



جامعة سورهج

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جمعية الثقافة من أجل التنمية

The religious education in the future schools: Between the pioneering and dependency

By

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The Global Era

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The global era has transformed local or regional phenomena, global and visa versa. The people of the world are unified into a single society that functions together. A combination of economical, technological, socio-cultural and political forces have broken down borders and increase prosperity to the winners. The global era leaves no room to be soft, slow or unaware.

Communication becomes crucial, and information a commodity. They are no longer material-based, and occur within the global socio-cultural dimensions. Industrial information has changed the nature of work and created new businesses, products and services with high competitive level and in global proportion. The winners are those possessing the market and not necessarily the capital.

Present day global dynamic render so many things obsolete in a short period of time.

The only things that is absolutely right and will never become obsolete are The Holy Koran, The Hadith, and the teachings of the holy prophet Mohammed SAW. We should capitalize on this in setting principles and actions, for it has to be right.

II. The World of Education

Being the foundation of human development the education industry is be the determining and driving force behind the dynamics of change. We all know education shapes the future, the winner in education holds the future. An ideal school for an ideal future is not difficult to characterized, yet to create one would take a combination of all the disciplines, the best of management, the right people, the right strategy and tremendous effort.

Like planning a product, education should be associated and planned to meet the needs of the users of educational organizations, local and global. It is no longer business as usual, the faster changing world, and environment makes it compulsory to predict global trends where we have to be very particular in not giving the students knowledge, information or skills that will be obsolete when they graduate.

But above all education should be delivered with passion and enjoyable.

A. Religious Education

In secular usage, religious education is the teaching of a particular religion and its varied aspects —its beliefs, doctrines, rituals, customs, rites, and personal roles. In Western and secular culture, religious education implies a type of education which largely separate from academia, and which generally regards religious belief as a fundamental tenet and operating modality, as well as a prerequisite condition of attendance.

The secular concept is substantially different from societies that adhere to religious law, wherein "religious education" connotes the dominant academic study, and in typically religious terms, teaches doctrines which define social customs as "laws" and the violations thereof as "crimes," or else misdemeanors requiring punitive correction.

Since people within a given country often hold varying religious and non-religious beliefs, government-sponsored religious education can be a source of conflict. Countries vary widely in whether religious education is allowed in government-run schools (often called "public schools"). Those that allow it also vary in the type of education provided.

People oppose religious education in public schools on various grounds. One is that it constitutes a state sponsorship or establishment of whatever religious beliefs are taught. Others argue that if a particular religion is taught in school, children who do not belong to that religion will either feel pressure to conform or be excluded from their peers. Proponents argue that religious beliefs have historically socialized people's behavior and morality. They feel that teaching religion in school is important to encourage children to be responsible, spiritually sound adults.

B. Treatment of religious education in different countries

In Indonesia's which is predominantly Moslem, public schools students belonging to minority religions, like Christian, Buddhist and Hindus enjoy religious education pertaining to their respective belief in separate classrooms.

Supplementary religious education can also be obtained through private tutoring at home, or respective religious establishments.

Unlike Indonesia, in the United States, religious education is often provided through supplementary "Sunday school", "Hebrew school", catechism classes, etc. taught to children at their family's place of worship, either in conjunction with worship services or some other time during the week, after weekday school classes. Some families believe supplementary religious education is inadequate, and send their children to private religious schools, called parochial schools when they are affiliated with a specific parish or congregation. Many faiths also offer private college and graduate-level religious schools, which may be accredited as colleges. Under U.S. law, religious education is forbidden in public schools, except from a neutral, academic perspective. For a teacher or school administration to endorse one religion is considered an infringement of the "establishment clause" of the First Amendment. The boundaries of this rule are frequently tested, with court cases challenging the treatment of traditional religious holidays, displays of religious articles and documents such as the Ten Commandments, the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance (which since 1954 has described the U.S. as "one nation under God"), and how prayer should be accommodated in the classroom.

In Canada, religious education has a varying status. On the one hand publicly funded Catholic education is mandated by various sections of the Constitution Act, 1867. More recently however, with a growing level of multiculturalism, particularly in Ontario, debate has emerged as to whether publicly funded religious education for one group is permissible. Newfoundland for example, withdrew Catholic funding in 1995. Quebec abolished religious education funded by the state through the Education Act, 1998 which took effect on July 1 of that same year. It re-organized the schools along linguistic rather than religious lines. In Ontario however, the move to abolish funding has been strongly resisted. As of 2005, funding from the taxes of those who specifically request to have their educational taxes allotted to Catholic education, remains in place and the foreseeable future. However, a debate similar to the American school voucher debate has emerged with the announcement in the 2001 Provincial budget that a system of vouchers for religious education may be on the horizon. However,

this debate has faded due in large part to the election of a new government in 2003.

Some European countries and their former colonies maintain a state-supported religion, usually either Lutheran, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox Christian. It is taught in a special class of the government schools. This policy aims to build and maintain a national identity. In many countries families can get permission to withdraw children from these classes. Many families with other religions use religious schools. The state supports one (usually) central seminary which trains pastoral staff for the state church. Other religions may support private seminaries, but these are smaller and not as well funded. Religions other than the state religion, even if ancient and respectable, are often deprecated in the national cultures (e.g. they are called "cults" in the news media).

Most of the federal states of Germany, which has a long history of almost even division between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, have an arrangement where the religious bodies oversee the training of mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious education teachers. In one of the federal states this includes Orthodox Christian teachers as well. The training is supposed to be conducted according to modern standards of the humanities, at mostly state-run colleges and universities. Those teachers teach religion in the public schools, paid by the state but answerable to the churches for the content of their teaching; however they must not teach behavior that is against the law. Children who don't belong to a mainstream religion or wish to opt out for another reason must usually attend neutral classes in "Ethics" or "Philosophy" instead. From the age of 14, children may decide on their own if they want to attend classes and which. For younger children it is the decision of the parents. The state also subsidizes religious schools by paying up to 90% of their expenses. These schools have to follow the same curricula as the public schools of their federal state, however.

Currently there is an ongoing controversy about the introduction of Islamic religious education. While there are around three million Muslims, mostly of Turkish origin, now in the country, most of them are not members of large religious bodies with whom the states could arrange such matters. Some religious bodies are publicly suspected to further anti-constitutional

values, such as inequality of men and women before the law. However, proponents of Islamic religious education in public schools say that it is better than having the children go to sometimes fundamentalist and always completely uncontrolled native-language "Qur'an Schools" in the afternoon, with which even many of the children's parents are not too happy.

In Austria the situation is similar. Because of its history as a multi-national empire that included the largely Islamic Bosnia, Sunni Islam has been taught side by side with Roman Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox classes since the 19th century. But also children belonging to minority religions, like Jewish, Buddhist and Latter Day Saints enjoy denominational religious education. At many schools, secular classes in Ethics can be attended alternatively.

In France, the state recognizes no religion and does not fund religious education. However, the state subsidizes private teaching establishments, including religious ones, under strict conditions of not forcing religion courses on students and not discriminating against students according to religion. An exception is the area of Alsace-Moselle where, for historical reasons (it was ruled by Germany when this System was instituted in the rest of France), the state supports public education in some religions mostly in accord with the German model.

In the UK, Catholic, Church of England and Jewish schools have long been supported within the state system with all other schools having a duty to provide compulsory religious education. There is no National Curriculum for religious education. The content of the Syllabus is agreed by Local Education Authorities, in the guidance of council comprising members of different religious groups, teachers and local councilors.

In traditional Islamic education, children are taught to read and sometimes speak Arabic and memorize the major suras of the Qur'an. Many countries have state-run schools for this purpose. Traditionally, a settlement may pay a mullah to teach children. There is a historic tradition of Sufi mullahs who wander and teach, and an ancient tradition of religious universities. However, the study of Islam does not suffice. Students must pass the state mandated curriculum to pass. Religious scholars often serve as judges, especially for criminal and family law (more rarely for commercial

law). In Islamic countries, non-Islamic religions are tolerated as personal beliefs, but not as public teaching.

In the Middle East, many Catholic schools are French-controlled so besides learning English and Arabic and French. While following the mandated curriculum, Catholic school students in the Middle East also learn theology and the parochial church's liturgical language.

Similarly, children receiving a traditional Jewish education are often taught some Hebrew, and students at Greek Orthodox schools typically learn some Greek. These traditions generally hope that by passing on the traditional language, the students will also retain a better memory of their culture's history and a stronger sense of cultural identity.

In the People's Republic of China, formal religious education is banned except in licensed schools of theology, which are usually college-level and above. These colleges are state-supported and usually very small, with limited enrollments and budgets. Religious education usually occurs in scheduled sessions in private homes. Religious teachers usually move on a weekly or monthly circuit, staying as guests in private houses in exchange for teaching.

In Thailand, Burma and other majority Buddhist societies, Buddhist beliefs are taught in school, often by monks. Young men are expected to live as monks for several months at one point of their lives.

In Japan, Buddhism, activity, reinforced by public ceremonies and parades. There are also some Christian schools, but the majority of their students are not themselves Christians and do not receive religious education at these schools.

The Church Educational System of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) provides religious education in approximately 135 countries.

Religious education is just a subject in a secular school, teaching mostly about faith and the religion being taught depends on the predominance of a certain religion where the school is located.

In this global era, more and more parents prefer to send to their children to religious schools. The main reasons parents give in supporting faith schools in the United Kingdom are:

- ❖ To be educated in the same values and beliefs as their family (35%);
 - ❖ Good discipline (28%);
 - ❖ Ethos and religious (27%)
 - ❖ Good exam results(10%)
- (Jeremy Henzel)

B. Dependency

Based on the previous deliberation, it is clear that religious education has dependencies in so many aspects, mostly political, social and economical. This has been going on for generations, and very unlikely to change in the near future in most countries, especially those of western culture or predominantly non Muslim.

III. Religious Education as The Pioneering Role in Education

A. Spiritualization of Education

Religious education should play the pioneering role in education, constituting all other discipline.

Spiritualization of education can be done through the integration of religious aspects into the organizational and school culture, also most importantly the disciplines being taught to the students.

The organization and school would be conditioned in a sophisticated way that every aspect of it confines to Islamic teachings.

In Islam there are three things that needs to be observed in depth to become a true Muslims (Insan Kamil), namely the Qur'an, Hadith and Akhlaq. (Al Buraikan, 1998:18).

Inamori, president of at well known company believes that his duty as a manejer starts with "providing material and spiritual welfare of his employees." (Peter M. Senge: 135).

Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall of Harvard University and Oxford University through a very comprehensive research proves that spiritual intelligence is the ultimate intelligence.

Ramachandran and his team from the University of California found the existence of God-Spot in the human brain. All the more proves how vital the role of religion is in the success of a human life.

B. Integration – The Fahmul Quran Curriculum

The Fahmul Quran Curriculum is an integrated combination of modern education and Islamic Teachings, associating the subject matter (history, geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, etc) with the values, teaching, guidelines stated in The Quran, Hadith, and Sharia.

The curriculum is delivered with active, creative, fun, dynamic and innovative approach.

It aims to elegantly manifest Islamic values and teachings in advanced civilization to ensure Sharia as the spirit and culture within a society that dynamically interact in the global era.

Islamic law covers all aspects of life, from matters of state, like governance and foreign relations, to issues of daily living.

This has been the aspiration of many nations where Sharia is to be loved and proud of as a strong foundation and driving force in creating a civil, modern and advanced society, which citizens are broad minded, loving technology yet honest, noble, resolute, trustworthy, polite, hospitable, and loyal.

Sharia practice should not based on fear of punishment but of understanding, love and sincerity to obtain world and heavenly happiness.

This approach emphasize on the beauty of the Sharia, where punishment is applied to educate with love and understanding as the basis.

Sharia is actually very broad, covering all aspects of live, relating to good governance, clean, just with high integrity, Islamic economy which brings prosperity, well structured society, and education with Islamic values which enroot to every aspect of modern knowledge with dynamic application

The irony is that not every Moslem understands what Sharia actually is, how and where the source is from, its limits, where to start etc.

IV. Manifestation - The Future School

We know of a variety of stated or unstated religious schools based on entity (public or private), and market (low, middle, or upper market).

A future school would integrate Islamic values and teachings in its visions culture, management, operation and development.

Contrary to most schools which, which depend on tuition or charity, the future school will be financially independent and ever expanding. It will horizontally and vertically create strategic business units that start up by taking advantage of the captive market of the school (to gain cost efficiency and cost repatriation), then expand to the general market. An example of this would be a school bus that is also rented out, catering service, teachers training, short courses etc. Portion of the revenue of these business units will then be re-invested back into the school.

A. Visioning

The future school should set its core values based on Islamic teachings, core purpose based on its objectives, with visionary goals based on the ultimate objective of being a Moslem.

B. Leadership (Culturing)

School culture depends on the character and culture of the governing leadership. As a leader, business man and warrior, the Prophet Muhammad SAW is a perfect example of this, making Islam the fastest growing religion in the world, through culturing.

Practicality of some values that is embedded in Islam that are seldom observed would be hygiene, eco-friendly or green school (non polluting, energy efficient, recycling etc)

Habits consists of Knowledge, skill and desire. Leadership is expected to bring the organization to accept the challenge, establish confidence and provide guidance or coaching.

For example, the use of recycled materials will substantially cut down operating cost.

In Islam networking is highly encouraged and neighbors should be cared for like relatives. An organization acts and reacts the same way as a human being. Thus an Islamic school should behave like a true Moslem or follow what the Prophet Muhammad SAW has set as an example.

Staging events and programs involving local and international communities and organization will broaden the schools network and open up new opportunities.

1. Trust

Trust is the first ingredient in effective management where every component in the organization should trust the strategy implemented (mission and ability to succeed), the organization it self (fair policy and implementation), and trust between them selves (good interest and intention). As in Islam, one has to have positive prejudice, trust and confidence towards a fellow Moslem.

2. Motivation

Motivation is the driving force that brings the organization and the entire management, staffs and workers close to their objective.

In Islam positive and negative reinforcement as a function of motivation is covered these differentiation halal, makruh, mubah, haram and in sunnah and Fard.

Every individual in the organization should believe that effort will lead to desired performance, and performance to reward. This equation works both ways.

C. Mission and objectives

Beside from financial (prosperity) and development objectives (sustainable growth), the future school would include objectives that carry other Islamic values.

D. Micro and Macro Environment Assessment

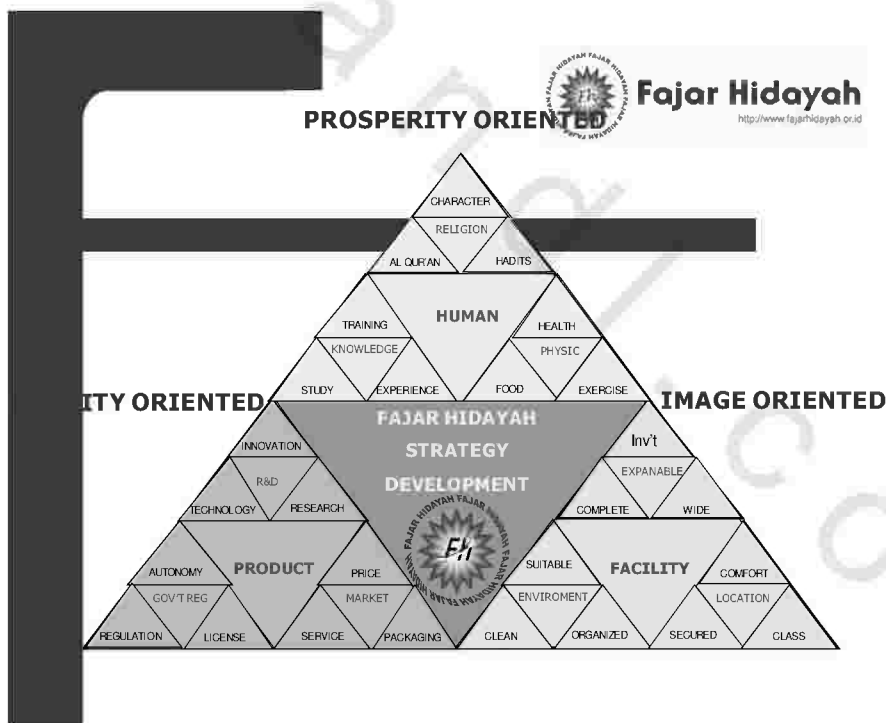
Islam teaches us to know one self, observe and aware of ones surroundings or environment. The future school should know and develop its know and develop its strength, know its weaknesses, recognize opportunity and considerate to threat. It will also need to know its

immediate direct or indirect pressure area (barrier, rivalry, threat etc) and respond to it well.

E. Strategy Formulation, Implantation and Evaluation/control

What most people know as strategic management (formulation, implementation, evaluation and control) to achieve competitive advantage have actually been practiced and exemplified by the Prophet. In the future school, the management would make use of modern strategic management differentiated by employing Islamic Knowledge.

Classically strategies would be implemented in three different levels, organizational, operational and functional level, generic strategies refine them. But Islam always take account of the community, so here there is an additional strategy to be implemented relating the school and the community. Corporate social responsibility which is rather new to most, is pointed out in Islam and was already exercised in the past by the Prophet.



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