The Greek sees one who is educated as a mentally and physically balanced individual. The English knight, priest, and Lord of a particular house are all considered to be elites that are well-educated. In Africa, a man who is hardworking, noble, probably a hunter or trader, who can communicate effectively and is wise in counseling is perceived to be well educated. ‘This is because the main goal of education in Africa is to be able to function effectively. It is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Preparation for adulthood, induction into society, and being able to face one’s social responsibilities. A form of participatory education that includes ritual imitations, recitations, and demonstrations, where skills like cooking, fishing, farming, hunting, weaving, trading, and the like are mastered. An educational system which includes manual activities (practical), intellectual training, and character building’ (Fafunwa, 2018).

‘The Christian missionaries started the Western education system in Nigeria in 1842. This was mainly around the Lagos area (Badagry and Abeokuta) which is part of today's western Nigeria’ (Amaele, 2009). ‘The first contact the Christian missionaries made was in September 23, 1842, in Badagry, Lagos, by Reverend Thomas freeman and Mr. and Mrs. de Graft of Wesleyan Methodist Mission in Ghana (then called Gold Coast), built a school and started a mission after which Thomas traveled further to Abeokuta (one of the cities in western Nigeria) to also start a mission work marking the beginning of Christian activity in western Nigeria’ (Ajala, 1980). ‘Western education, therefore, has been well established in this region for half a century before it extended to other parts of the country (Ajala, 1980).

In view of this, the western part of Nigeria became closer to the colonial masters. They were present in governmental positions since they were the most educated according to the British. ‘The British perceived them to be ahead of all other Nigerian tribes socially, and economically’ (Ajala, 1980). Islām has been in the Western part of Nigeria before the arrival of the British. Embracing Western education affected the Islamic beliefs of many so much that those willing to get educated had better opportunities of achieving their goals if only to convert to Christianity. Christianity became a dominant religion because former slaves who were predominantly Muslims were forced to adopt Christian names and accept Christianity and ‘the colonial masters affirmed that accepting Christianity is the only way they could render humanitarian and civil (educational) help to them as this will be the only way they (the colonized) can be civilized’ (Thani, 2012). Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 1963) believed that the Christian religion and the Church established in the colonized areas is the white people’s church – i.e., a foreign church and religion that calls to the ways of the oppressor, the white man, and the master not a church that called to the God of the natives colonized. ‘This rendered those Muslims who stuck to their religion in western Nigeria to be backward in the area of Western education, and opportunities to get a job within the

British government, which was largely blamed on the policies of the colonial masters and Christian missionaries' activities' (Thani, 2012).

4.4 Challenges Facing Islamizing Education in Western Nigeria

Education according to the Islamic perspective has many definitions. This may differ according to the understanding and research of who is speaking about it. Some summarized it to be a character development known as *tarbiyah*, and others see it as an Islamic education which involves the study of the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and other Islamic values and teachings. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas defined it as 'Recognition and acknowledgment, progressively instilled into a man of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition and acknowledgment of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence' (Ogunbado, 2016). This implies that it is a process in which humans are enlightened so that they can fulfill the purpose behind their creation which is to contribute meaningfully to the development of the world they live in, and primarily to know how to achieve the goodness of the next world after death by obeying while alive the instructions and guidelines set by their Creator in the world they live in. The late Professor Ismail al-Faruqi saw Islām as 'a religion, a universal and integral part of knowledge process which requires the development of new theories, an Islamic theory of aesthetics rooted in Quranic Monotheism and Islamization of knowledge, and not by engaging in apologetics' (Yusuf, 2021). However, setting up Muslim schools in western Nigeria, and Islamizing the curriculums has many challenges.

4.4.1 Islamization of Knowledge

Islām is a religion that requires applying the middle approach in everything. Laxity or/and extremism in our affairs are frowned upon. Relative to this statement, it is not permissible for a Muslim to strive only to achieve worldly things, including knowledge without a mixture of Islamic knowledge. Allāh says in Surah al-Baqarah verse 200: 'But of mankind, there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter' (al-Hilali and Khan, 1983). al-Imām Abu Abdillah Muhammad bn Ahmad Abu Bakr al-Ansāri al-Qurtubi said: 'This verse addresses the disbelievers. The Arabs during the time of ignorance (before Islām) supplicated for the benefits of worldly things alone and were less concerned about the next world. They supplicated for camels, livestock, and victory over their enemies, and did not supplicate for the next world because they did not know or believe in it. The Muslims should also ponder about this promise of punishment for those who indulge in such' (al-Qurtubi, 2012).

In the following two verses of the same surah, Allāh says: 'And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of fire". Those for them there will allot a share for what they earned. And Allāh is swift in reckoning' (al-Hilali and Khan, 1983). Al-Imām al-Qurtubi said 'there are different

interpretations of the meaning of the goodness of this world and the next. Some said it is knowledge and worship of Allāh. A lot of scholars said it is the combination of favors of this world and the next which is a more accurate interpretation' (al-Qurtubi, 2012). Any knowledge deprived of an Islamic interpretation, or not placed under the view of the word of Allāh (the Qur'ān) and that of His messenger breeds nothing but arrogance. An example is science. While science focuses mainly on possibilities, al-Islām is more concerned about permissibility. In Vitro fertilization (IVF) is a medical procedure whereby fertilization of a male sperm and that of a female egg takes place outside the womb (uterus) of a woman; a test tube in a laboratory most of the time. This is a possibility. The permissibility that the Shari'ah (Laws of Allāh) looks at for example is fertilizing the egg of a woman and the sperm of a man that is not legally married. When a scientist who carries out such a procedure graduated from an institution where there are no curriculums on Islamization of the knowledge he acquired, he cares less about the permissibility. The reason why such scientists today see religion as a non-contributing factor to the knowledge they acquired forgetting that it is Allāh that bestowed that knowledge on them, and the knowledge and its carrier both belong to Allāh. Allāh says in surah as-Sāffāt verse 96: 'While Allāh has created you and what you make' (al-Hilali and Khan, 1983). ash-Sheikh Muhammad b. Ali as-Sābuni said concerning this verse: 'Yes, I swear by Allāh the Most-High that He created you and created your deeds. Everything was created by Him. Why do you worship what was created and leave the Creator? Do you not reason with your senses O people?!' (as-Sābuni, 2000). Worshipping something else other than Allāh does not necessarily mean an action that involves movement or rituals. Giving the rights of Allah to any of His creation is also considered an act of worship.

To change this impending catastrophe, especially in western Nigeria, Muslim educators in this region must first master each modern discipline in order to be well informed about it, have a good command of the subject, and be a professional in the field. The second step is to acquire sound Islamic knowledge. This is because, without it, it becomes impossible to Islamize the subject or see the need in doing so. The effort to remove or ignore the role of Allāh in creation by pushing for theories like that of the big bang, evolution by natural selection and their likes are being studied by Muslim students who get confused when they read in the Qur'ān that Allah is the Creator of all things. 'The spiritual torture this has caused the Muslim youth is alarming, and the Islamic world is fully aware of the rape of the Islamic soul taking place right before their eyes. The reason why Muslim educators must as a matter of urgency integrate the Western curriculum into Islamic knowledge by either reinterpreting, amending, adding, or eliminating any information that is not on par with Islamic ethics and morals' (IIIT, 1989). Naqib al-Attas's two methods suggested Islamizing modern western knowledge by first Isolating it, then infusing Islamic elements seems to be the easiest and short-term achievable method in realizing this noble task.

4.4.2 Incompetence of Islamic Teachers

Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish existentialist philosopher, theologian, poet, social critic, and religious author said 'To be a teacher in the right sense is to be a learner. Instructions begin when the teacher learns from the learner. Put yourself in his place so that you may understand what he understands and the way he understands' (Hong & Hong, 1992). A science student memorizes Boyce's law and gets an "A" without knowing how the theory is applied in chemistry. The result is having students graduate as brilliant in theory, but dullards in practical application and useless to the development of society. Paulo Freire in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2009) emphasized the teacher-student relationship and effective teaching methodology. He compared the teacher to a narrative subject and the student, to a patient and a listening object. 'The teacher teaches a topic completely alien to the students. He fills them with the contents of his narrations that are detached from reality. Words that are hollow alienated are emptied of their concreteness' (Freire, 2009).

Mentoring of old and new teachers, introducing them to new administrative skills, and seeing to their welfare are all required to enhance their commitment and improvement in passing on knowledge. Amos Oyetunde Alabi in his article 'Mentoring New Teachers and Introducing Them to Administrative Skills' (Alabi, 2017) defined mentoring as 'a system where those with lots of knowledge and experience render help and advice to those at work or younger people preparing for work. It is also a complex and multi-dimensional process of guiding, supporting, teaching, and positively influencing a beginning or new teacher' (Alabi, 2017).

The scholars have a saying: "a mentee will be what the mentor is". To be a mentor, one should be:

- a. Knowledgeable: This is important. An in-depth knowledge about the field he or she intends to pass on. This is because the one who does not have cannot give,
- b. Wisdom: Allāh says in Surah al-Baqarah verse 269: 'He (Allāh) grants *Hikmah* (Wisdom) to whom He pleases, and he, to whom *Hikmah* is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding' (al-Hilali & Khan, 1983). '*Hikmah* in Arabic literally means wisdom. In this verse, it means knowledge, the understanding of the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and one's ability to act in the correct and right way (al-Hilali & Khan, 1983).
- c. Patience: Those he intends to mentor, and guide are naturally low in knowledge, how to relate with people, or appreciate their efforts. If he is patient, with time all these negative traits that might be found in the mentee will turn positive.
- d. Humility: Just as wisdom complements the knowledge, humility complements the respect people have for those who possess it. People react to how they are treated. When

a mentor is humble and respectful, the mentee reciprocates with love and respect for him or her.

- e. Sincerity: This is to have the intention that the knowledge shared or transferred is for the sake of Allāh. To please Allāh alone and expect reward from Him alone. This will help if any disappointment comes from the mentee, or the efforts put in are not appreciated or complimented.

If he or she intends to grow and learn, the mentee should make efforts to:

- a. Be polite: When a student shows respect to those he or she is learning from, it opens new ways for him or her to grow.
- b. Be humble: Learning new things requires humility. Whenever the companions of the Prophet were asked by him about what they do not know, they always respond by saying “Allāh and His messenger know best”. Rushing to respond to questions presented by the mentor, or having the “I know it all” attitude will be a means of deficiency in knowledge. Understanding the question before answering is considered to be having half of the answer ready.

The messenger of Allāh ﷺ is the best example any human can learn from. Allāh says in surah al-Ahzab verse 21: ‘Indeed, in the Messenger of Allāh (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow, for him who hopes for (the meeting with) Allāh and the last day, and remembers Allāh much’ (al-Hilali & Khan, 1983). Al-Imām Muhammad bin Salih al-‘Uthaymin explained this verse to mean ‘ Emulating the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in all things is good. This is because he is infallible from making mistakes in the legislation. This is not applicable to others than him because in relation to emulating them, it could be good or bad. Emulating the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ must be done by following his deeds, sayings, and beliefs. If one follows his sayings, but not his beliefs and deeds, such a person cannot be said to be emulating the Prophet ﷺ. Emulating him has to be in deeds, words, believes, and actions. This is why every student of knowledge, one whom Allāh has bestowed knowledge upon should be active in the society he is. His knowledge should not be in books alone, but to be used to benefit people. Such a person should not say “I have memorized this or know that” but does not apply it. Where is the benefit of that? Or he says “I am in my house. If anyone comes (to benefit from me) I will teach him. If not, I will not”. It is imperative to broadcast awareness of knowledge among Muslims especially during this time because people are returning back to the previous times of ignorance. They require knowledge and guidance (mentorship) because they are inclined towards bad lifestyles. If students of knowledge take charge in mentoring people in these affairs just like our Prophet ﷺ used to, there will be lots of goodness in it’ (al-‘Uthaymin, 2012).

4.4.3 Financial Commitments of Parents

‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (May Allāh be pleased with them both) narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Listen attentively, all of you are shepherds and all of you will be asked about his flock. The Imām (Leader) is a shepherd and will be asked about his flock (subjects). The man is the shepherd of his family and will be asked over his flock (the family). A woman is the guardian of her husband’s home and his children and she will be held responsible for them. The servant of a man is a shepherd over the property of his master and will be held responsible for it. Listen attentively, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock’ (al-Bukhari, 2012). It was also recorded by al-Imām Muslim b. al-Hajjaj in his Sahih Muslim hadith number 1829. Ignorance is from a lack of knowledge. The cure is to study. Studying entails paying for the services rendered by the teachers. A responsibility that lies on the head of the household, the father. Allāh says in surah at-Talaq verse 7: ‘Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allāh has given him. Allāh puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. Allāh will grant after hardship, ease’ (al-Hilali & Khan, 1983). al-Imām Ismāil bn ‘Umar Ibn Kathīr (may Allāh have mercy upon him) said about the meaning of this verse: ‘That is, for a father to spend on his child in relation to his capabilities’ (Ibn Kathīr, 2009). Also, In this verse:

- a. The instruction to spend on one’s family is clearly stated.
- b. To spend according to what Allāh has provided for a man is permitted.
- c. Allāh will not burden a man or take him into account for what he is sincerely incapable of providing for his family.
- d. Everyone has been given *rizq* (provision) by Allāh and is expected to spend from his provision. An act that can be possible only with the noble trait of self-contentment.
- e. Refusing to be financially responsible according to one’s capability is sinful since it will imply that such a person is refusing to obey the commandment of Allāh.

Thawbān, the freed slave of the messenger of Allāh ﷺ said that he ﷺ said: ‘The best dīnār (money) a man spends is the dīnār (money) spent on his dependents (children), a dīnār he spends on his riding animal for the sake of Allāh, and a dīnār he spends on his companions for the sake of Allāh’ (Sahih Muslim, Hadith: 994). Abu Qilābah said the Prophet ﷺ started with spending on one’s children. Abu Qilābah then said: “what man earns a greater reward than a man who spends on his young dependents (children) so that he spares them from begging, or so that Allāh benefits them through him and make them become independent” (Sahih Muslim, Hadith: 994, Hilyatul Awliya, vol. 2 pg. 283). A reflection for those who are eager to preserve the Islamic religious values of their children and ensure

for them the combination of two types of knowledge (Western and Islamic) that will give them an edge, by the permission of Allāh, among their pairs.

5. CONCLUSION

Proper and comprehensive Islamic methodology is required which primarily should be by seeking guidance from the two main divine sources in Islām. The Qur’ān and Sunnah (saying and teachings of the Prophet ﷺ). The advantage compared to Western education is that even when challenged by those who lack manners, or one finds himself in a situation whereby exchange of ideas in a scholarly manner is required, haughtiness and arrogance are avoided. Islām emphasizes two types of knowledge: Revealed knowledge that comes from Allāh with defined instructions and application of reasoning in relative to necessity, and earthly knowledge in which Allāh has permitted us to use the intellect He gave us’ (Anzar, 2003). A Muslim student must recognize this. It is not permissible to touch a woman who is not a wife, or close relative. What happens when such a woman falls or faints and no one is present to rescue her but a male? A man needs an urgent operation to save his life but there are no male doctors around to carry this out. Is he to be left alone to die or have the available female doctor attend to him? The redline is to know that the free will and senses that are given to humans by Allāh should work under the revelations of the Creator and not at par or above it. That will enable humans to appreciate the bounties of Allāh, avoid arrogance, and not be among the ungrateful.

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