The Impact of religious Education on the Learners

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Abstract

The first teacher and mentor of the human beings is God. He has announced to the human beings the leading path of mankind by the prophets and in the form of holy books including the Holy Quran. The aim of this study is the evaluation of education in the view of Islam and Quran, and its impact on the learners. The method of this study is descriptive-analytical. The findings suggest that from the viewpoint of Islam, education has been one of the most important human issues and in order for people to reach real perfection and to shape their human identity for nearness to God, they must enjoy an accurate and complete upbringing, therefore, in order to guide people from ignorance and error, [God] has sent a set of religious and moral teachings in the Book of Quran to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and, to achieve a proper upbringing model, by use of the Holy Quran one can achieve these educating principles. Some of these great goals that are directly related to human education include: guidance and development of the mankind, realization of purity and pure life in the human entity, realization of piety, nearness to God and his contentment, reaching the position of thralldom of God.

Keywords: Religion, Education, Educator, Learner.
Introduction

The creatures need God both in the realization of the existence and in the attainment of upbringing in the path to perfection, i.e. God is both, the creator and the educator of the creatures. In fact the first real mentor and teacher of mankind is God. Because He is who has created all sentient forces and author agents of knowledge in mankind. God has stated his teachings in the scriptures and in the language of the prophets. He says in the Holy Quran: "these are the verses of the Wise Book (A full content and sound book)".

The purpose of sending the prophets also has been educating and guiding of people toward felicity. They have come to bring, with proper education, the human beings, from low levels and bestial darkness to high levels and light of humanity. When the mankind becomes an educator, a relationship between the educator and his creator and Lord will be established. Based on this, the books and the teachings of the prophets including the Holy Quran, all are toward educating. The followers of the prophets, too, as a mentor in the path of upbringing should observe some rules with inspiration from the prophets' teachings in the Holy Books like the Holy Quran including:

a. Inviting the learners to the house of peace and calmness.

b. Guiding each intelligent person to the amount of his aptitude.

c. Giving proper remuneration toward individuals' deeds.

d. Giving an appropriate response to the needs and requests of people (Sharafi, 2010, P. 257).

Definitely with regard to educating the mankind, his recognition is important and this matter has engaged many scientists in various scientific disciplines. In the teachings of divine religions, especially Islam, educating the mankind is one of the main axes, and the creation of the world, sending of prophets and holy Books has been done for him to achieve the ultimate felicity (MesbahYazdi, 2009). So if the man is unknown, it will not be possible to establish for him a targeted educational system and to determine the goals and principles of his educating. All elements and components of the education system, including objectives, principles, methods, factors and barriers to education, to some extent, depends on the situation and condition of the mankind, and hence, in the field of education, recognition of the human and understanding of his features has absolute necessity (Beheshti, 2008).

2. Discussion

Scriptures emphasize and pay attention to education of the mankind very much. Quran, as a Holy Book that contains valuable hints in the field of education, not only is not an exception, but also has provided valuable religious and moral teachings related to this issue, that with having these resuscitative teachings, its followers wipe away physical and mental pollution from themselves and prepare themselves for living in the other world and with their Lord, so that this way, they attain both the God's contentment and his merci and forgiveness. Quran, which is sent down for educating and guiding of people, has very valuable doctrines
related to upbringing. This Holy Book teaches, to those who, for a few days, are guests in the territory of the mankind and the world, the man and the world as they are, and the human being as it should be, and the world as one can enjoy it. This sacred text includes all of the mankind's benefit and corruptions and intelligences and this point that what this creature should do and what should avoid of (Jafari Tabrizi, 2007).

For the mankind, religion has been the deterrent and preservative factor from inclination and perversity, and directs the human instincts toward the right path and modifies his human desires and needs. It cleans the egos, saves them from downfall and decaying and, prevents them from committing sin and deceptive and avidity enhancing affairs. Therefore, if religion becomes firm in the human entity, it will put a warning power in him that prevents him from committing the sin, and takes him away from perversion and inspires him to do good deeds and teaches him pioneering in the righteous fields (Al-Qurashi, 1983).

A large number of the verses of Quran are about the mankind and issues related to him. According to these verses, it can be found that Islam pays particular attention to the man and his upbringing. So, to find a good upbringing model, one should refer to Quran. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "I was sent for educating". In that known story that he entered into the mosque and saw two groups of people in one of which people were praying and in the other, they were engaged in teaching and learning, the Prophet said: "Both are good. But I'm sent to teach", and then he himself went and sat among those who were teaching and learning (Motahari, 2010, P. 22).

The wonderful role of education in human life is not hidden from any wise man and so far its necessity has not been questioned. The man, through proper education, can reach the peak of values and gain a temperament of an angel, and if he does not have the right education, not only his talents and potentials will be wasted, but also he will be doomed to the animal level, even lower than it, and will fall into decay because the human, at his birth, is without knowledge and understanding and education. With the passage of time and gradually, through direct and indirect educating, his potential talents will be actualized and will grow and develop. However it should be noted that the flourishing of talents and human values depends on the proper way of teaching and upbringing of the human and for him to reach the absolute perfection, the man must enjoy the proper upbringing and education (Shokuhi, 1989).

Education that is based on religious principles brings the most significant victories for the community and removes areas of concern from the society and wipes out factors of disobedience and rebellion, as it bestows on the man the merit of living in his/her home with his/her family (Al-Qurashi, 1983).
3. Religious Education

1.3 Definition of Education

Literally, the word education means developing and adding and, as a phrase it is trying to create a favorable change in the person and his/her steady and gradual perfection (Shokuhi, 1989, P. 2), (Ghaemi, 1989, p. 23).

"Education is a set of deliberate and targeted actions or effects of a mature and experienced man on a non-mature or inexperienced man in order to establish moral and scientific qualities or professional skills. In other words, education is providing of the contexts and factors of actualization or flourishing of personal talents for his disposal growth and development toward desired goals based on a measured program." (Kardan, et al., 2012, P. 336).

2.3 Need for Education

The human is a marvelous, complex creature with extensive existential dimensions and angles and in his entity there lie mysteries that cause him to be considered as the compass point and the center of the circle of existence, because his abilities and talents are infinite, his intellect and wisdom is admirable, his determination is surprising and his worthy perfection is marvelous. The mankind, alone, is a reflection of the universe and has capabilities that may be like angels or even may be superior to them and becomes the Caliph of God on earth. (Beheshti, 2008).

Holy Quran as the educator of mankind in different ages, from young to old, has stated the monumental task of education directly and sometimes indirectly. One of the important parts of education, is upbringing of children that Quran, while expressing stories of the prophets and their children (like the story of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, etc.) in various Surahs, has informed the mankind of the educational issues of the human.

The climax of Quran's teachings in this context is in Luqman Surah, in which the God Almighty, from the tongue of Luqman, addressing his son, has directly stated different aspects of education. (Gheraati, 2008) "Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: O’ my son! Join not in worship [others] with Allah, for false worship is indeed highest wrong-doing".

4. Goals of Religious Education

The flourishing of human intelligenes in physical, intellectual, social, moral, and religious aspects and, meeting the needs of community in military, political, cultural, social and, etc. aspects is among the goals of education (Alavi, 2007, pp 48-49). The ultimate goal of education in Islam, is providing the preliminaries of moving and steering of man in the
right path and his ascension to the human perfection phase and returning him to the position
to which the foundation of his creation is based, so that in the shade of good deeds, he passes
the levels of science and faith, and every moment make himself closer to the Almighty God
who is the final destination of this journey of truth. In this path, the man is invariably faced
with three linked issues:
First, the man, with all of his talents and resourced, should be provided.
Second, the society and the history and all its aspects and resources should be at the service
of education.
Third, the world should be at the service education.
The educational goals stated by Quran, are in accordance with mettle, and in harmony with it.
Moving toward God causes the man to use all of his talents and to actualize them. However,
Islam, in upbringing of the human, insists on the principle of rationality and rational
approach. Therefore, in education, blind imitation must be avoided and the educators should
be encouraged to studying and research. (Bijarzehi, 2007).

It should be noted that the need for religion has indigenous root in the depth of human
entity and this innate need outbreak when the mankind encounters complex mysteries of the
world and this facing makes his intellect and wisdom curious about finding answers for a
series of basic questions such as: What is the world? What is the man? Who is the creator of
the world and mankind? From where the mankind comes and what is the purpose of creating
mankind and the world? How were the world and the man started? How do they end? What is
life? What is the world? What is death? Such questions preoccupy the human mind and force
him to find an answer and solution to them (Hojjati, 1979). These questions and answers have
deep ties with religion and with the direct impacts on people's religious education.
Some religious teachings that are directly related to human educating include:

1.4 Guidance and growth

Man is one of the secrets of creation, but noblest of all creatures of this world. Of
course, the human baby potentially, and not actually, has this nobility so that some scholars
consider the human baby more unable and weaker than that of any animal in meeting his
needs, so his educational growth is slower and longer (Shokuhi, 1989, P. 18). Therefore, the
Lord, about the basic need of the mankind to steering and growth says: "He said: our Lord is
He who gave to each [created] thing its form and nature, and further, gave [it] guidance."
(Quran, Ta Ha, 50).

Guidance as the ultimate goal is sometimes expressed in Quran with the word
"growth". Growth, in Quran, means guidance and is contrary to delusion. Guidance (with the
aforementioned meaning) is the ultimate goal for the human. Of course, helping the man by
God and reaching him to destination, is a blessing and it will be given to those who, in any
status of their dignities, step into the path shown by God and become committed to his
criteria. Then, whenever the human becomes compliance with divine criteria in physical, intellectual, moral, social, economic and political aspects, God is to help him to reach his destination, and in this way guidance, as the ultimate goal, will be realized.

2.4 Purity and pure life

According to Islam, Islamic and ethical principles and rules, observe the purity of the human. For example, the principle of unity is introduced as the greater purity, and if any one joins others with Allah, he will lose his innate purity. As well, other provisions and ethical issues and rules are considered purity, and to any extent that there is commitment to them, the mankind will gain more purity. Then, purity, in its broad sense, includes beliefs, ethics and deeds.

Therefore, the ultimate goal in Islamic education is achieving the pure and clean life, and this cleanness includes all human aspects from physical purity to intellectual, moral, social, economic, and political purity and this is that longitudinal relationship which is established between ultimate and intermediate goals. (Bagheri, 2011, P. 78).

3.4 Piety

According to the third and fourth verses of Surah of Al-Baqara, the Holy Quran has considered piety as faith in the unseen, saying prayer, charity of sustenance, faith to the Prophet and what has been revealed to him, faith to what has been revealed to other prophets through inspiration and belief in resurrection. Also, according to verse 77 of Al-Baqara Surah, there has been considered special behavior for the saints and righteous ones, by which, the characters of the veracious and the pious can be achieved. At the beginning of this holy verse it is addressed to the Jews and Christians that: it is not righteousness, to turn your faces towards east or West, but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contacts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain [or suffering] and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. At the end of this verse we read: those who have such beliefs, these are they who are true [to themselves] and these are they who guard [against evil].

4.4 Nearness and attention to God

Nearness means closeness to God and it is obvious that this nearness is dignity nearness not locative nearness. In locative nearness it is the man who is closing to God, because God is always close to the human, at its utmost. Seeking the attention of God is also attached to this nearness, because by the word attention it is meant regarding and noticing God, a transcendent attention that seeks the satisfaction of God, not his punishment.
Therefore, attention is the utmost nearness to God and one of the ultimate goals of education, and therefore, it is necessary that its shadow casts on each of the teaching goals of the human (Baqeri, 2011).

5.4 Worship and Devotion

Based on Quran, the ultimate goal of the human beings is "worshiping" and cognition of God. "I have only created Jinns and men that they may serve me, (And in this way they evolve and come close to me)". Upbringing of human should makes it possible to reach this goal, therefore, "worshiping", is the final goal of educating as well. In a sense we can say that the purpose of creation is worshiping and obeying God's commandments and it is not merely a series of specific deeds and prayers. Hence, the purpose of education is making "devout" not "worshipper", because it is possible to be a worshipper but not a devout, as Satan was worshiping for six thousand years, but he was only a worshiper and not a devout. Devout is one who only believes in God as his Lord. And worshiping, too, is a way that causes the mankind to reach this "divine cognition", that if worshiping does not accomplish this aim, cannot be considered as the ultimate goal of creation (Baqeri, 2011).

Ali (AS), about obedience of God and his consent, said: "the closest and the most qualified people to the prophets are those who are aware of their instructions more than others"; then Imam recited this verse: "the most deserved and the nearest people to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet and those who believe in the Prophet." (Al-E-Imran, 68) Then he said: the friend of Muhammad (PBUH) is one who obeys God, even though his blood tie is distant, and the enemy of Muhammad is one who commits sins even though his blood tie is close (Nahjolbalagheh, Hekmat,96).

According to the concepts expressed in description of the goal it is necessary to consider the relation between them. If we pay attention to the verses that consider worshiping and servitude as the reason for creation of the human being and if we place servitude at the center (of attention) it can be stated that servitude and slavery are the ultimate goal of education. Hence, the greatest attribute used in the Quran for the Prophet (PBUH) is the word Devout. Devoutness, concerns a long and complex process to exit from the domination of factors that have threatened to seize the man. Since the human is a needy creature and is associated with physical, psychological and social needs, has always, in intense moments of need, been exposed to possession of something or someone and changes the need, that exists innately, to objection that is deviant form of that natural matter. Practice of how to get out of this deviation is the description of the way of becoming a devout. Becoming a devout does not mean leaving the circle of neediness, and basically such exit is not possible for the human; neediness is in his entity, and he has always been like this and will be. What a devout tries to get out of, are illusions arisen from neediness that in the fever of these illusions, considers the inanimate objects as his origin and refuge or finds a needy person like himself as his purpose and the leaning point. Therefore, by getting rid of these illusions, one can
regain the true origin of his wish. Of course, the devout will not get free of need; rather he gets rid of illusion and becomes conscious and recognizes his true Lord. Thus, the devout and Lord are two concepts that considering one of them without the other is not possible.

In understanding the concept of education it can be concluded that explanation of education has always been the prophets' aim. Now, in relation to the aim of educating we have understood that servitude is the ultimate goal. Therefore, this end goes back to its origin; and the mankind, with finding a way to servitude responds to the basic issue of his own existence i.e. education and divinity and passes the way that the prophets have shown to him.

If we consider servitude in terms of the effects that that it spreads on human eternity, it can be called pure life and piety. Pure life is a kind of living with its special vital effects and, piety refers to a kind of inner personality in which moods, feelings, thoughts, and intentions are ordered under a special control and recording. Then, if we consider servitude in terms of reaching of the human to his goal, it can be called guidance and growth. The result is that if we consider servitude in terms of reaching the goal and the beloved, it can be called closeness and attention. Thus, God calls, whoever who is in search of closeness, the devout (Baqeri, 2011, pP.73-84).

Conclusion

According to what was mentioned above, it can be concluded that the Quran is a rich source of teachings of Islam and the most fundamental source of it. This book contains overviews and principles that are necessary for human direction and guidance. Quran is the principal axis of education and contains principles that constitute theoretical foundations of Islam. So by referring to Quran, it can be possible to extract the principles of proper upbringing and to provide the mankind with a proper educational model. One of these models in the issue of teaching and learning is the teacher-student relationship that should be sincere and this divine goal should be free from any material profits. It is necessary for the teachers and learners to consider God and his obedience, removing themselves from vices, and directing of the God's servants to the facts of religion, as their ultimate goal in their deeds and efforts. They should not join, in their intention, another goal (Sani, 1988, pp.120-121).

The other point is that according to Quran, the human is a recognizer being and can gain recognition about phenomena that are around him. Quran has introduced a variety of ways through which one can achieve recognition. Given that the human is a recognizer and can achieve recognition through the senses, the mind and heart, the educator, should bear in mind this fact and set his/her curriculum in a way that fosters all of these instruments so that the learner can achieve a comprehensive understanding. The important point is that, no matter how he/she has a favorable human behavior, the teacher will not be accepted by the learners if he/she is scientifically weak and not very knowledgeable. Thus, a balanced character with
the scientific expertise of the teacher makes him/her more valuable and credible in the view of the learners (Shabani, 2008, p.122).

Another point is the kind behavior of the educator with the learners, especially when the learners are very young, exercising this affection is more necessary because it is the best tool for personality development and softening of the individuals' emotions at their early ages (Delshad Tehrani, 2003, p.262).

The other point is for the teacher to avoid discrimination in all of his/her confrontations with the learners, because this leads to distrust.

Another point is the educator's fairness in judgments about the learners. He should reward each of them based on their deeds, and his criteria in evaluation of the learners should be the learner's effort and activity and, factors such as personal emotions, mental issues should not interfere in judging.

One more point is that the position, social, economic and cultural status of the learner should not affect the educator's decision-making and evaluation (White, 1943). At the end, the following is recommended:
a. Broader use of educational concepts derived from the Quran in education.
b. Modeling the lives of the prophets and divine ones in the field of education.
c. Using the religion-oriented principles, methods and educational goals in upbringing and education.
References


