**An Analysis of Educational Thoughts of Allama Muhammad Iqbal**

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**Abstract**

Allama Muhammad Iqbal was a revolutionary philosopher who inspired and awakened the whole Muslim Ummah generally and the Muslims of Subcontinent particularly by his poetry. Iqbal Philosophy based on reality, truthfulness, and authenticity because it is rooted in the teaching of the Holy Quran and teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W). Allama Iqbal was a man of knowledge and action. He was well aware of the Islamic teachings as well as the Westerns and Greek Philosophies. He was in the opinion of bringing changes and revolution through spreading knowledge, promoting education and developing self-consciousness. In the view of Allama the basic reasons behind Muslims falling and declining were ignorance, lack of intellectuals, disunity and misunderstanding of each other, narrow minded, blind following, and unawareness of the blessing of freedom, lack of self-consciousness and absence of competent leadership. He believed all of these miseries will not be changed until the Muslims will not change themselves. In the view of Allama, education is itself life. Life without education is like a death body that should be buried. In Allama’s views the development of self-consciousness, promotion of Islamic brotherhood, development of the whole personality, preservation and transmission of rich Islamic cultures, and production of such kind leadership who lead the world are the basic aims of education. Aimless life, philosophy, and education are the only destruction for human being. Allama had a view that teachers are the back bone of the nation, therefore; there should be organized, well pattern and systematic procedure for teachers recruiting, selection and induction. According to Allama teaching profession is not like other profession, it the noblest profession and the teachers are the most exalted persons. They should focus their attentions on their profession and should be futuristic.

**Keywords:**

**Introduction**

Allama Iqbal was a theologian, thinker, philosopher, poet, reformer, teacher, and educationists. (Dr. Baqai, 2003). He spent his life with the aim in awakening the Muslims of Subcontinent. He was a true believer of Islam and his poetry is the reflection of the revealed knowledge that is called Quran and the teaching of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W). At the time of Allama the Muslims of Subcontinent were depressed in all fields of life, especially in education. He inspired, motivated and awakened the Muslims to seek knowledge and advance in education. Iqbal was in against all types of “isms” that harm the concept of Islamic universality.

About education Iqbal views were not somewhat different from the views of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.W). He was a lover of knowledge and education was the nucleus point in Iqbal life. He got the best opportunity to present the precious teachings of Islam in thought provoking poetry. It is observed that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.W) prayed Allah by saying: “My Lord! Increase me in knowledge”. (At-Taha, 114). And Allama says:

زندگی ہو میرے پروانے کی صورت یارب  
علم کی شمع سے ہو مجھ کو محبت یارب  
)اقبال،(2006

**Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this research study are:

1. To explore Iqbal’ views about the importance of education.
2. To assess the status and responsibilities of teachers in the light of Iqbal philosophy of education.
3. To identify the aims of education in the light of Iqbal philosophy of education.

According to Islam, knowledge is light, luminosity, life, and religious obligation. Islam disallows Muslims to be remained uneducated and illiterate. Life without knowledge has no worth and values. According to Quran the supremacy of human being over all other creatures is the knowledge. Knowledge and wisdom are the distinguishing factors of men from men and other creatures. All Messengers of Allah were the most educated in their time. God’s first Prophet Hazrat Adam was educated by Allah Almighty. As the Holy Quran says: “And He taught Adam all the names, then presented them to the Angles; then He said: Tell me the names of those if you are right in your proclaim”. (Al-Baqara, 31). Iqbal philosophy is based on the Holy Quran. The uniqueness of his philosophy is his familiarity with the real and authentic sources of knowledge that is called Quran. The concept of Iqbal Khudi is a broad concept that encompass all spiritual, moral, physical, emotional and social development of children. (Dr. Baqai, 2003). In Iqbal’s views the only being whom God provided the ability of critical and creative thinking is human being, therefore; he will be responsible of all his deeds and he will be rewarded of doing all (Wajibat, and Mustahabbat) obligatory, preferable actions and will be punished of all misdeeds. The concept of Self-Consciousness was nucleus point in Iqbal philosophy, and he believed the falling and rising of persons and nations are depended upon the knowing and unknowing of Khudi. He further expressed that unawareness of self-consciousness is the basic reason of legging behind the Muslims Ummah. Allama’s concept of Khudi is really rooted in the view of Imam Ali (a.s) about the Self-Consciousness. As He says: “he who becomes aware of his self, become aware of his Creator”. Or one who knows his self knows his Lord”. (Imam Ali, 2010). In another place he highlighted the importance of human being as saying:

اتزعم انک جرم صغیر وفیک انطوی العالم الاکبر

You think that you are a small entity, but the great cosmos lies in you. (Imam Ali, 2010). In this quotation Imam Ali says a man seems to be a small entity physically, when it is studied in depth, thought carefully, observed keenly, and analyzed systematically then it seems greater than the entire universe. Allama had the same view about the man and the universe. The understanding of Khudi leads towards the understanding God Almighty. Allama has the opinion that the success and failure in the both world are depended upon the men’s consciousness of self. (Chisti).

According to Islam knowledge is the most power, wealth, and source of enjoyment. Life without knowledge has no importance in Islam. Allama also says:

علم دولت بھی ہے، قدرت بھی ہے، لذت بھی ہے۔  
 )اقبال،(2006

This view of Allama is really the focusing point for all Muslims. The concept of wealth, power and designation’s supremacy over knowledge was completely rejected and condemned by Allama. Power, wealth and gratification lie in education. The present scenario of the world has proved Allama’s view. In today’s world all nations which invest in education and lay focuses on education are leading the world and all nations those give preference to non-educative programs are beggaring and begging. In the views of Allama, giving importance to education means respecting teachers, spending money on education, constructing educational institutions, libraries, providing research opportunities to researchers, valuing intellectuals, and respecting all persons who belong to education profession. Allama views that a nation that gives more value and importance to bureaucrats, politicians, Wadaras, rich persons, ministers, and others non educative personnel than teachers, professors, scholars cannot survive and progress.

In the view of Allama, the roles of teachers are not limited to facilitate the students, they have more roles and responsibilities than facilitating. The teachers are the builders, reformers, defenders of nation’s ideology. Therefore, the creams of the nation, and most genius persons should be selected as teachers. Allama is against the prevailing perception about the teachers, that those can, do and those who cannot teach. This the wide gap between our percept about the teachers and the perception of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W) and our ancient scholars about the teachers. Increasing literacy, attracting children towards schools, and decreasing dropout rate from all levels of education will not be possible without acknowledging, and honoring teachers and their services.

**Teachers**

It is an undeniable fact that teachers play central role in the whole education system. These are the teachers who make unity among the nations, these are the teachers who teach how to survive, these are the teachers who define how sacrifice, these are the teachers who lead the nation, these are teachers who transform the rich national values, these are the teachers who train the youngsters, these are the teachers who defend the nation, these are the teachers who awake the sleepy nation, these are who purify the spirit, these are the teachers decide about the future of the nation, these are the teachers play role models and these are the teachers who guide the nations to come out from the darkness of ignorance towards the light of knowledge.

Allama says about the responsibility of the teachers:

مقصد ہو اگر تربیت لعل بدخشاں

بے سود ہے بھٹکے ہوئے خورشید کا پر تو  
)اقبال،(2006

Here, Allama expressed his view about the responsibility of teachers by   
using لعل بدخشاں as a symbol for the students. According to Allama students are not row material which have no worth and values. In the view of Allama, students are precious rubies. And the teachers are the trainers, therefore; they should be aware of the importance of the students. He highlighted the missing element of our education system that is training. The purpose of education should not be only conveying terms and information, it should be more than transformation. Teachers must have aims in their minds while teaching. Aimless teachers no lead anywhere. Development of the whole personality should be the aim of education. This holistic development without training is not possible. If it is taught the students with having the aims of earning money, seeking popularity and designation then these are the drawbacks of teaching. The second major responsibility of the teacher is production of leadership to lead towards heaven. Translations of new words, delivery of lectures, transmission of knowledge and experience not only teaching, teaching is above all of these. Teachers must have leadership qualities. (Chisti) As Allama says:

نگاہ بلند، سخن دلنواز، جان پرسوز  
یہی ہے رخت سفر میر کارواں کے لیے  
)اقبال،(2006

This is a missing aspect in our education system that we focus on qualification, experience but ignore the morality of teachers.

Allama says:

دنیا ہے روایات کے پھندوں میں گرفتار

کیا مدرسہ، کیا مدرسے والوں کی تگ ودو

کرسکتے تھے جو اپنے زمانے کی امامت

وہ کہنہ دماغ اپنے زمانے کے ہیں پیرو  
)اقبال،(2006

According to Allama, leadership is correlated with creative, innovative, imaginative abilities. A person who has no revolutionary mind, cannot be a teacher. In these verses, Allama says, teachers should be futuristic, enthusiastic**,** resilient, determined, dedicated, empathetic, evolving, fearless, generous, inspirational, passionate, vulnerable and trustworthy. (Chisti)

**Aims of education**

Knowledge should not be gained only for the sake of worldly purposes, but there should be aimed to seek the both worlds. (Hamid, 1986) knowledge is required for the both understanding abstract, metaphysics as for as the concrete. Deep study of Allama philosophy of education reveals the readers that the aims of education in the view of Allama are not somewhat different from the aims of educated stated by Holy Quran and Sunnah. Allama’s focuses were on the holistic development rather than any one aspect of an individual.

According to Allama Self-Consciousness is the base for all virtues, and victories.A person who ignores his self, cannot be able to understand his Master, nor the universe. (Chisti, 1947)

### Self-Consciousness means:

### To know the self-duties and responsibilities.

### To know the purposes of his creation,

### To be aware of the end of life,

### To develop rationality,

### To foster creative and critical abilities,

### To follow the orders of inner messenger,

### To be a man of action,

### To be balanced in feelings and emotions,

### To avoid blind following and imitation,

### To do all obligatory actions,

### To refrain from doing forbidden,

### To spend purposeful life,

### To serve for humanity,

### To focus on character building along with physical development,

### To be true follower of Islam,

### To practice Quranic teachings,

### To prefer others’ needs over his own,

### To love God and His creatures,

### To follow the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W),

### To believe in metaphysical nature.

### To believe in the supreme authority of Allah Almighty. (Chisti)

### Allama believed that construction of Khudi is not only needed for Self-Consciousness, but necessary for nation survival and existence. Allama describe the importance of Khudi in such a way:

### خودی کی موت سے مغرب کا اندرون بے نور

### خودی کی موت سے مشرق ہے مبتلائے جذام

### خودی کی موت سے روح عرب ہے بے تب وتاب

### بدن عراق وعجم کا ہے بے عروق وعظام )اقبال،(2006

### The concept of Iqbal well popular Khudi is correlated with the concept of Nafs in the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W). There are a lot of quotations from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W) that tell us the importance of Khudi. Imam Ali a great disciple of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.W) says: “He knows his self, indeed he knows his Master. (Majlisi, 2002). Allama says because of giving no importance to Khudi Arabs and Non Arabs are facing unfavorable circumstances, and reach near to Hell.

### He says in another place:

### خودی کی جلوتوں میں مصطفائی

### خودی کی خلوتوں میں کبریائی )اقبال،(2006

Men’s journey to Heaven is only possible through knowing the Self-Consciousness. In above lines he says if you want to know Khudi and want to adopt then the existence of Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W) is the best example, and if you want to know Khudi then you may know through studying yourself. Your study about your existence will reveal you that there are thousands of signs of existence of God.

### Allama had view that education should provide such kind of leadership and intellectuals who may lead the world. Seeking education for earning money is not appreciated.

### Allama says:

### وہ علم نہیں زہر ہے احرار کے حق میں

### جس علم کا حاصل ہو جہاں میں دو کف جو )اقبال،(2006

Character building is also one of the aims of education in Allama’s philosophy of education. Real followers of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W) are those who have sound moral, ethical and social values. Character building of students was necessary element at the beginning, and medieval periods of Muslims. The basic difference between today’s Muslims and their forefathers was described by Allama in these verses of his poetry:

تم ہو گفتار سراپا، وہ سراپا کردار  
تم ترستے ہو کلی کو، وہ گلستان بکنار)اقبال،(2006

You can but weave the web of words, they did their deeds of might: you pine after a bud; they basked. ([www.amiqbalpoetry.com](http://www.amiqbalpoetry.com)).

Today’s Muslims focus more on advertising, publicity, showing of and baseless proclaims, and they neglect character building, action, morality, cooperation and hard-working, while these values were more importance in the view of our forefathers. (Chisti)  
Individual differences and variations are needed to be considered and focused in teaching learning processes. Allama advocated to develop uniqueness of individuals and use it purposefully. Every person has his own philosophy of life, way of leaving, way of thinking, way of dealing and way of communicating. All these uniqueness can be developed for different purposes. Men should not be punished of having differences in opinions.

Muslims Ummah had glorious past, and golden age. There were great Muslims scientists, intellectuals, historians, sociologists, astronomers, philosophers, theologians and educationists. They were the rulers of the world. Education was free for all, and no one was restricted to gain knowledge because of his race, nation, region and color. These were at the times, when Muslims were hand workers, energetic, adventures and educated. Unfortunately, all of these qualities became the part of history. We are not inheriting our knowledge legacy that was precious, because of laziness and ignorance. Allama says; knowledge is the great legacy of Muslims, but the Muslims are not getting benefits from it. Rich Islamic culture should be transmitted through education. Allama say:

باپ کا علم نہ بیٹے کو اگر ازبر ہو  
پھر پسر قابل میراث پدر کیوں کر ہو)اقبال،(2006

Iqbal gives no value to wealth, and kingdom ship, as compared to knowledge and wisdom. He says:

### خریدیں نہ ہم جس کو اپنے لہو سے

### مسلمانوں کو ننگ ہے وہ بادشاہی )اقبال،(2006

At first there should be described the real legacy of our ancestors, then it should be transmitted to new generation. The safe, and important channel of transmission of this legacy is education. This will only bepossible through effective curriculum, well aware and sincere teachers, and patriotic policy makers. (Chisti)

Allama condemned strictly the system of education in which rote memorization and blind imitation are preferred over critical and creative thinking abilities. In the view of Allama blind imitation and blind following are curse. He says:

تقلید سے ناکارہ نہ کر اپنی خودی کو  
کر اس کی حفاظت کہ یہ ہے گوہر یگانہ)اقبال،(2006

Allama believed the blind imitation of the Western civilization will lead the Muslims towards Hell. It is the responsibility of education to foster the creative and imaginative abilities of the students. They should follow the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W) as the Holy Quran says: “O! You who believe! Obey Allah and obey Apostle and those in authority from among you; if you are quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle, if you believe in Allah and the last day; this is better and very good in the end”. (Al-Nisa, 59). And another place says: “Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much”. (Al-Ahzab,21).

According to Quranthe only role model who is perfect and can be exemplar for the whole mankind is the Holy Prophet (S.A.W. W). Unfortunately this trend has been changed and now a day non Muslims actors are presenting as role models for our new generation. Our new generation has lack of information about their heroes, and they going away from Quran and its teachings. In the light of Allama Philosophy it can be said that the reason behind the Muslims’ falling was, and is unawareness about the teachings of Quran. Allama says:

### وہ زمانے میں معزز تھے مسلمان ہوکر

### اور تم خوار ہوئے تارکِ قرآن ہو کر )اقبال،(2006

Quran contains all basic laws that are needed for the whole mankind till Doomsday. Quranic laws are not like man made laws that are not universal and for all human beings.

Iqbal had a firm belief in Islam and he was proud of being a Muslim and also was proud of rich Islamic civilization and glorious past. He believed that Islam is a perfect code of life. Muslims should be proud of being Muslims. All problems, issues and difficulties can be resolved and overcome by applying Islamic laws and there is no need to get help from The Western made laws. Although, it is the responsibility of the teachers, parents, policy makers, curriculum developers and all others concerned authorities to make aware of the students about these worthy and valuable authentic laws. But educational institutions, like; schools, colleges, universities are more responsible to transmit these values to new generation, because they are socialization agencies. In formulating aims of education the transmission of Islamic values should be neglected. We as Muslims no need to follow other religions nor their values and civilizations but unfortunately this saying of Allama still remain unpracticed byMuslims. (Chisti)  
Allama expressed his feelings about those Muslims who adopt the Western civilizations in such a way:

### وضع میں تم ہو نصاریٰ، تو تمدن میں ہنود

### یہ مسلمان ہیں جنہیں دیکھ کر شرمائیں یہود )اقبال،(2006

The true followers of Islam are those people who observe and practice Islam in their lives. Islam is not only theoretical concept; it is the combination of two things: beliefs and practices. There are two types of laws; a. Ousol-e-Deen that are called the roots of religion, which are related to beliefs system.b. Faro-e-Deen that are called branches of religion, which are related with practices. The aim of education should also focus on both theoretical and practical aspects of Islam. While Allama showed his disagreement and disgratification with our current educational situations. He says:

### یہ علم، یہ حکمت، یہ تدبر یہ حکومت

### پیتے ہیں لہو دیتے ہیں تعلیم مساوات

### بیکاری وعریانی، ومے خواری وافلاس

### کیا کم ہے فرنگی مدنیت کے فتوحات )اقبال،(2006

Unity in diversity is the key to success and need of the time. Every man is a unique being, and no two are alike in this world. Allama was well aware of differences among the different nations and schools of thought of Islam. He was in the opinion of the unity is diversity. In the philosophy of Allama it was clearly understood, that differences should not be highlighted, instead of focusing on differences it should be highlighted commonalities and similarities among the Muslims. He suggested that Muslims should be kind with all human kind, and they should avoid of all types of prejudices, intolerances, biasness, racism, extremism, terrorism and favoritism.

Allama believed in the universalization of Islam. According to Islamic teachings there is one God who is the Creator of all creatures and whole universe. Quran says: “All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds”. (Al-Fatiha, 01). And the Holy is the mercy to the both worlds. As the Holy Quran says: “And we have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds”. (Al-Anbiya, 107). There is no logical and rational reason to highlight the differences. There is no major difference in the Islamic schools of thought. As Allama described this reality in his poetry:

منفعت ایک ہے اس قوم کی، نقصان بھی ایک

ایک ہی سب کا نبی، دین بھی ایک، ایمان بھی ایک

حرمِ پاک بھی، اللہ بھی، قرآن بھی ایک

کچھ بڑی بات تھی، ہوتے جو مسلمان بھی ایک   
)اقبال،(2006

And one your prophet, religion, belief system, one your Kaba, one your God, and one your Great Quran; Yet, still, divided each from each, Lives every Muslims.

The great tragedy, which the Muslims’ world is facing today is disunity and lack of cooperation, coordination, consensus. Quran says: “And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on your when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way”. (Ale Imran, 103). Allama says:

فرقہ بندی ہے کہیں اور کہیں ذاتیں ہیں

کیا زمانے میں پنپنے کی یہی باتیں ہیں   
)اقبال،(2006

The basic and fundamental aim of education should be to promote unity and brotherhood among the students. There should be uniform system of education fall citizens. It is a state responsibility to provide to all citizens an equal opportunity to get knowledge. Harmony and national unity without state’s policy and its implication is not possible. State should take step to make unity among the different schools of thought and different nations. Differences should be used only for recognition not for violation. Quran says: O you men! Surely We have created you of a male and female, and made you tribes and families that you make know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is King Aware”. (Al-Hujrat, 13).

In the view of Allama, the basic difference between today’ s Muslims and their forefathers are they were merciful, forgivers to one another and today’s Muslims are against one another. As Allama says:

خودکشی شیوہ تمہارا، وہ غیوروخوددار

تم ہو آپس میں غضبناک، وہ آپس میں رحیم

تم خطاء کار وخطائیں، وہ خطاپوش وکریم

تم اخوت سے گریزاں، وہ اخوت پہ نثار  
**)**اقبال،(2006

It is said: The Muslims quit this world; their days are on the wane, the path of Al- Quran. You roll the eye of mutual wrath, their eye was ever kind, you err, for errors look, while they were generously blind. You shun the ties of brotherhood, they cherished more than life. (Chisti) Allama was against all types of disunity, whether it is based on color differences, race differences, or country differences. He suggested the Muslims to be united one.

یہی مقصود فطرت ہے یہی رمز مسلمانی

اخوت کی جہاں گیری، اور محبت کی فراوانی

بتانِ رنگ وخون کو تورکر ملت میں گم ہو جا

نہ تورانی رہے باقی ، نہ ایرانی نہ افغانی  
)اقبال،(2006

## This is the destiny of the nature; this is the secret of Islam, World-wide brotherhood, an abundance of love! Break the idols of color and become lost in community. Let neither Turanians, Iranians nor Afghan remain. (http://iqbalurdu.blogspot.com)

## Discussion

## Allama Iqbal as an educational philosopher had his own philosophy of life. His philosophy is based on Quran and Sunnah. He was in favor of reshaping education system by introducing innovation and bringing changes. He believed that education is life and without education life is like a death body. He also viewed that education is the distinguishing element between human being and other creatures. But only transformation of knowledge and experience is not called education, it is more than transformation. Training is also a part of education, therefore; an equal importance should be given training.

#### Self-Consciousness or recognition of Khudi is the nucleus point in Iqbal philosophy of education. He believed the reason behind the falling and declining of the nations was giving no importance to Khudi, therefore the teachers should infuse the spirit of self-consciousness in their students.

The holistic development of the children, promotion of worldwide Islamic brotherhood, development of critical and creative thinking abilities, transmission of rich Islamic social, moral and ethical values, and production of intellectuals and leadership who can lead the world should be the aims of education. He believed that the future and the destiny of the nation depends upon the quality of education that is imparted to students, therefore, teachers should be selected carefully. Professional commitments, job related knowledge and skills, leadership qualities, effective communication skills, hardworking qualities, innovative and imaginative abilities and knowing self-consciousness are the basic needs for becoming teachers. Teachers are the real models for their students, therefore; they should be sound morally, ethically, and socially.

تیرے دریا میں طوفاں کیوں نہیں ہے

خودی تیرے مسلمان کیوں نہیں ہے

عبث ہے شکوہ تقدیر یزداں

تو خود تقدیر یزداں کیوں نہیں ہے  
(اقبال،2006)

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