



ILORIN AS A BEACON OF LEARNING AND CULTURE IN WEST AFRICA

**EDITED BY
Z. I. OSENI
A.G.A.S. OLADOSU
B. O. YUSUF
M. A. ADEDIMEJI**

Dr. Mukkah A. Ahmed
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إلورن: منارة العلم والثقافة في غرب أفريقيا

تحرير وتحقيق

أ.د. زكريا إدريس أوبو حسين
أ.د. عبد الغني عبد السلام أولادوشو
أ.د. بدماصي أولنريواجو يوسف
د. محفوظ أديميجي

من منشورات مركز الدراسات الإلورية، جامعة إلورن، إلورن،
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MORAL DEVELOPMENT: SCIENCE EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION AS PERCEIVED BY PEOPLE OF ILORIN, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

T. Akanbi, A. O. Akanbi, M.A. Ahmed and R.B. Ahmed

INTRODUCTION

What is Science?

Science means many things to many people, depending upon the level of understanding of the word. To the scientists, it is a way of thinking, a way of looking at the world around us. It is not just a list of discoveries or just the scheme for naming plants and animals but a product of human thought nurtured by experimentation and application. Science is the most powerful tool for human development and at the same time, for his destruction if negatively used. Science is not just everything in our life on earth, but one of the most important and the most overwhelming achievements of human, arising from his ability to think and communicate.

Science is a body of knowledge. It is an enterprise in which developing nations like Nigeria depend upon to enable them develop in areas of technology (Ajayi, 1991). Abimbola and Omosewo (2006) state that "science can generally be defined as a body of knowledge, a way of investigating and a way of thinking in the pursuit of an understanding of nature" (p.3). Abimbola (2013) described the state of science in national development and explained why advancement in science and technology are necessary for perfect understanding of the universe and that this is a necessity for all. Bajah (1993) elucidated that for the sake of simplicity, science could be attributed to two components as: The mass of information about nature which scientists have accumulated and (ii) the process by which this accumulation will take place. The common feature of this definition is the emphasis placed on the development of thought processes rather than the acquisition of certain scientific facts.

Science education is a form of education that is concerned with sharing science content and process with individuals not traditionally considered part of the scientific community. The learners may be children, college students, or adults within the general public.

What is Science education?

Science Education is the field concerned with sharing science content and process with individuals not traditionally considered part of the scientific community. The learners may be children, college students, or adults within the general public. The field of science education includes work in science content, science process (the scientific method), some social science, and some teaching pedagogy. The standards for science education provide expectations for the development of understanding for students through the entire course of their K-12 education and beyond. The traditional subjects included in the standards are physical, earth, space, and human sciences (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2014).

What is Islamic Education?

The word 'Islam' is an Arabic word which means complete submission to the will of Allah (the Creator, Who nourishes and evolves all things) in thought, word, belief and deed. The main objective of Islamic education is to show the best path by which men and women may realize their true nature and maintain peace with God and His creatures, among themselves. It is also an education that defines man's role on earth, that is, the purpose of creation. Islamic education preaches against all immoral practices and enjoins the doing of good deeds so that there would be justice, security, harmony, tranquility and development in the society. Islamic education preaches good moral to ensure all round development of individuals in the society. Islam teaches moral education in all aspects of life social, political, economic, legal and others. Islamic education according to Education Encyclopaedia (2014) has broader meaning embracing knowledge in general in a framework where the teacher, the student, the school and the syllabus all comply with Islamic principles and teaching.

What is Moral Education?

The word moral comes from a Latin root (*mos, moris*) which means the code or customs of people, the social glue that defines how individuals should live together. Moral education is that education that teaches right or wrong of an action. Moral education gives a set of rules of conduct based on the principle of right conduct rather than on law or custom. First and foremost, we note that words like 'humility', 'truthfulness' and 'justice' are descriptive terms designating particular attitudes or more of behavior. For example, modesty is a quality of measuring human behavior and can be examined from the viewpoint of science and Islamic education. Ahmed (2014) pointed out the importance of morals in the use of Hijab. In the paper, the presenter reiterated the importance of being modest in dressing. The researcher also pointed out that Muslim girls and women should not shy away from decent dressing as this will show a sincere relationship between them and their God. Moral education refers to helping children acquire those virtues or morals that will help them individually live good lives and at the same time become productive, contributing members of their communities Education Encyclopaedia (2014). In this view, moral education should contribute not only to the students' individuals, but also to the social cohesion of a community.

Moral in Science/Islamic Education

Moral education from science education perspective has to do with the recognition of the valued human behavior and misbehavior of the generality of the people in a society. Moral education therefore in science education, is the education that deals with the development of the scientific attitude to life e.g.

- (i) respect for other people's views and opinions;
- (ii) making judgment based on available data or evidence only;
- (iii) critically analyzing situations before conclusion;
- (iv) carrying out guided but scientific observations; and
- (v) realizing the useful application of ethics of science

In science education, moral development that may result from moral instruction is not expected to be a form of learning that is psychological or indoctrination but philosophical. While science education encourages

learning, it can be recalled that Islamic education also cherishes learning and meaningful education. This can be seen in the Holy Quran chapter 2:97-98 where it is stated that the meaning of revelation become manifest to those "who have knowledge and who have understanding". Also, in Quran chapter 2 verse 269, it is written that whosoever has been given knowledge, indeed has been given an abundant good". Quran chapter 39 verse 9 also states" that people who have knowledge are not equal to those who have not". Islamic education, therefore, aims at developing peoples' talents and inspiring lofty ethical values in them. These goals are the main foundation on which Islamic civilization, society and people's personalities are built (Ali, 1934) in (Doi, 1974).

People, especially the scientists generally think that learning in religion is all about indoctrination. This is not true. If the Qur'an encourages learning, it can be deduced that Islamic education also respects or expects people's view and opinion, just like in science education where data are collected, analysed and the result is used to pass appropriate judgment. Prophet Muhammad said in one of his Hadith/sayings: One who proceeds on a path in the pursuit of knowledge, God makes him proceed therewith on a path to the Garden (Paradise). And, verily, the angels spread their wings for the seekers of knowledge out of delight. Verily, every creature of the heaven and the earth asks forgiveness for the seeker of knowledge, even the fish in the sea. The merit of the *'alim* (the learned) over the *'abid* (the devout) is like the merit of the moon over the stars on a full-moon night. The learned are the heirs of the prophets, for the prophets did not leave behind a legacy of wealth but that of knowledge. So whoever partakes of it derives copious benefit. [Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi*, kitab fadl al-'ilm, hadith. This is an agreement between scientific education and Islamic education. Being educated will enable an individual in the society abide by the societal culture, norms and values which is similar to Islamic education that provides Quranic injunctions on total life (Siddiqui, 1980).

Role of Science Educators in Islamic Morals

The role of Science Educators in Islamic Morals cannot be over emphasized, Science Educators should teach concepts and topics as prescribed by the curriculum and should allow students know the importance of being truthful especially in science practicals as this will help them in their various fields of specialization. An example is a medical doctor in training, if the teacher has not been truthful to him or her about

some aspects of the discipline, he or she will later find those aspects difficult when he or she becomes independent.

Also, science educators should make students know the reason why they have to inculcate moral ethics into their work for example, moral dressing, as this will show how responsible they are in their respective places of attachment.

The ethics mentioned above are derived in Islamic morals and will enable the student balance both morally and spiritually.

Components of the Holy Qur'an and Science

The Holy Qur'an is made up of three major parts. These parts are:

- (i) History of people in the religion and the religion
- (ii) Spiritual learning and spiritual development
- (iii) Moral armament.

Islamic education has study areas for philosophy, sociology, economy and psychology of religions. It is, therefore, not out of place to give moral instructions and develop good morals amongst people using the contents of the Holy Qur'an. In Islam, one of the moral instructions is the prohibition of illicit sexual intercourse 'Zina'. 'Zina' in Arabic word means fornication or adultery. It is totally forbidden for both sexes and is severely punished under the Islamic law, according to Quran because of its adverse effect. As 'Zina' is forbidden in Islam Allah (SWT)'s commanded in the Quran that people should stay away from Zina. In another chapter, it is also stated that "And those who invoke not any other god along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse (zina) and whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the day of resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace; except those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds, for those Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is all Forgiving, Most Merciful." (al-Furqaan, chapter 25, verse 68-70). Still in another chapter, Allah states that "And come not near to unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is a faahishah (a great sin) and an evil way." (Sura Al-Israa, chapter 17, verse 32, so also is it forbidden in science, for science advocate sanity which is not in Zinah.

Dr. Mulkah A. Ahmed

Islam teaches truthfulness just like science. Science education teaches good observation, appropriate data collection, adequate record which leads, drawing of correct inference from available data and making of reasonable generalizations or and conclusion from the observations and records (Abimbola and Omosewo, 2006). So also, it is Islam teaches the Muslims to be truthful, honest, sincere and transparent in all their dealings with others. Muslims should not tell lies so as to deceive fellow human beings to satisfy their wants. This is why the Quran says: "O you who believe; why do you say that which you do not. It is most hateful in the sight of Allah to say that which you do not" Qur'an chapter 6 verse 2-3

One may even want to refer to development of morality using people's traditions, culture, printed and electronic media, sports, music, etc. in developing moral in children, but each of these media of instruction is not globalised. As Islam is practiced in almost every country of the world, teaching of morals through the use of the Holy Qur'an is therefore universal.

Scientific/ Islamic Education

Scientific and Islamic ethics are very important components in moral development of our youths. These ethics are meant to be taught in schools so as to sharpen youth behavior and give them moral uprightness. This will go a long way to make an Ilorin child or adult adjust to his social environment.

It is important to note that science is a process of improving the total circumstances of humans on earth, satisfying and granting man's spiritual and material needs and gaining mastery of his environment. Islamic education along with science teaches primarily human development which includes:

- I behaviours similarly pronounced as Mosaic laws like not stealing, not backbiting, not indulging in alcoholism e.t.c as Qur'an set down the laws which are penalties on these atrocities.
- II ability to carry out regular worship and prayers which helps one to develop not only a positive attitude to life as Allah said in the glorious Quran "Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book, and perform Salah. Verily, Salah prevents from lewdness and

evils. And indeed, the remembrance of Allah (by you) is greatest. And Allah knows what you do." (Quran 29:45).

In research programmes, science education teaches honesty in practical work. Individuals in practical work or experimentation lessons are expected to observe and report exactly what they observe. Similarly, Islam enjoys Muslims to be honest as in one of the Prophet's Hadith by Abdullah who reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: Truth leads one to Paradise and virtue leads one to Paradise and the person tells the truth until he is recorded as truthful, and lie leads to obscenity and obscenity leads to Hell, and the person tells a lie until he is recorded as a liar. Sahih Muslim – Book 32 Hadith 6307, the prophet also said: "the best jihad is hammering the name of Allah in front of a Tyrant king", as related in the musnad of Ahmad. The implication of these statements is that Muslim scientists should be transparent even at the point of death.

The level of development of a country is determined, among other things, by scientific advancement. The same notion was given by Jegede (1983) who observed that the current development in science and technology in Nigeria has so greatly affected the lives of every Nigerian. The same thing as what we have in Islamic education in the teaching of human social development. Islam emphasizes specific acts of kindness, and defines the responsibilities and rights of various relationships. In one of Prophet Muhammad's Hadith recorded by Sahih Bukhari and Muslim the Prophet said *"He is not a believer who eats (he is filled when his neighbour beside him is hungry). Anyone who has no mercy on the juniors and respect for the seniors, is not one of the Muslims"* Bukhari and Muslim transmitted (p.7).

Stealing, robbery and killing are criminal offences that are very rampant in Nigeria. People have no security over their lives and properties. For example, in daily news, it is a common thing to hear people being attacked, robbed or sometimes killed. In Borno state of Nigeria, precisely in Chibog, secondary school girls are recently abducted. Islam frowns at these and lay down various punishments for it, which can be in form of killing, crucifixion, flogging, stoning to death, etc. This can be seen in the Quran 24 verse 2 where Allah said "The fornicatress and fornicators flog each of them with a hundred stripes... Also in Quran 5 verse 33, Allah said " The recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His messenger (saw) and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be

killed or crucified or their hands cut off from opposite sides or exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the hereafter. Just as moral education is in Islamic culture, so also it is in science ethics. In recent years, two major trends have been dominant in science education.

- (i) The call for science for all, and
- (ii) The move towards balanced science.

According to Bajah (1985) science education will provide humanity with knowledge of the social behaviour that is needed to develop effective solution to global development.

The greatness of a country depends on the level of achievement in science and religion. That is why Nigeria needs to develop its human and material resources to enable it drive effectively the economy by itself. There is, therefore, the need for an inspired mobilization of the people, their abilities and talents, and for directing resources utilization towards scientific and religion development.

Recommendation

Based on the established facts on the scientific education views on Islamic moral education, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) In traditionally Islamic areas in Nigeria, like Ilorin, Kano, Zaria, Hadejia Sokoto, the government should try as much as possible to help Islamic education mass group campaign by encouraging groups and individuals to incorporate more Islamic education curriculum into Western education for all study programmes in Nigeria as a country.
- (ii) As much as possible, teachers of moral education in learning institutions should teach learners moral development and how best to achieve morality through different methods and strategies which include Islamic enculturation, traditional education, etc.
- (iii) Scientific/Islamic education is known not only as involving Islamic religion, but taking Islam as a complete way of life. The present Federal Government is strictly against corrupt practices and is out to encourage good morals in children; therefore, the Federal Government should work towards establishing

scientific, moral education department in the country. One in the federal capital territory and one each in the three old regions, i.e. the Western, Eastern and the Northern regions.

- (iv) Youth organizations such as Boys' Scout, Girls' Guide, Red Cross, Man O' War, Boys and Girls Brigade and Sheriff Guard should be encouraged to teach and inculcate in people the right moral attitudes as these organizations are mostly used these days for checking children's movements during ceremonies.

- (v) There is also the need to enrich the minds of the young ones through open teaching of moral education in scientific and Islamic terms; this is sometimes called enlightenment campaign.

Conclusion

It is important to realize that moral education and Islamic education share common grounds. However, there are some slight adjustment of religion in science education. Religious education includes morals and scientists teach these aspects of religion through moral trainings.

One can, therefore, conclude by saying that as far as moral education, in science and Islamic education are concerned, both have comprehensive provisions for permitted and forbidden things. Some of the areas examined for the study in Science have no conflicts with Islamic education. However, religion is dogmatic while Science is dynamic. Therefore, the moral teachings in the two education are to help in ensuring justice, peace, tranquility, freedom for all and other good things that help in building a decent and strong society.

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