

EDUCATING FOR AUTHENTIC SELF

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Abstract

Authenticities of the “self” had been studied from several perspectives. In this paper, the “authentic self” was examined from transcendental perspective. The concept of authentic self is a focal point and a buzz word in recent studies. With the swing on moral and ethical dilemma within the society, it has reached a height that the phrase “authentic self, society, leaders, schools, community” is now been studied. The contemporary global trend of the dichotomy between the authenticity of the private and public of a “self” was reviewed. This paper will consider the Islamic purview of the “self.” The union of the private and the public dimensions of the self were evaluated using the indicators such as the “self” in relation to God; relationship with the Scriptures; principles of social justice and understanding of the world. The role of education as a vibrant catalyst in making an “authentic self” was finally correlated to expose its effect as a tool for societal change.

Introduction

The study on authentic self have been studied from different perspectives, thus “self” connotes different meanings with respect to culture, heritage, religion and beliefs. The thrust of this paper is to argue that the concept education needs to be mediated and moderated through social institution, spiritual institution and historical situation so as to develop an authentic self. In this paper authentic person is someone who is true to his/her inner self and does not segregate his/her life into various components thereby losing touch with his/her inner core. An authentic person reflects ethical and moral behavior through his deeds, utterances, behaviors and actions.

Concept of Education

Education has been used as a tool for change; it has been one of the most important aspects of human development and perhaps the most influential social institutions in any society. Thus education is the change in knowledge, transmission and renewal of common sets of beliefs, culture, values, norms, inner faculty development, and behavioral patterns (Noraini & Hassan 2008:1; Rosnani, 2004:96; Ibrahim, 2002:4). According to (Ashraf 1985:4), education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of man through the training of man’s spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses. Education therefore should cater for the growth of man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively and motivates all aspects towards goodness and attainment of perfection.

The notion of what is education and what is not has been extensively discussed by various authors. The quest to find both the purpose and essence of education has driven a great deal of research. Some authors suggested that education is not a mere acquisition of knowledge or transmission of facts and figures, rather education is perceived as a change in man’s personality. As noted by Hodgkin (1991) “education is the art of calling others to seek the truth as to what it means to be human, to explore the essence of their being; to discover the spiritual chemistry of relationships; to make judgments about the significance of rightness or wrongness” (cited in Duignan and Bhindi 1997:202). From Hodgkin’s definition of education the underlying meaning of “what it means to be human” is the discovery of one’s true self or the authentic self.

Moreover, Rosnani (2004: 96) and Kazmi (1999: p 21) suggested that education should be drawn from the ethical values of the society so as to decreases social vices and promotes social justice. In other words education should be mediated through culture and other social filters. The ends and goals of the society will reflect its end and goal on education. The major goals of education in Muslim society will be Islamic ideals which the contemporary form of education lacks. This laxity might also be as a result of the external and/or internal factors coupled with loss of heritage.

The present system of education had been stripped of values, norms, beliefs, and traditions attached to education which is responsible for the changing trend and turbulent shift in modern education. This changing trend significantly nurtured an ideology of materialism and fame culture by making education to be seen as essentialities that assist “self” in meeting personal needs. This notion was shared by Ibrahim (2002:9) and Collins (1971:118). The modern system of education is materially oriented and its products (graduates) are materially inclined for occupational attainment, fixed demand for skills, social stratification and mobility. Thus the extrinsic value attached to education in contemporary is a means of defining styles, defining self with respect to traits, dressing, positions, choice of cars, family status and for obtaining lucrative employments. Invariably, the modern type of education is devoid of social institution, spiritual and historical entities.

Kneller (1971: P5) argued that education philosophy depends largely on general philosophy which involved the application of formal philosophy. Such as:

- The nature of good life to which education should lead
- The nature of man himself, because it is man we are educating
- The nature of society, because education is a social process
- The nature of ultimate reality which knowledge seeks to penetrate

Education: Spiritual Institution

The ethical, moral and religious concept of education had attracted much attention tropically as a panacea to an authentic self through an integrated education of the self. The Islamic concept of education identified and nurtured faith in man to his creator, made man to understand and comprehend him/her self, and make his to exert his rational faculty from the spiritual world view of Islam. However, recently the Islamic concept of education attracted attention; the urge to restore a pure Islamic education became a global issue in an attempt to salvage the globe from the resultant effect of dualism. That is the intellectual confusion, dichotomous identity and split personality among various faiths.

Education in the Muslim world as acknowledged by Noraini and Langgulung (2008: 2-3) had undergone four distinctive stages in history; the first phase was the developmental phase which begins with the Prophet (pbuh), until the end of Umayyid periods. The second phase was flourishing period of education starting in the East, with the emergence of Abbasid dynasty until the down fall by Tartar 659H/1258H. The third phase was the weakness and decadence phase. This stage is also referred to as Islamization of contemporary knowledge which has generated mixed reactions among Muslim scholars. During the Prophet (pbuh) period education was strategically utilized in making progressive changes within the society. The changes made were strategic for knowledge acquisition and human development. He (pbuh) was able to transform the society with high moral and ethical decadence through the process of education. The state of the society before Islam was given account of by Manzurul (1999: 19) and how their history was totally transformed to be emulated globally.

“If we look to history we can see how a totally bankrupt segment of human society, in spite of its severely handicapping material development, was transformed by Islam, in its first era, into a constellation of people characterized by the attainment of the fullest and richest kind of personality development” (p 19)

These lead Muslim thinkers to converge at Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 1977 to deliberate on holistic Islamic education. As noted by Saqeb (2000:39) and Ibrahim (2002:4) the conference became the turning point in modern history on Islamic education and marked the beginning of Muslim thinkers, scholars, educationist, philosophers, and sociologists in responding to the urgent need for Islamic education. The (Muslim thinkers) then thought of revitalizing the present generation of Muslims as was done during the Prophet's (pbuh) era.

Concisely the education systems during the prophet era shape the mind, mental capacity of the early Muslims and mold a balance society. The changes were made visible through: (1) the Quran served as core reference point for the modes and methods of educating (2: 129). (2) Education was also tie to believe, that is the education receive shaped the society and individual, thus in Islamic education was considered as Ibadah (worship). The society made an impressively tale mark history for the whole human race within a short while. Rooting education through the Quran and believe molded and shaped the community of learners, brought about changes in the state of mind, intellect, behavior, morals and ethical conduct. The point of argument is that a backward society could make a tremendous impact on the world generally. The impact made shake everything in sight with respect to civilization and human development in terms of personal and spiritual development.

This conscious awakening also led Muslim thinkers at Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 1977 to deliberate on holistic Islamic education. As noted by Saqeb (2000: 39) and Ibrahim (2002: 4) the conference became the turning point in modern history on Islamic education. The Islamic education draws its philosophy from the belief that God, the ultimate knower, ‘taught to man the knowledge of all things’ (the Quran 96:1–5). However before the Mecca conference a, similar urge was voice by Muslim thinkers and scholars like Sayyid Jamaludin Al-Afghani, Shaik Muhammad Abduh, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Sir Dr. Allamah Muhammad Iqbal, Dr. Ali Shari’ati and others. The conference marked the beginning of Muslim thinkers, scholars, educationist, philosophers, and sociologists responds to the urgent need of Islamic education. The (Muslim thinkers) then taught of refertalizing the present generation of Muslim as was done during the prophet era.

Although, Saqeb (2000:39) sums up the reasons for the Muslims crisis as follows:

Modern education has militated against Islamic world view and failed to lead Muslims to discover and promote their true identity. What has essentially been required has been the synthesis of Islamic religious concepts of knowledge based on Divine revelation, and modern knowledge based on experience, observation and reasoning of the kind that was product of early Islamic education' (p, 39).

The epidemic notion that education simply imply ability to read and write ability to read and write was rather transformed as means of 'shapening man' noted by Nasr (1987: p 58-64) and cited in Sidek (2000: 20). However reflecting on modern society Muslims have the access to build the most sophisticated technology but contented with frivolities. The idea is that education should serve, as mediating and moderating tools in thought shapening and intellectual development thereby leading to living a good life (Kneller 1971:5).

Thus the Islamic concept of education intended for man to have a good life by developing the spiritual entity in man along with development and civilization. This was epitomized within the Islamic educational framework as a whole which comprises of the spiritual, mental, and ethical and physical education. Educating the 'self' in relation to the whole of the three dimensional spheres required for a holistic "self" formation. As noted by Saleh (2002: 47), spiritual education develops human consciousness; mental education establishes the basic human scientific thought while physical education aids the development of human body and finally ethical education focus on cultivating human behavior. Therefore, the essence of education in Islam is to develop the authentic self who reflects ethical and moral behavior through his deeds, utterances behaviors and acts which connote a balance diet of education as defined by Allah.

For instance strengthening the relationship between "self" and Allah is a strategy upheld in educating the soul. The Quran encourages thinking and reflecting on events and nature, thus making the mind is an instrument for thinking, likewise, development of the "self" skill is a strategy used in developing human body (Salleh 2002: 40). It is thus imperative that the true 'self' that can be responsive to both the present and the future evolves through the development of the "self" thinking faculty, this aspect remains the concern of educators across borders. Once intellectualism is in place and properly nurtured coupled with the right doze of effective and efficient monitoring, assessment, and evaluation, then the true and holistic "self" is actually educated. The clarion for molding this present generation into future generation will respond not only to societal needs (the most important aim of education) but also the discovery of the true authenticated self that will be in harmony with his/her individual inner core, group, organization, society, environments and finally Allah.

Education: Social Institution

Education is a means of socializing and changing norms and values as a reflection of individual inability to perform or function in isolation been social animals. The process of socialization in education might be argued to be universal; however the how, the way and the concept of education are strongly influenced by social characteristic or other factors. To be educated effectively amidst personal, social, and environmental inhibitors requires learners to have the right motives, self esteem. Thus education should focus on what to teach and not whom to teach,

focusing on what to teach assist personality development. Thus the understanding of man's nature, mindset, orientation and personal plus collective interest is required. Knowing these factors might be contributory factors to the development of better or best self within the four wall of education.

Within the Islamic purview education is portrayed as a social education that assists individuals to understand his/her self and the society and highlights their duties towards it. For these reasons as noted by Noraini and Hassan (2008:1) education is the most influential and perhaps a key social institution in any societies that aids and nurtures human development and growth. According to Khaleef (1997:45), the modern education has a tremendous influence in all cultures and social systems. With these notions in mind Griffin and Brownhill (2001: 63) argued that the basic background for learning (education) is culture and social context.

To change the context of modern education depends on the ability to face the challenges attached to the rigor of learning as well as the ability of 'self' to deploy and employ the intellectual faculties. It is worth stressing that learning remains very individual and personal, it depends largely on the focal lens motivated by the driving force of learners to learn new concept and theories.

Consequently technology boom in contemporary society is taking a sharp toll on the intellectual and mindset of today's youth. They are more pre-occupied and distracted by various inhibitors to learning. Such inhibitors include globalization, peer groups, media, and internet. We are not conversing that these 'self' inhibitors are out rightly bad, rather its negative consequences on the thinking patterns and abilities of the learners are almost devoid of any other valuable content. As noted by (Behishti and Bahonar 2010: 8)

The material civilization of today has solved many problems of human life, and has given man dazzling power to control nature. But at the same time it has so much eulogized and puffed the philosophy of having more and more, that it has made the man of our age a greedy animal, who is day and night worried about only increasing the production and consumption and thinks of nothing else. Materialism and too excessive concern about economic affairs have converted man into a machine. He is always busy with earning his livelihood or finding the means of leading a more and more luxurious life. This situation is so wide-spread that the life of most of the men of our times is almost devoid of any other valuable content.

The much echoed and re-echoed glorious Islamic civilization was socially formed, thereby producing scholarly people in various endeavors. Education is generally regarded as a mode of social activities. The importance of education which stretched before and beyond the Prophet's (pbuh) era was explicitly stated in the Quran. The first Quranic injunction to the noble Prophet (pbuh), was to "read" Q96:1-5. Reading broadens the mind and the mental horizon; importantly it keeps one in a state of seeking knowledge. In other words reading produces a spark that ignites the intellect to an "unending process;" a lifelong process. Reading therefore is begins from the cradle and ends to the grave.

The core interest of past generation on educational process was socially constructed; it resulted to an Islamic state founded on the “Iqra culture” that was rooted in the traditions of yatakkarun, ya’qilun and yatadabbarun (Sidek 2000:18). However Kazmi (2005:19) asserted that the desire to learn and the commitment to learning are stressed on the culture of learning. In other words learning was a social activities and social responsibilities of the society.

Education: Historical Institution

Education, as generally agreed by scholars and philosophers, is the transmission of not only knowledge but norms, values and beliefs. That is, education operates in a historical conversation. By historical conversation we mean that the past is a record of the present that set direction to the future. Thus for the past to influence the present it must transmit its norms, values, cultures, and beliefs to the present generation. A major prominent means for such transfer to occur is through education. As noted by Noraini & Hassan (2007:2-3) Muslims made glorious and marvelous achievements in almost every field of knowledge such as technology, economics, investments, education. With these contributions to the society much emphasis was placed on the teaching of the Quran which was the foundation for knowledge acquisition.

With the passage of time, the transmission of the flourishing scholarship in Islam declined due to deviation from our heritage, cultures, values and norms. The dormancy of western culture through colonization resulted in other cultures not necessarily Islamic heritage, traditions and history to be marginalized. With the marginalization the historical accounts of each generations changes from one period to the other. The historical significances of a country were gradually loss, to pave way for the new culture, new norms and so on. Gradually one of the fundamental purposes of history which is to shape and influence the type of education given to its citizen could not be achieved.

Unfortunately, also with dominant norms, evolving from 19th century upwards gave rise to a new socialization need. The new needs continued to spur the growth of new types of education. The new type of education captured not only Islam, inclusive of other traditions. With the emergence of new socialization needs, the traditional value accrue to education was relegated to the dustbin. This was summed up by (Collins 197: 125-126) participation in the dominant culture groups provided an individual with fundamental sense of identity. However exclusion of other in-group culture was felt to be normally legitimate.

The significance of history was emphasized by the Quran, it is not only a book that allowed us to shape our lives but it also provide past historical scenarios and documentation of past events for us to learn from. The Prophet (pbuh) said “I have been sent to this world to perfect the best of moral character in human behavior to educate and purify them (Bukhari). This strongly suggests that educating for authentic self is the purpose of Islam. The Prophet (pbuh) was entrusted with these great challenges. So as to fulfill his mission as an ideal teacher and role model, he was well-guided, endowed with wisdom and knowledge and utilized the messages from the Quran. The fulfillment of his mission was accomplished after twenty three years. The

establishment of Islamic state was visible not only in the Prophet (pbuh) but his companion as well.

The companions were able to translate the Prophet's (pbuh) tradition in an historical setting. The Prophet (pbuh) was able to transform not only the personal characters of his followers but also changed their orientation on belief, way of life, ethics, economics, and education and he upturned their moral decadence. His philosophy of self transformation model was in line with what Lashway (2006:45) called the best leadership. He asserted that the best leaders developed themselves while developing others because they deliberately model the kind of behaviors and attitudes they want to encourage in their subjects.

As a matter of fact the Prophet's (pbuh) actions, deeds, and behaviors served as reflective practices that shaped the moral characters of his companions. A leader does not only do the right thing but does things right. Thus Muslims continued with the tradition of the Prophet with respect to education and social formation. The historical account continued to flow like a river and the Islamic world contributed to science, technology and preserve human values and ethics. The subsequent generations of Muslims after the Prophet (pbuh) and the four caliphs provide historical insights of the past.

The transmission of education through history was at its height between eight and twelfth centuries. These periods produced Muslims who have great flare for learning. As noted by (Quadir 1991:8) there emerged 'a craving the like of which history had never known before.' At these periods Muslims became leaders of philosophical and scientific thoughts. However the height of Islamic civilization was followed by a subsequent collapse. Some scholars blamed the collapse on the west with whom the sits of knowledge, economy, and education were lost too, by the Muslims. According to (Quadir, 1991:8) citing the case of lost Moghul Empire in India, the Safawid Empire in Persia, and Ottoman Empire left the Muslims empty with neither land nor science, nor philosophy. Rather what they are left with is an out-model belief, regurgitation of facts and knowledge. These lead Muslims to cling to the past and do not want to move beyond the relic that history transmitted from their glorious and intimidating past.

Other scholars contended that the destruction of Baghdad the center of intellectual life in the mid 13th century had a great blow on Islamic civilization and closed the chapter of the glorious period of Islam. Thereby ushered in, an era of intellectual backwardness, hostility to learning. On the other hand it was seen as delineation from the continuity of the historical experience while living through it. According to (Kazmi 2005: 16) he argued that the world of people living in Medina and Mecca changed radically with the Prophet (pbuh) appearance. However he, critic that, what made a conspicuous and visible difference in people's life was their concrete understanding of the truth. That is they lived by the Quran in their daily conducts and both their private and public life were mirrored for others to follow in a collective effort. By doing so the then Muslims allowed the truth to make a visible difference in their lives. The degenerating state started when Muslims took careless analyses and over interpretations of the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). No one felt the urge in examining the early Muslims' understanding of the Quran. The understanding and interpretation given to the Quran shaped, change and molded society and brought them to limelight. The early Muslim understanding of the Quran reflected in their lives, they receive the Quran on the bases of their personal strength of implementation and not how many verses they have memorized.

The writer strongly believes these might not only be the problems. It might also be due to Muslims' fascination for the glamour of the world and therefore neglected the fundamentals of Islamic education. It might be the neglect of the fundamental role (authentic self); or it might be the absence of a filter through which Western beliefs and values messed up with the purity of Islamic values. We might need to look at education from narrative sense (historical), social institution and spiritual view point. Then we might be able to develop authentic self that was used as a vehicle for societal change in the lost glorious past

Authentic self

As argued by Sidek (2000: 16) the concept of education in Islam is embedded in the tawhidic paradigm. Limiting not only to worldly needs, this paradigm also caters for the hereafter. If education is concern both in the worldly life and the hereafter then it is seen as a means to be human and that is an authentic self. Recently, much attention is given to the concept of authentic self and it is also a focal point and a buzz word in recent studies. With the swing on moral and ethical dilemma within the society, it has reached a height that the phrase "authentic" self in relation to the society, leaders, schools, community is now being studied. The world is conversing for authenticity in the private and public life of "self."

The self according to Aviolo (2005: 195) is made of image, reflection, and discovery which can develop over time depending on personal choice. Thus becoming or not becoming an authentic self is a choice and we are the architect of that choice (Kazmi 2000: 376). We cannot and will not define "authentic self" outside the scope and realm of the transcendental. Allah fashioned, created and endowed us with the faculty of intellect that makes a distinguishing mark between us, the angels and other creatures. It is to say that we cannot define and develop the "authentic self" without reference the Allah and to His Holy Book.

We are created in a clean state and every child is born with sound natural disposition. In the transcendental plane the children of Adam asserted that Allah is their Lord (Q7:172) and at the point of birth they are changed by parents from their clean state (authentic self). Further, man is created from clay and Allah breathes spirit into every soul (Q15: 28-29). Subsequently man endowed with ilm (knowledge) and freedom of choice (Q10:99). From time to time prophets and messengers were sent by Allah as a continuous guidance to man so that the true self of man be constantly nurtured and rediscovered with reference to Allah.

This process of rediscovery may be described as being open to oneself (private) and to others (public). There is no such distinction in Islam between the public self and the private self. "Self" is 'Self' either in the public or private. On the outside and inside we reflect the true self in us and these reflections is defined only and solely by Allah. Thus "self" should be seen as imbibing and inculcating value in the mind and soul of an individual. This will assist in differentiating right actions from wrong ones; doing what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

If we are truly educated based on Islamic purview, there is no doubt of developing the authenticity in us. To achieve the helm of "authentic self" we truly need to educate the three dimensions (mind, body, and soul). Educating an aspect of the dimension of "self" in favor of another dimension not only makes the development of authentic self unachievable but will have

a drastic effect in the society. Such effect is what we are witnessing in recent times. As an “authentic self” we need to define the “self” in relation to Allah, the Qur’an, and the principles of social justice.

The “self” in relation to God

The Qur'an considers man to be a being having the responsibility of self-making. Thus self making means a transition from the sensuous self who is fully engrossed with the gratification of the immediate sense of perceived pleasure. To the self who developed his light of reason to challenge the sensuous passion in him/her with intellectual pursuits (example Adam) and virtuous life (example the Prophet (pbuh) begins to see the divine light of God (Manzurul 1997: 64).

To have a good relationship with Allah man must subdue his or her sensuous passion stage. As noted by Haq (1992: 59- 60) to be associated with and attuned to the divine reality of God the self need to get rid of his/her sensuous passion. Getting rid of the sensuous passion requires a struggle between an individual and his/her innermost self.

The above discussion is summed up with the following Qur'anic verses:

Alluring for people is the love of the joys that come from women, sons, hoarded heaps of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle and plantations. All this is the comfort of this worldly life, but with Allah is a far better abode. Say, shall I tell you something better than that? For those who practice piety, with their Lord are Gardens underneath which rivers flow. They shall abide in them forever, and shall have spouses purified in Allah's grace. Allah watches over His slaves. Those who say: Our Lord! We do believe. So forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the Fire. Who exercise patience, speak the truth, who are devoted in prayers, spend their property in the cause of Allah and pray for pardon in the darkness of the night (Surah Al Imran, 3:14 - 17).

The Self relationship with the Scriptures (Quran)

The strategies for organizing and managing ‘self’ have been provided by Allah through the Quran. The Quran serves as a panacea between “self” and the “world.” The Quran provides an in-depth strategy on how we can improve the quality of life and how we can be an authentic self in relation to Allah that is by living our life in reference to our Creator. Although the texts have remained the same over time, it has served as a reference book meeting the needs of every society. From generations to generations the Quran serves as a guide to human society and community both individually and collectively.

The Quran had always been a contemporary book that accurately provides answers to needs from time to time. Its relevance have been locked and encapsulated in its text. The answers to man’s predicaments and how to avoid them are contained in it. One of the major problems of present generation of Muslims lies on how to recover the hidden treasure of the Quran. In doing

so we need to constantly stretched our mental muscle to think. The Quran is no doubt a miracle for to mankind through the last prophet (pbuh). It explicitly contains truth and if understood and properly digested will make a difference visible in the life of the “self” and the larger society. To make a difference we are commanded to read it. Educating the “self” with reference to the Quran defines an “authentic self” through the passage of time.

A major problem of present generation of Muslims critically lies on how to recover the hidden treasure of the Quran. In doing so we need constantly stretched our mental muscle to think. The Quran is no doubt a miracle parcel and packaged down to man through the last prophet (pbuh). It explicitly contains truth if understood and properly digested will make a difference visible in the life of the “self” and the larger society. The difference made with the prophet over a period of twenty some years was made alluring through it. To make a difference we are commanded to read. Thus it will be iterated that the bases and foundation of education should be based on the Quran. Educating the “self” with reference to the Quran, defines an “authentic self” through the passage of time. In light of this Quran serve as guide to man, that ensures a constantly built relationship with Allah, and others (Q 96: 3-6).

According to (Kazmi 2005: 19), the spiritual, moral, political and social impact of the Quran is rehearsed to Muslims on daily bases. Recently Muslims awarded a great negligence to the intellectual effect of the Quran. If high negligent is on the Quran by Muslims definitely, we might not understand and comprehend “self” outside the world without referencing to Quran. In short I need to understand: “who am I”, “what is my purpose on earth”, and “what are my expectations”. If I do not fulfill my expectations with references to Quran, it can be rightly said that I have failed to perform my expected role as a “self as a vicegerence on earth”. ” Thus to fulfill my expectation it has to be done in the light of Quran, it serves as a moderator between “self” and the world. Significantly and uniquely the Quran plays a role in shaping the “self” and the world, for a best harmonious and comfortable living. As a “self”, living in reference to Allah I see and visionized the world from Quranic projection and not from another projection because the Quran has come to moderate and shaped the excessiveness of “Self

Principles of social justice

As Muslims we are least concerned with what happens to our next door neighbor. We are so engrossed in our personalized affair, have a carefree attitude and blindsided to others affair. It is not enough to say “Salam” to others but what is enough is to see to their welfare. “He is not one of us who lived full while his neighbor hungry.” This shows the essence and importance of social existence in Islam. We are encouraged to live as a community who care not only for ourselves, our families (immediate and extended) but also for the masses.

The Qur’an (Q2:177) states that it is not piety or righteousness that you turn your face towards the east to west in prayer but pious is the one who believe in Allah, the last day, the angels, the

book, the prophets and give his wealth inspite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to the poor. This shows that we must uphold the principle of justice and provides for the needs of others.

From the above verse it indicates that our piety is shouldered on the principle of social justice. The rich should inculcate the spirit of love, belongings and see the needs of others as their own needs. As a Muslim I satisfy my sophisticated need when the needs of others are been satisfied. This is why Islam recommended the institution of zakat.

Understanding the world

Education is an instrument in building and creating wealth of knowledge. In other word it primarily it assist “self” in building and creating wealth of knowledge as well as assists man to judiciously utilize his/her mental muscle in creating a harmonious environment. Education also serves as an agent that brings productive teaching and learning to the environment, and develops and creates a rounded “self.” Education als0 aimed at been able to make use of the intellectual ability, in designing and developing our world. Temporally the world is ours, we reside and housed by it, make a living from it, develop intellectually in it and in essence the whole of existence man’s is within its sphere.

Thus it is logical if we create a conducive environmental atmosphere for harmonious living with “self”, “fellow self” and other creatures which might be the best for our stay on earth. If much neglect is on “our world and we are least concerned with its development not only have we created a hostile environment for the “self” but for other creatures as well. The task of understanding the world lies on man to organize and manage its resources, and other creatures including man. Then we need to good strategies and development in doing so on our own accord by providing basic necessities of life for man survival.

Conclusion

In conclusion it has been argued in this paper that the “self” is made up of body, mind and spirit and that education in Islam caters for these three dimensions so as to be an authentic self. In order to better understand the authentic self the discussions have traversed on the spiritual, historical and social contexts. To have an authentic self we need to understand the “self” in relation to God; the Scriptures; the principles of social justice and understand the world. By doing so we would need to have a good form of education that defines man from the transcendental plane. Education serve as an agent that brings productive teaching and learning to the environment, to develop and create a rounded “self” who is required for personal, national, societal, human development and most essentially develop the inner core that goes a long way in translating and defining his or her person as time unfold.

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