

# RESTORING SPIRITUALITY AND MORALITY TO EDUCATION

*The Role of Muslim Intellectuals in all Fields of Learning*

*Professor D. O. S. Noibi*

# **RESTORING SPIRITUALITY AND MORALITY TO EDUCATION**

***THE ROLE OF MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS IN ALL FIELDS OF LEARNING  
(WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SOUTH WEST NIGERIA)***

**Edited by**

Professor D. O. S. Noibi

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# INTRODUCTION

## *LET'S DO IT TOGETHER!*

This pamphlet is addressed to Muslim intellectuals, particularly those domiciled in the South West of Nigeria. It invites them to join their peers in other parts of the Muslim world in addressing, as effectively as possible, the fundamental challenge confronting Muslim education in the contemporary world. As a holistic system, Islam has a characteristic approach to education, an approach that is consistent with the belief that Allah is the Creator and Sustainer of all things and, therefore, the Ultimate Source of the knowledge of all things. However, the secularist and materialistic philosophy of the West does not share that outlook, as it excludes the Divine from the realm of education. As a result of the colonization of the Muslim world and, subsequently, globalization of the Western worldview, that secular approach to education has, for a long time now, greatly influenced the Muslims and has weakened their consciousness of the Islamic holistic approach.

Meanwhile, Muslim intellectuals in some parts of the world have emphasized the need to respond to this challenge by striving to revive the educational system that is proper for Muslims. The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) leads the way in this regard. It came up with the idea of the 'Islamization of Knowledge' and adopted that term, which had been proposed by leading advocates of the project namely, Professor Sayed Muhammad Naquib Attas of Malaysia (1978) and the renowned Palestinian scholar, Professor Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi (1982). Seeing that the Muslim *Ummah* in South West Nigeria is an important sector of the global *Ummah*, IIIT, in collaboration with the Islamic Education Trust (IET), organized a seminar on Islamization of Knowledge for Muslim intellectuals in the region.

The seminar was held at the Faculty of Education, University of Lagos from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' u th-Thani, 1433AH (16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2012). It attracted 30 participants from 10 universities and notable Islamic organizations domiciled in South West Nigeria. Five papers were presented. The scholarly discussions that followed indicated an appreciation of the

challenge and the relevance of the project to the *Ummah* in the South West. It was agreed that collective efforts by Muslim intellectuals in the area should follow.

Committees were later set up to work out details of further actions. Recommendations from the committees included the production of a piece of literature that would highlight the problem, its implications and necessary actions towards a solution. This pamphlet has been produced in response to that recommendation. In the first of the three chapters, the objective is to emphasize the need for the restoration of the spiritual elements that formed the basis of the kind of education that Islam bequeathed to the rest of the world through Europe. This is discussed against the background of the challenges which that kind of education faces in the contemporary world. The pertinent question is: Does the contemporary Western type of education agree with the:

1. strong Islamic link between education and Divine authority;
2. Muslims' belief in the reality of the hereafter;
3. accountability to Allah for what every individual or group does in the life of this world;
4. oft-repeated promise of richly rewards in the hereafter as incentive to good deeds; and persistent warning of severe punishment in the life to come as deterrent from evil deeds?

If contemporary Western education does not necessarily agree with those basic beliefs of Muslims, but rather challenges them, then, only Muslim intellectuals are qualified to respond to the challenge. This they can do by making the best use of the combination of their academic expertise and a good knowledge of their faith. That is the thought which the chapter leaves us with.

Now, how has the global secular approach to education imposed on Nigeria adversely affected the level of the performance of education in Nigeria in terms of "development and behavioural pattern"? What was the "missing

link” responsible for that non-performance? What was wrong with the concept of “Religious Education” that came with colonialism and Western education and how can that be remedied? How appropriate is the term “Islamization of Knowledge”, what are the proposed alternatives and why are these preferred especially in Nigeria? How would you respond to the propaganda of those who claim that the Islamic holistic approach to education is anti-progress? Finally, what is the task before Muslim intellectuals, the (“Resource Persons”) towards achieving the required restoration or “injecting” of the “missing link”? These are some of the very pertinent questions which are answered in Chapter Two of this pamphlet.

Lastly, Chapter Three assesses the contemporary education system in Nigeria in the context of the integration of knowledge project. It examines the impact of the Christian- sponsored Western education of Muslims in Nigeria raising the question whether or not the objectives of education in the country and the curricula are adequate enough to fulfil the all-round development of the person. Is the education provided in the country really integrated as an ideal type of education should be? Does it integrate “reason and revelation” in order to function properly in society? What kind of results did past and current education ordinances and policies enacted for this country envisage and how much good should we expect in terms of discipline and good character? How can the five Fundamental National Objectives of Education in the country guarantee a balanced education with a strong spiritual and moral basis? The Chapter concludes by calling for action in all disciplines, which should be reflected in curricula, text books and the teaching and learning process. Does this integration process envisage results that are beneficial to the society in general across religious boundaries despite the Islamic basis of the integration?

It is the desire and hope of the group of initiators of this project in South West Nigeria that fellow Muslim intellectuals in the region will respond to this call and join in the effort to put education in its rightful place. It is a task that must be done; so, let’s do it together.

# RESTORING THE SPIRITUALITY OF EDUCATION: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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## **Introduction**

It is common knowledge that the modern Western approach to education is secular. It acknowledges and tolerates spiritual values only when convenient. It trivializes religious devotion and, consequently, regards moral commitment as entirely relative. This secular concept of education has become global as a result of the spread and dominance of the West's materialistic outlook on life. Being part of the global community, Muslims experience real conflict in this regard. Muslims are, by definition, committed to the belief that beneficial knowledge is one that promotes a profound appreciation of the greatness of the Supreme Being and His Attributes (Quran 35:28). It is, therefore, imperative that Muslim intellectuals endeavour to resolve the conflict by restoring to education the spiritual elements that formed the basis of the Islamic educational tradition and culture.

## **Balanced Education**

In a balanced system of education, equal importance is given to spiritual and emotional development on the one hand and physical and intellectual development on the other. What this means is that the respective parts of the brain are equally developed. In secular education, it is only the side of the brain responsible for physical and intellectual development that receives attention at the expense of the side that determines spiritual and emotional development, which is virtually neglected.

In that disproportionate growth of one side of the brain at the expense of the other lies the malady of modern education and the modern global civilization



that grew from it. That lopsidedness has created a serious imbalance in education, as it leaves a vital aspect of the individual undeveloped. This poses a serious challenge to any Muslim who understands, and is conscious of, what it is to be Muslim. Consequently, it poses an even greater challenge to Muslim intellectuals especially those concerned with education of Muslims.

### **Our origin and our role**

The Islamic teaching on the origin of man and our role on earth should determine the Muslim concept of, and approach to, education. In man's first experience of formal education, Allah was the 'Teacher' while Adam (A) was the 'Student'. We read in the Qur'an:

*And He (Allah) taught Adam the names (and nature) of all things.*

(Qur'an 2:31)

It is pertinent to note that this ability to acquire and use knowledge was thus a special favour bestowed on mankind over and above the angels. The latter were, therefore, required to prostrate before Adam (Qur'an 2:34).

Meanwhile, Adam and his offspring (the whole of humanity) were created to be *khalifah/khulafa'* – trustee/trustees and manager/managers – on earth (Qur'an 2:30; 6:165; 27:62). It is obvious therefore, that the special gifts of intellect and knowledge bestowed on us were meant to enable us to perform the task of *khilafah* – trusteeship - as required. The task itself stems from the very purpose for which we were created. Pointedly, the skeptics are told that it is unreasonable to imagine that they have been created without a clear purpose in view:

*Did you then think that We created you in mere idle play, and that you would not have to be returned to Us?*

(Qur'an 23:115)

So, for the avoidance of doubt, Allah declares:

*I have not created the jinn and humanity for any purpose other than that they should worship Me (by doing My Will).*

(Qur'an 51:56)

Those statements have come from Him Who not only created us but also bestowed on us those special favours. So, it is only appropriate and reasonable that humanity should listen and comply. Indeed, we are morally bound to do so. Since we found ourselves here involuntarily, it only makes sense that we accept and follow the guidance, the 'user's guide', the roadmap that has come to us from our Maker and Sustainer. Ignoring such guidance is an act of arrogance and ingratitude, and it amounts to choosing the path to self-destruction. Therefore, any way of life or system of education that ignores this reality should be regarded as entirely misleading and handled with great caution.

### **Appropriiate starting point**

So, the only reasonable starting point in the acquisition of knowledge is to understand our relations with Him on Whose behalf we hold the trust and manage life on earth. This requires a good understanding of the whole purpose of our life on earth and the nature of the stewardship assigned to us. We should seek to know how to fulfill that grand purpose of our existence, which would include how to deal with our own selves as individuals, other human beings and even the dumb creatures and the environment in which we have found ourselves. Obviously, none of these things can we understand except through guidance from the Creator and the Principal on Whose behalf we are trustees and managers. He (SWT) has fulfilled His part of the 'contract' by providing the required guidance through human Messengers:

*Verily, upon us rests the provision of guidance . . .*

(Quran 92:12)

The significance of that guidance delivered by those human messengers (the prophets) is underlined by yet another statement:

*. . . messengers who (delivered) glad tidings (for the righteous) and warning (for the wicked), so that mankind may not have any excuse before Allah (on Judgement Day) after the (messages were delivered by) the messengers . . .*

(Quran 4:165)

To ignore His guidance and act according to one's whims amounts to substituting the human intellect for God as source of guidance, thus going off the track! In that kind of situation, the rejecters of Allah's guidance often erroneously think that they are doing what is right. When told:

*"Do not spread corruption in the land," they say (erroneously), "We are only improving things"*

(Quran 2:11)

However, in reality, *". . .they are the ones that spread corruption, though they do not realize (that, that is the case).* (Quran 2:12).

### **Recompense in the life to come**

One major aspect of education in Islam which, by definition, modern secular education clearly ignores is the fact that all human beings are going to be brought back to Allah on Judgement Day to give account of their stewardship as trustees and managers. There is the promise of richly rewards on that day for those who, while on earth, fulfilled their obligations as responsible trustees. On the other hand, there is stern warning of painful punishment for those who willfully disobeyed. The promise and the warning are meant to be incentive and deterrent respectively. Next only to the oneness of God, that reality of recompense in the life to come is emphasized again and again in the

Qur'an. The importance attached to it must, therefore, feature prominently in all curriculums of education for Muslims.

Indeed, as Smith and Haddad have observed - and rightly so - the Islamic teaching about the life to come has intrigued Western observers. That is in light of the specifics of the future abodes of recompense portrayed so graphically in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. These scholars pointed out that the implication is that Muslims must not fall prey to the lures of worldly materialism as the West has done. Incidentally, Prince Charles, Heir to the British Throne, has consistently urged the West to re-learn spirituality and connection with the Divine from the Muslim world. He warned that if the West failed to do so, such failure would be at their own peril. Indeed, the strength of Islam lies in the faith that the fruits of today's labour will be reaped in the hereafter, and that Allah will reward all people in justice in the life to come. This is a vital component of the living faith of Islam and should be so treated as part of the curriculum.

So, the concern of education for Muslims should not be only for good living in this world; it should include how to attain good life in the hereafter as well. A common supplication of Muslims, recommended by Allah Himself, is this: “. . . . *Our Lord and Sustainer! Grant us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and save us from the chastisement of hell fire.*” (Qur'an 2:201). We are warned in the Qur'an that those who care only about the pleasures of the present life will surely end up in the chastisement of hell in the hereafter (Qur'an 17:10, 18 & 19). In light of the above, the goal of the education programme for Muslims must include producing beneficial results not only in this life but also in the hereafter. Education for them must be one that maintains a perfect link between the life of this world and that of the hereafter.

It must be said though, that emphasis on adequate preparation for the hereafter does not in any way create an impediment to intellectual or material progress in the life of this world. That is evidenced by the fact

modern Western civilization is heavily indebted to the Muslims from whom Europe learnt mathematics and the sciences in Spain. The difference between the two traditions lies in the fact that the West later abandoned the spiritual elements of that intellectual heritage replacing it with secularism. The Muslims had been able to cultivate various sciences without becoming alienated from a spiritual and holistic worldview. Their intellectual tradition was one that maintained the kind of harmonious relations that must exist between man and God. It was a tradition that emphasized the need to improve the quality of life in this world while, at the same time, emphasizing that preparing for the future life is even more important. In defending his choice of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as “the most influential single figure in Human history”, Michael H. Hart asserts that the Prophet (SAW) was “the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels” – by “secular” Hart meant other aspects of life on earth.

### **Spirituality as basis of sustainable morality**

Meanwhile, there is a universal recognition of the fact that morality should be an integral part of education. At the successful end of their studies at the university, young graduating students are told that they have been “found worthy in character and learning”. Yet, the secular education system does not formally accord morality any place in its various curriculums whether for instructional or examination purposes. Meanwhile, researches have shown that corruption is widespread in universities across the world as reported by a seasoned university administrator, Professor Peter Okebukola, former Executive Secretary of Nigeria’s National Universities Commission. He then proposed the inclusion of a compulsory module on morality and piety in the curriculums of the universities.

However, it is not the philosopher, jurist or moralist that can correctly determine the rules of morality. In his Foreword to the book, *Intellectuals Speak Out About God*, Ronald Reagan, even as President of the USA, lamented the various means of attack on ethics and moral values in his country. He then concluded saying,

We know only God can give us the courage and guidance we badly need. Challenges to faith today are legion...

The fact is that, as humans, we can only use our intellect to understand, appreciate and apply the rules made by Allah. However, we cannot, by ourselves, discover truth in its entirety, including the correct standards of morality. It is Allah, the Source of all knowledge, wisdom and moral values that has all the facts including the appropriate standards of morality. He asks rhetorically:

*Does the Creator not know what He has created?*  
(Qur'an 67:14).

And in yet another challenging question, Allah commanded the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to ask those who made false claims:

*Do you know better or Allah?*  
(Qur'an 2:140)

The moral code given by Allah is the one that can adequately regulate our relationship with Him and facilitate our living together as human beings in peace and harmony. It is therefore a moral code which should never be violated by anyone. We may make new rules but, in doing so, we must be guided by the authentic general ethical principles laid down in the scriptures. At the end of a list of do's and don'ts stated in the Qur'an, we read:

*And that this is My straight way, (the way leading straight to Me); follow it then, and follow not (other) ways, lest they cause you to deviate from His way. All this He has enjoined upon you, so that you might remain conscious of Him."*

(Qur'an 6:153)

The secularists' display of arrogance is robustly dismissed by Allah in the following statement:

*Only a little amount of knowledge is  
communicated to you (human beings)*

(Qur'an 17:85)

### **Scientists admit limitations**

Scientists themselves have begun to acknowledge the fact that, after all, they do not have all the answers. Commenting on Einstein's theory of General Relativity, Dr. Lincoln Barnett declared that "scientists have become aware of the alarming limitations of man's senses". As Harun Yahya stated, the fact is that our physical senses can only help us to perceive the material world which, however, is an illusion. So, in reality, little or nothing do we know of things that lie beyond matter. Indeed, intellectuals including scientists have realized that many unprecedented scientific discoveries had actually been stated in the Qur'an centuries before they were made.

For instance, Dr. Maurice Bucaille, author of *The Bible, Qur'an and Science* was astonished to find out that various statements contained in the Qur'an had preceded related discoveries made by scientists by centuries. As a result of his findings, this French surgeon and scientist embraced Islam. Similarly, Professor Keith Moore, the world renowned embryologist and author of *The Developing Human* was amazed when he discovered that virtually all his discoveries in the field of human embryology in recent times had already been stated in the Qur'an and the books of Hadith many centuries earlier. Consequently, he permitted the inclusion of the relevant passages of the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet (SAW) in a fresh edition of the book.

## **Conclusion**

Muslims of South West Nigeria have been doubly affected by the modern Western approach to education. Arabic and Islamic learning was the only kind of literacy known in the region, as in other parts of West Africa, before the advent of British colonialism and the Christian missionaries. With the imposition of Christianity through the Western type of education, Muslims of the area were saddled with the burden of Christian indoctrination along with that of the secular concept of education. Every member of the Muslim community in general has a role to play in the efforts being made to put an end peacefully to the unconstitutional Christian indoctrination of Muslim children in educational institutions.

However, the job of bringing the lost elements of spirituality back to education for young Muslims at the various levels of education can be done only by Muslim intellectuals. Given what we now know of the peculiar circumstances of Muslims in the South West, Muslim intellectuals domiciled in the area are hereby invited to take the bull by the horn. They are called upon to intensely explore their respective disciplines for evidence of relations with the Supreme Being as the ultimate Source of knowledge. The Qur'an is replete with statements which relate virtually everything in existence, every aspect of life and every event to the will, act or permission of Allah. Allah describes the Book as "*explaining everything*" (Qur'an 16:89), and says He "*has left out nothing in the Book*" (Quran 6:38). Statements such as these and many others fired the imagination of the early Muslims and that led to the great intellectual achievements that they recorded. The statements can do so again even in our own time.

We urge Muslim scientists to consider, for instance, the thought-provoking challenge coming from Allah (SWT) to the unbelievers and the skeptics, stated in Qur'an 56:57-73. How, in their opinion, would the secular scientists respond to challenges coming from Allah in the form of rhetoric questions? Firstly, the skeptics are told that they are creatures of Allah (whether or not they so believe)! So, why would they not accept the truth coming from their



Creator (57)? Then, they are asked to consider the awe-inspiring and complex phenomenon of procreation: who could have brought the sperm and the egg into being and put the embryological process in place (58 &59). And why would they not readily accept the reality of resurrection seeing the miracle of their coming into being in the first instance (60-62)?

The unbelievers are also asked to consider whether it is they or Allah who causes the seeds they sow in the earth to grow; and whether they did not think that Allah could deprive them of the products of the seeds (if He so willed) and thus make them to lament in the end (63-67). Similarly, they are told to ask themselves whether it is they or Allah who brings down from the skies the sweet water that they drink and whether it is they who protect the water from being burningly salty and bitter; they should then ask themselves why they are not grateful (68-70)! Lastly, they are asked: what about the fire that you kindle; did you create the trees that serve as its fuel or was it Allah that created them? (71-73). This is a reference to the plant-origin of almost all the known fuels including mineral fuels like coal (petrified wood) or petroleum which is a liquefied residue of plant-nourished organisms buried in the earth for a very long time. We suggest that Muslim scientists consider what is likely to be the response of secular scientists to this challenge. Conversely, what is their own response to these questions, as believers?

Finally, let us bear in mind the status that Allah assigned to us: that Muslims are the ones who *“urge the doing of good deeds and forbid the doing of evil deeds, believing firmly in Allah”* (Qur’an 3:110). On careful reflection, it can be seen that the task at hand falls squarely within that assignment. Furthermore, the Prophet (SAW) directed that any Muslim who observes something wrong should stop and change it with whatever fair means that he has at his disposal. The task at hand also falls squarely within the premise of that instruction. And those who strive and carry out the bidding of Allah and His Messenger (SAW) are assured of richly rewards here and hereafter. May you be one of them!

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# ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE: THE TITLE QUESTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

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## **Preamble**

*It is difficult to turn on a radio or television, read a newspaper, magazine or popular book, or see a movie in a neighbourhood theater and not find an attack on the ethics and moral values we have been taught to cherish. Drug and alcohol abuse have taken a terrible toll on our youth. We know only God can give us the courage and guidance we so badly need. Challenges to faith today are legion, and you may find yourself faced with choices that another generation could not have imagined – and the right choice will not always be the popular choice.*

The above excerpt is the opinion of the former U.S. President, Ronald Reagan, in a Foreword he wrote to a book entitled the *Intellectuals Speak Out About God* which was published in 1984. Ronald Reagan used the Foreword to show how the Western leaders are groaning as a result of the collapse of the moral fabric of the Western society. But the book brought to Ronald Reagan good tidings being a compilation of submissions made by some Western scientists regarding their conviction that the scientific events, subjects and structures which have so far constituted the themes of their researches could not have occurred by accident and on their own. Behind them, there must have been a Prime Mover – God – and a purpose. A quick question at this juncture is “What is the connection between the collapse of the moral fabric in the West and the recognition of God by some Western scientists?”. Here lies the

answer: *'Ibadah*, worship of God, which was the purpose of creation of man, implies a moral obligation on man to recognize God as Lord and Cherisher. Consequently, it further places on man the duty to obey Him in all matters in appreciation of His multifarious favours showered on us. That would be in line with the principle of reciprocity that "From them to whom much is given much is expected". It is therefore a pleasant beginning of moral rebirth that some scientists expressed belief in God through their research works. The scenario we set out to describe in this write-up is of tripartite dimension; namely learning, morality and religiosity.

### **The Problem**

Problems facing us in Nigeria - be they educational, economic or political - can conveniently be summarized in the term 'vulnerability' because such problems, more often than not, are an extension of what transpire outside Nigeria. The issue is that Nigeria being part of the globalized village usually gets quickly influenced and infected by foreign ideas and diseases. For example, the HIV/AIDS endemic that started in the West did not only spread to Nigeria but was made, through powerful media propaganda, to look like an African-grown health challenge. Incidentally, it has been medically established that a 25-year old British sailor named David Carr of Manchester was the first person who died of AIDS in 1959 (Philip Emeagwali: 2004). The global economic meltdown which was detected in the West in 2007 and which has defied all possible remedies so far caused economic catastrophe in Nigeria. The National Mirror in its June 25, 2013 edition, page 49, reported the case of a female undergraduate of Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria who attempted to flush her newly-born baby down the toilet in her hostel and that was about three weeks after a similar incident occurred in China. A highly sophisticated organized terrorism of al-Qa'idah fashion is now operating in Nigeria. In the criss-cross of these negative local and global events, what role is expected of education? In the UN 2000 summit, the United Nations called for a new World Order in terms of normalizing and re-engineering people's living conditions.

## **The Role of Education**

If people's living condition must be normalized and reengineered, especially in Nigeria, there is no alternative instrument to education. Education, axiomatically, is the catalyst of development. To make things work in a particular direction, we need education. Education also has the corrective capacity in case things fall apart. But in Nigeria, has education served as catalyst of development? Has education been used in a corrective capacity? Generally, is education performing in Nigeria?

In order to answer these questions, we use two performance indicators; namely **full development** and the **behavioural pattern** of the average educated Nigerians.

### **(a) Full Development**

In different parts of the world, full development and its indices constitute a reliable evaluation instrument of a performing education. Full development manifests in indices such as availability of job opportunities, portable water/uninterrupted power supplies, standard roads, efficient/accessible health care delivery, leisure, food security, housing and a stable political institution. Above all, security comes as a byproduct. It stands to reason that education is performing optimally in any society that experiences full development. In the Nigerian context, it is obvious that education is not performing in view of underdevelopment experienced in Nigeria, where it has persisted for six decades after her independence.

### **(b) Behavioural Pattern**

The behavioural pattern which is the manifestation of the life style of an individual can serve as an indicator of his/her education or lack of it. The manner of spoken language, mode of dressing, interpersonal relationship, service delivery, eating habit, self appraisal and self control, etc. eloquently depict one's personality and educational attainment. A performing education should enable an individual to

acquire the listed behavioural patterns by which the right human capital for nation building emerges. The following few examples illustrate the common behavioural patterns of many educated Nigerians.

### 1. **Selfishness**

The term selfishness is used in the context of this write-up to replace a notorious anti-social behavior called corruption in Nigeria. Selfishness is preferred because 'corruption' has become nebulous, as it defies appropriate definition and a precise scope. This is against the backdrop of the fact that so many practices which are qualified as corruption have become normal with legal backing in Nigeria. For example, the establishment of the office of the first lady (which is run like a parallel office to that of the Head of State, the Ministry of Women Affairs), using public funds to run political party's affairs, etc. are forms of corruption that are carried out with a legal zeal. On the other hand, selfishness is a situation where personal interest is superimposed on corporate interest such as when the public treasury is recklessly looted and contracts are either poorly executed or out-rightly abandoned despite full payment of the contract costs. An average educated Nigerian wastes quality time on frivolities at the expense of productive activities and official duties. A lot of individuals recklessly squander money on ephemeral events such as birthday, wedding and burial ceremonies. Nigerians are noted for wasting billions of dollars on the acquisition of landed properties in foreign countries, the houses they rarely occupy but were purchased only to display affluence. Invariably, the money wasted on events such as listed above is basically earmarked for nation building but diverted to selfish use.

## 2. **Lack of Political Will**

The indifference of government to the concept of nation building is obvious in a variety of ways. When the Power Holding Companies of Nigeria (former NEPA) fails to deliver, instead of a query, government keeps pumping subvention to the organization which also grabs throat cutting tariffs from consumers for services poorly delivered or not delivered at all. Though roads are not motorable, the Federal Ministry of Works gets regular allocations instead of queries. The government kept mute when the Central Bank Governor, Sanusi Lamido revealed “that unproductive National Assembly consumes 25.41% of the nation’s annual budget” (Punch). If the presidency allocation, states’ allocation, local governments, office of the first lady’s and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs’ are added, there will be virtually nothing left for any development. This is commonly referred to in Nigeria as unrealistic size of government.

Furthermore, there is one anti-clock policy adopted by all politicians; it is the slogan of ‘the next election’. The next election is obviously the top priority of all political parties as they all swing into action preparing for the next election immediately a general election is concluded. Another manifestation of lack of political will is that of deceitful statements/slogans made by the government in power, be it military or civilian, which commonly reads thus:

“...this *administration* is determined more than ever before to move this country forward”.

But experience shows that at the end of each administration, the country is left in a position worse than that of the entry point of the outgoing administration.

### 3. Unprofessional Behaviour

Some professionals, out of greed, mortgage their conscience to promote unethical practices like promotion of inequity by the very judicial personnel whose responsibility it is to uphold justice. The President of the Nigerian Bar Association, Mr. Joseph Daudu was quoted as indicting the Judiciary for manipulating justice. According to him, there is a growing perception, backed by empirical evidence, that justice is purchasable and it has been purchased on several occasions in Nigeria (Punch October 4, 2011 p. 18).

### 4. Promotion of Militancy

The emergence of pressure groups in various guises such as MEND, MOSSOB, Boko Haram, etc. has become a culture in the Nigerian political landscape. Militias are usually raised to wreak havoc on the opposition group or to make the state ungovernable for the helmsman. Whichever way the obnoxious practice is viewed, its implication for nation building is critical as trillions of naira are deployed both to prosecute the agenda and, on the other hand, to checkmate the violent operations of the militias; colossal amounts of money that would have been ordinarily channeled towards nation building.

The above, a tip of iceberg though, is to establish the notion of non-performance of education in Nigeria as evident in, first, **lack of full development of the country** and, secondly, the fact that the **behavioural pattern** of many educated Nigerians as detailed in 1-5 above leaves much to be desired.

But then, where does the problem lie; is it in the **educated or in the education**? A critical examination of the Nigerian education system as referred to in various aspects of this pamphlet indicates that there is a missing link in education.



### **What is the Missing Link?**

From all indications, Nigeria is hugely blessed with the essential ingredients of development such as human capital and financial and natural resources. The main challenge is that the average highly educated Nigerian, highly skilled Nigerian, the professional Nigerian lacks the ability of doing it right displaying what is known as discipline. The ability to do it right is a moral issue. And as it is already inferred in the preamble above, morality cannot be discussed in isolation from religion because morality and wisdom are interwoven and both are the function of religion. So, the missing link is the wisdom and guidance that are derivable from religion. This could be buttressed by the opinion expressed by Ronald Reagan as quoted in the preamble above: **We know that only God can give us the courage and guidance we so badly need.**

A point should be quickly made at this juncture; namely that no one should equate the special arrangement of IRK/BK offered at all levels of Nigerian education system with religion which is wisdom/morality-laden. By the time the missionaries, in collaboration with the colonial administration introduced religious studies to Nigerians, religion had been thoroughly secularized in Europe. This is to say that the 'religion' brought to us was already stripped of spirituality and morality. And when IRK (Islamic Studies) was introduced in the public schools, it was done in the BK fashion. Like Ronald Reagan, A.A. Lawal, (2006) a professor of History, in his inaugural lecture entitled CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: A COLONIAL LEGACY lamented the spate of immorality and corruption that enveloped Nigeria.

What is the panacea to the phenomenon of missing link in education? Is the crisis of missing link peculiar to the Muslims alone? Is the term ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE accurate and adequate for the process of bridging the gap?

### **Islamization of Knowledge**

When Muslims felt the menace of the missing link in the education system in their various countries, the reaction was that of shock, frustration and lamentation. Within a period of ten years (1972 - 1982), conferences and

workshops were held in Jaddah, Pakistan, Dakka and Jakata. Arising from the conferences were:

1. Establishment of International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT)
2. Establishment of World Centre for Islamic Education, Ummul Qura University
3. Establishment of Association of Muslim Social Scientists
4. Publication of recommendations of the four world conferences
5. Publication of other materials on Islamic Education e.g. Crisis in Muslim Education, Conceptual Crisis and Natural Sciences, Curriculum and Teacher Education, etc.

Playing leading roles in these activities were Professors Ismail Faruqi, Ashraf S.A., Ghulam Ahmad all of blessed memories and many others, who are still active.

In their wisdom (may Allah Almighty bless them for their contributions), Islamization of knowledge was proposed as the panacea to the crisis. Towards actualizing the proposal, numerous materials such as the few listed above were produced. But then, their contributions notwithstanding, the debate on the appropriateness of the term Islamization of knowledge remains germane. For historical and operational reasons, we may have to reconsider the term Islamization of knowledge.

(a) **Historical Perspective**

The impulse generated by the education system which flourished in the Muslim domains in the medieval period transcended the Muslim countries to Europe. As a matter of fact, one of the universities established and run then by the Muslims was situated in Cordova Spain which impacted significantly on sparking off the Renaissance. This feat has been repeatedly acknowledged by the Western intelligentsia like the tribute paid by the (London) Times Educational Supplement (9 May 1969) P.1, 498 to Al-Azhar during its thousandth anniversary celebration in 1969:

Al-Azhar's 1,000 years, Older than Oxford or Cambridge, more influential in its heyday than the Sorbonne, more revered even now by its students than any Western university, Al-Azhar this year celebrated its thousandth anniversary. It is fitting that tribute should be paid by the West to this centre of Islamic learning in Cairo. Without Al-Azhar's steadfast devotion to scholarship through good times and bad, the torch of the Ancients' learning, guarded by the Muslims while Europe was in darkness, might never have survived to spark off the Renaissance. (Babs Fafunwa P. 53)

The intriguing question is what type of learning did the Muslims bequeath to Europe which sparked off the Renaissance? It was learning in which religion was the foundation and morality was an integral part. In the post Renaissance period, learning was repackaged and redefined to exclude religion thereby giving birth to the secular versus religion phenomenon. The Roman Catholic Church played a role in the factors that led to the repackaging and redefinition of education; the episode of persecution of scientists such as Galileo (1564-1642) remains fresh in people's memories. In the colonial era, the education system given to the colonies was the repackaged one. If a need is being felt today by Muslims and non-Muslims to redefine and repackage education, what do we call both the process and the finished product? Islamization/Islamized? If history is of any relevance in the circumstance, we should go back to the pre-Renaissance system when education that flourished was simply called education. Instead of Islamization, **Revival of knowledge** or **Integrated Education** or the Saudi's coinage of **Ta'sil** which means going back to the basis or injection of the missing link into the existing system may be appropriate. This is in consonance with Ronald Reagan's clamor for God, Religion and Morality.

(b) **Operational Perspective**

The whole world is clamoring for a change. The desired change is not an exclusive Muslim demand. The education system that is now due for change is simply called education. The proposed alternative which simply means integration or injection of the missing link into the existing system should come as the contribution of Muslims to the purification of a decayed system. In the Nigerian context, Muslims and Christians are not living in separate zones. Against the back drop of the fact that Muslim and Christian children attend the same schools, 'Islamized education system' may sound too sectarian, too discriminatory. So, perhaps, revival (*ihyaa'*), or integration (*indimaj* or *takamilah* in Arabic) may appeal to all and sundry.

**Implementation Strategy**

Assuming that we settle down for Revival, or Integration as the theme which translate in Arabic to *Takmilatu I-Ma'rifah*, or *Ta'silu I-Ma'rifah*, the starting point is seeking justification for the exercise. Why seeking an alternative to the existing system? The ills, evils and hazards of the existing system must be articulated convincingly and persuasively. All stakeholders must be convinced about the inevitability of the change. A change is usually resisted no matter how promising or desirable it may look. The resistance is borne out of the fact that some elements benefit from the hazardous system. Hence, the need for sustained efforts to explain it convincingly

**Setting the Record Straight**

There is an on-going attempt to rewrite world history with a view to obliterating Islamic contributions to world civilization. This is particularly noticeable in the area of intellectual enterprise. The method used in all instances is the same. It is by skipping the medieval period when Muslims made significant contributions to world civilization. For example, as Osuntokun (2000) traces the history of university education, he begins with ancient Greece where philosophers, especially Plato established a citadel of learning known as Academy which was named after Academusa, hero of the

Trojan war. He moves to another Academy built in Egypt in 323 BC – 30 BC. This was followed, according to his ranking, by the works of the Christian fathers. Then, he moves straight to the Renaissance era. By the same token, Ibadapo-Obe (2013) traces the history of the university education beginning with Taxila University in 600BC, to Oxford University 1096, Cambridge University 1209, Harvard University 1636 and ending with University College Ibadan 1948.

What is missing in all these narrations is the unique intellectual contribution made by Muslims in the medieval period. Tracing the history of the world's intellectual enterprise without mentioning Khawarazmi who introduced Algebra and zero in Mathematics, or Ibn Sina (980-1037) who is fondly referred to in the West as Avicenna for his encyclopedic material in medical sciences entitled *Qanuun fi Tibb* (Canon of Medicine) which was a must-read-text in the European institutions for many centuries up till the nineteenth before the Western scholars attained self-sufficiency, is grossly inadequate. It is a misrepresentation or distortion of history of the world's intellectual enterprise. Muslim scholars of relevant expertise should oblige to write history of Medicine, Education, Philosophy, Technology, Sociology, Theology, Mathematics, Literature, etc to highlight for posterity what Muslims contributed especially in the medieval period to world civilization. This is a critical area to which Muslims should pay attention. Another area Muslims should pay attention to is the documentation of the international organized terrorism before it is documented by non-Muslims who will make it look like the only hallmark for which Muslims can be remembered. This becomes mandatory for two reasons.

First, organized terrorism, it must be noted, is a purposeful campaign to reenact the crusades episode of the medieval period when the Eastern and Western Christians united to clip the wings of Muslims whose influence in politics, learning, regional and urban development was unrivalled then. The wars of the Crusades ended after two centuries leaving Muslims stronger as the

combined efforts of the Eastern and Western Christians failed either to wipe off Muslims or to reduce their numerical strength, *ma shaa' Allah*.

Secondly, before the history of the on-going organized terrorism is written by non Muslims, we must inform the world about the genesis of the upheavals in terms of its purpose, its financiers, its targets, its short- and long-term goals. While we cannot predict how long the war of terror could last, we can say with confidence that history will repeat itself as Muslims will survive the war, coming out stronger and larger in numerical strength.

### **Injecting the Missing Link**

The key task before the resource persons is tripartite; namely Integration, Merger and Exploration.

### **Integration**

The integration approach means a systematic method of injecting the Islamic world view in the current education system. This is based on the thesis that the Darwinian evolution theory is the virus that has so far rendered education deficient. The theory has led to a world view which gives man a false perception of himself and that of his environment. Man has been indoctrinated to believe in his absolute freedom of action and choices on the strength that no one was responsible for his creation and that his coming to existence was by chance. The notion of absolute freedom of man which is the product of the evolution theory is the mother of all vices that plague man today.

*Tawhid*, therefore, is the missing link that needs to be injected into the system. *Tawhid* encompasses the Islamic world view which includes the meaning of the real status of man as *khalifah* (vicegerent) with the privileges and duties of the *khalifah*, as well as the environment where he lives. The *tawhid*-based world view will make man relate to his Creator in a manner that positively impacts on his behavioural pattern. He will seek and attain comfort without undesirable side effects.

Before injecting the *tawhid*-based world view into the education system, the notion of creation without a creator should be debunked by scientific means. For example, if man, according to the evolutionists, reached his present state of physical being through gradual transformation across different species (various living organisms Amoeba, orang-outang, etc.), it is unscientific that the initial formulating species will continue to coexist with man. Take a slice of yam or a grain, for example, following the emergence of the new tuber of yam the initial slice planted ab initio is gone. On the other hand, man is a product like a motor car. And if a motor car cannot produce itself without an external producer, man (any living organism for that matter) cannot come into existence without a producer/creator.

### **The Real Care Provider**

Integration involves reflecting the knowledge and role of the Divine in every classroom subject; indeed, in every classroom activity. This is a merger of the spiritual and the material in a pragmatic manner. Merger portends advantage of wiping off the line hitherto erroneously drawn between religion and the so-designated secular subjects. The separationist practice (between religion and secularism) is carried out in a manner that has always denied learners in the science and commercial groups access to religious studies. Merger, therefore, gives the learners repeated contacts with the knowledge of God in an integrated manner. Merger should be carried out at all levels of education. For example, in the first six years of Basic 9, knowledge of God can be reflected in both Civic and Social Studies classes. A topic such as THE REAL CARE PROVIDER can be introduced. A light dialogue is run between the teacher and the pupils about the real care and its provider. The rider is who cares? The pupil answers:

#### **Mummy Cares.**

She bathes me in the morning.

She helps me to wear my school uniform.

She gives me a nice breakfast.

She bids me goodbye to school.

She welcomes me back home in the afternoon.  
She gives me very good lunch.  
She buys lots of toys for me.  
She takes me to the park to play.  
Mummy cares.

### **The Driver Cares.**

He takes me to the school in the morning.  
At school, he takes me across the road.  
He waits until I enter the school compound.  
He comes back in the afternoon to take me home.  
The driver cares.

### **The Teacher Cares**

He rings the bell in the morning.  
He talks to us on the line.  
He prays with us in the hall.  
He leads us to the classroom one by one.  
He knows my name.  
He calls my name too.  
He teaches us 1, 2, 3.  
He teaches us alif, ba, ta, tha.  
He teaches us A, B, C.  
He teaches us how to pray.  
He teaches us nice songs.  
The teacher cares.

### **Daddy Cares**

He gives mummy a lot of money to buy my uniform.  
He provides food for me and a lot of toys.  
He pays the driver some money every month.  
He pays my school fees.  
Daddy works hard to get money.



Daddy pays everybody who takes care of me.  
He pays the doctor who treats me when I am ill.  
Daddy cares.

### **Who Really Cares?**

The real care comes from Allah.  
He cares because He is the Creator.  
He created everybody and everything.  
Everybody is a creature.  
Everything is a creature.  
Allah alone is the Creator.  
Daddy, mummy, teacher, doctor, driver and neighbour are creatures of Allah.  
Allah created them and takes care of them.

### **Allah Cares in Many Ways**

Allah cares for us when we sleep.  
Allah cares for everyone.  
Another name of Allah is Ar-Rabb; the One that cares.  
The water we drink is part of Allah's care for us.  
The fruits we take are part of Allah's care for us.  
The sunshine is part of Allah's care for us.  
The dark, cool weather of the night is part of Allah's care for us.  
The fish, chicken, beef, rice and beans we eat are part of Allah's care for us.

### **THE REAL CARE IS FROM ALLAH, THE CREATOR**

The dialogue is backed up with illustrated photographs of the persons and all earthly objects mentioned in the dialogue.

The above represents both integration and merger. The integration approach should be carried out in Civic and Social Studies text books used from Basic I – VI

### **Education and Integration/Merger**

In the secular realm, knowledge is any information that can be perceived by human senses. A metaphysical discourse, known in Islam as *al-Ghayb*, is outside the scope of knowledge as far as secularists are concerned. This anti-metaphysics syndrome is to deny man access to a body of knowledge that can be sourced only in the revelation; the body of knowledge that is indispensable in the management of human affairs. For example, how to use this world to prepare for the hereafter is beyond human perception. Marginalization of metaphysics in the education system as a secular manifestation amounts to cutting off half of the knowledge. Man cannot get it right in his quest for normal living as long as only half of knowledge is what is being packaged and paraded as education. Crisis of any description facing modern man is a direct implication of operating half of knowledge. What man loses by denying himself access to the full knowledge (with *al-ghayb* integrated) should be a separate study illustrated with empirical evidence.

Our task, therefore, is to re-merge what the secularists separated. As we set out to merge and harmonize, we explore. Explore what? We explore in the Qur'an and the Sunnah the body of knowledge which the secularists tag secular, thereby establishing the indivisibility and interconnectedness of the divine and the mundane. This is to package every subject with information derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah as illustrated in the following examples:

### **Biology**

We demonstrate to the learners how the Qur'an and Hadith give minute details of the Biology lessons beginning with the creation of man.

*Then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed. Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We*

*made a (foetus) lump, then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed is Allah, the Best to create*

(Q.23: 14).

Other examples are breast feeding (Q.2: 233), sexual intercourse (Q.2: 187 & 222), etc.

Water as the main material from which every living organism was created:

*We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?*

(Q.21:30).

### **Chemistry**

The science of chemistry also receives encouragement in the Qur'an. The creation of man out of clay probably through a chemical interaction between various substances in the dust calls for attention. It draws to our attention the process of combination and change under the Divine Laws:

*We created man from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape*

(Q.15:26)

### **Physics**

The creation of all things in pairs; that is male/female, positive/negative:

*Glory be to Allah Who created in pairs all things that earth produces as well as their human kind and things of which they have no knowledge*

(Q.39:36).

The learners' attention should be drawn to the Big Bang Theory and what the Qur'an says about it:

*Do not unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one unit of creation before We clove them asunder*

(Q.21:30).

### **Physical Geography**

The learners are shown how the Qur'an pay meticulous attention to measurement especially in the act of creation or the crafting of any object (of course, this is not restricted to Chemistry):

*And the earth we have spread out like a carpet and set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance.*

(Q. 15:19).

### **Medicine**

The creation of honey with its medicinal value as stated in the Qur'an is instructive (Q.16:68-9). This is to draw attention to the study of herbs and other creatures around them for medication purposes. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) specifically instructed Muslims thus: O servants of Allah, make medication, because Allah does not cause any disease to exist without making available the appropriate herb to cure it except one disease which is old age" (in other words, no medication can turn an eighty year old man to eighteen) (Narrated by Bukhari).

Other passages of the Qur'an refer to other branches of knowledge such as **Agriculture** (Q.80:24-32), **Tourism** (Q.40:82 & 22:45-46), **Transportation** (Q.16:5-8), **History** (Q.30: 2-3), **Technology** (Q.21:80), **Business** (Q.2:275 & 282; 83:1-3), **Social Studies** (Inheritance Q.4:7-13) **Civics** (the international brotherhood of mankind Q.49:13)

If Muslims must face the **Qiblah** at *salat*, the onus is on them to develop the appropriate instrument that will enable them to find the location or direction of the Ka'bah. And this they did.

The learners in the class of Mathematics should be given an insight into the Muslims' contributions to Mathematics such as the introduction of zero by Kwarazmi as well as the development of Algebra. In concluding every lesson emphasis should be placed on the fact that Allah, Who provides this first hand information is, undoubtedly, the Creator.

### **The Scope of Integration**

The Integration exercise is to be carried out in the school syllabi, textbooks and scheme of work. Each resource person will do the exploration in terms of searching for what the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* say about his/her area of specialization. The (Qur'anic) text is studied and integrated into the lesson content. For example, in a Business Class, the teacher sets his behavioural objectives as follows.

At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (a) state the attitude of Islam to business transaction;
- (b) describe the method of raising capital in Islam;
- (c) define Interest in business;
- (d) list the dangers inherent in interest

### **Content**

Islam permits Muslims to trade in order to make profits. It is allowed to buy and sell commodities such as books, stationery, clothes, shoes, building materials, food stuff, electronics, computers, automobile, etc. To conduct a business, you are allowed to raise the capital, which is the money needed to buy the articles of trade. This can be done through loans from a colleague or from a commercial bank. Islam forbids giving or taking of Interest. Interest is the extra amount of money charged on the initial capital. Interest is usually prefixed in percentages. Interest is forbidden because it amounts to taking from the poor and giving to the rich and it can cause inflation,

unemployment, reckless spending and stealing. The inherent danger in all of this is insecurity. For example, it has been established that the global economic meltdown is a direct outcome of interest charged by banks and financial houses among other causes. Interest is also called usury. According to the Qur'an, "... *Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury*" (Q.2:272). Also forbidden in business is the manipulation of the scale in a bid to cheat the customers or business partners (Q. 83:1-5).

This reflection should run through Evaluation as well as Assignment. We must, however, strike a balance by making sure that the Integration exercise is done in the Syllabus and Textbooks in respect of every subject.

The resource persons will serve as internal critics by way of assessing each other's work. In order to reduce errors to the barest minimum, external assessors should also be appointed to critique the materials. Some Muslim private schools can be selected for demonstration purposes. Teachers of the schools so selected must be acquainted with the materials through training.

### **Conclusions**

Revival of knowledge or Integrated knowledge or (*Ihya'ul Ma'rifah* or *At-Ta'limu l-Mutakamil*) – or the adoption of the Saudi version of *Ta'sil*- has been proposed as an alternative to the term 'Islamization of knowledge' for a number of reasons. First, the word 'Islamization' does not appropriately capture both the goal and the procedure. While the goal is to have a complete system of education, the procedure is to restore the missing link into the current system which is considered incomplete. Secondly, the education system which Muslims of the medieval period bequeathed to the West was a complete system of mundane and spiritual combined; that was the system that was later repackaged in the West by separating religion from the mundane. Thirdly, not all Muslim countries that are active in the restoration exercise use the term 'Islamization of knowledge'. Saudi Arabia, for example, is using *ta'sil al ma'rifah* meaning return of knowledge to the basis. Fourthly, in a pluralistic society like Nigeria, the Islamized knowledge

may look like an exclusive brand for Muslims and may attract hostility. Since both Muslims and non-Muslims are suffering from the effect of the incomplete education system in circulation, the restructured system should be presentable to all.

It should be noted that in this write-up, a justification for the exercise/project is sought in the local parlance where performance indicators are identified and utilized to establish the state of non performance of our education system. The justification becomes obvious when viewed against the need to situate the project in our country avoiding the syndrome of blind imitation of foreign ideas. Finally, it is hereby recommended that the restoration exercise should be carried out by the designated personnel in phases. The procedure highlighted above may be adopted or adapted.

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# ASSESSING THE CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The main purpose of education is to guarantee the overall development of the mind, body and soul of man in a way that the individual achieves internal peace and maintains peace with all that exists in the universe. Many concepts of education have tended to narrow the goal of education to the transfer of knowledge for effective participation in the competitive global environment. In many education systems, conscious effort is made to develop talents and intelligence of individuals for economic success and functioning as responsible citizens. No wonder then that when the question of ‘what has happened to our educational system?’ is asked, the answer provided is restricted to the material values of education at the expense of its more vital moral and spiritual components. Most education systems around the world are today producing more criminals, corrupt officials and deviants of various kinds exhibiting a plethora of anti-social behaviour. The school system itself has been invaded by horrendous orientation leading to violence and indiscriminate use of guns to kill school mates and teachers. These are direct results of over-secularization of education in all its facets.

Nigeria is a typical illustration of an environment where education has been used to secularize the learner. The introduction of Western education in the

19<sup>th</sup> Century actually threw many Muslims into a quandary. Fafunwa (1982, p.71) reports that

Between 1850 and 1960, Muslims and animists were merely tolerated because a good citizen in Nigeria then must be one who is African by blood, Christian by religion and British or French in culture and intellect. The Muslims saw the utilitarian benefits of Western education but were unsure of maintaining their faith. This was a big dilemma.

The root of Western form of education is usually traced to the arrival of Thomas Birch Freeman, of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and Mr. and Mrs. De Graft of the Church Missionary Society who established the first Christian school in 1842. These Christian missionaries introduced western education in the coastal area of the southern part of Nigeria with the agenda of teaching the natives how to read the Bible, train local school masters, catechists and clergymen. When the colonial government became operational, the additional intention to produce junior and middle-level manpower for the colonial administration became a focal point.

African traditional education had been in existence in African societies prior to the arrival of the missionaries. It was basically an informal type of education in which family members, the larger community and the society are involved in training the child with the goals of developing the child's latent physical and intellectual skills and to inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority (Jekayinfa, 2003). The sole aim of traditional education was functionalism (Fafunwa, 1975), the child was trained in such a way that he became useful to his immediate community, his parents and his neighbours.

Muslim education in Nigeria also predated the advent of Western Education. The diffusion of Islam in West Africa started as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> Century. Ummu al-Jaylani, the Kanem ruler who reigned between 1085 and 1097 was a Muslim. Before Christianity was introduced to Nigeria the tradition of Islamic scholarship was already firmly established through a system of education that stressed spirituality, literacy and societal needs. Although the entire education system revolved around the Qur'an, stages of learning achievement were discernible from primary up to the tertiary level. Ability to read the Qur'an and practice Islam dominated the elementary level while, at the higher level, deeper dimensions were taught. These included *‘Ulūmul-Qur’ān* (Qur’ānic sciences), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *Mustalahul-Hadīth* (Science of Prophetic traditions) and other subjects such as *al-hisāb* (arithmetic), *al-jabr* (algebra) *mantiq* (logic), *nahw* (syntax), *sarf* (morphology), *‘arūd* (prosody), *balāghah* (rhetorics), *adab* (literature) to mention but a few. Muslims had authored several treatises and scholarly works in various disciplines through the non-formal education they established before Christianity and the Western education that accompanied it reached the shores of Nigeria.

The Christian missionaries used discriminatory policies in their schools as instruments of conversion of Muslims to Christianity. In the process, Muslims children whose parents wanted to keep in the Islamic faith were denied access to formal schools. Many Muslim parents could not take the risk of exposing their children to Christian evangelisation. The few Muslim parents who enrolled their children in Christian schools discovered later that the content of the education their children were exposed to was heavily Christian. Fafunwa reports:

Muslim education was thus retarded not because the Muslims were unprogressive or because their religion was opposed to formal education but because ‘education’ in those days tended to mean Bible Knowledge, Christian ethics, Christian moral

instruction, Christian literature, some arithmetic, language and crafts- all geared to produce Christians who could read the Bible. The system also helped train Christian clerks, Christian artisans, Christian carpenters, Christian farmers, Christian husbands and wives and Christian Nigerians.

The majority of Muslim children, therefore, were restricted to the *madrasahs* where Islamic religious subjects dominated the content of instruction. Although these Islamic schools, at the highest level of education, could produce Imams, Islamic scholars and teachers, they were in no way capable of producing professionals in the sciences and many disciplines in the humanities. In the *madrasahs*, ability to read the Qur'ān fluently constituted the core aspect of instruction. The students later studied *Tafsīr*, *Hadīth*, *Fiqh*, Islāmīc history, Arabic language and literature, rhetorics and so on. Since learning is a life-long activity in Islām, the students did not stop learning until perhaps after the death of the teacher. The *malams* served *in loco parentis* to the pupils being responsible for their upkeep and moral training. The pupils were taught how to preach as they observed the propagation activities of their teachers; taking a cue from that, they developed the skills of *da`wah* (Islāmīc propagation) and officiating at Islāmīc ceremonies.

The realisation that Muslims needed professionals in all fields to be able to participate in the social, economic and political development of the country inspired Muslims to establish schools where both Western education and basic aspects of Islam were made available to Muslim children. The pressure from the Muslim community led to the founding of the first government primary school dedicated to the education of Muslim children in Lagos in 1899 (Fafunwa, 1982). However, only one primary school could not take care of the educational needs of the teeming population of Muslim children. Moreover, Muslim primary school leavers would require secondary education which at the time was provided by the Christian missionaries. The

Ahmadiyyah Movement intervened by establishing, on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1922, the Ta'limul-Islām Ahmadiyya Primary School, Elegbata, the first Muslim primary school founded by a Muslim Voluntary Agency. It was not until 1948 that the Muslims established the first secondary school, the Saka Tinubu Memorial Secondary School, Olushi, Lagos. Following the establishment of these schools, several others have since been established by government and private concerns. The crucial question however is: To what extent have these educational institutions been able to fulfil the purpose of education for Muslims, which is to prepare man for life in this world and the hereafter? This discourse examines the Nigerian education system taking cognizance of the ideals of Islamic education and the ideal yardstick for measuring the success of an educational system.

## **2.0 Parameters of Assessment**

Most of the time, assessment issues in education focus on how effective an educational programme is but not what the programme itself represents. We miss the point when we neglect the substance and concentrate on the means. Issues of standard of education are often confused with the quality of education. The concept of standard in the literature revolves around the standard of curriculum, teaching, teacher, student achievement, accreditation, moderation and so on. The quality of a thing however refers to the basic and indispensable characteristic or worth of that thing which distinguishes it from another thing (Afemikhe, 2007). One of the fundamentals of quality is the content of an educational programme.

The ability of an educational system to cater for all aspects of life is an important determinant of its credibility, relevance and utility. Similarly, any instrument used to assess the adequacy of the variables just enunciated must be absolutely objective and comprehensive to the extent that it possesses all the epistemological attributes required for contemplating all phenomena. Thinkers and theorists of different ideological orientations have advanced various indices of evaluating reality without valid foundations. The submission of Protagoras that “man is the measure of things” is a typical

illustration. He focuses on material interests of human beings claiming that goodness is what satisfies the practical needs of man (Abdul-Haq, 2002). In a similar vein, positivism holds that only the empirical sciences constitute true knowledge. But science studies only the physical and social environments and is unconcerned with spiritual domains. In other words, science describes how things function not how they should function. It is not in a position to provide moral education which man and society do need.

The Qur'ān presents a perfect way of life in all its dimensions. The Qur'ānic fabric not only has embedded within it all issues of life but also has principles of research that are absolutely objective and devoid of biased research methodology. As the last divine guidance, it assists in reconstructing social life in the light of ultimate principles. The Qur'an creates a world-view that encourages a type of research that is capable of extending the frontiers of knowledge that will be of benefit to the whole universe. The right type of education is one that follows the divine guidance, the ultimate source of wisdom. It is one in which reason and revelation are integrated in a single body of knowledge. Therefore, the first characteristic of an ideal education system is that it produces a complete man. Al-Attas (1977p. 13) submits:

The purpose of seeking knowledge in Islam is to inculcate goodness in man and individual self. The end of all education in Islam is to produce a good man, and not – as in the case of Western civilization- to produce a good citizen.

*The Islamic values of an education curriculum focus on personality and character development of children, close attention to the real needs and concerns of students, and preparation of students with the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to function successfully as Muslims in society.*

### **3.0 Hallmarks of Contemporary Education in Nigeria**

A prominent common element of contemporary education is its failure to inject divine guidance into the educational process. This problem is rooted in the history of Western education in Nigeria. The framework for national education was evolved through a series of ordinances, laws and policies. The ordinances and laws include the 1882, 1887, 1916, 1926, 1948 and 1952 Educational ordinances and several Regional Laws such as the Education Law of 1955 in the Western Region, Education Law of 1956 in the Northern Region and the Lagos Education Ordinance of 1957 (Labo-Popoola, S.O., Bello, A.A. and F.A. Atanda, 2009).

It is noteworthy that one of the major reasons why the 1887 Ordinance failed was its inability to curb indiscipline in the school system (Etejere, 2012). A number of other ordinances and reforms came into being as listed above as a result of the shortcomings found in the systems of education. The curriculum conference of 1969 was a major reform in Nigerian education. It gave birth to the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1977 that housed the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme which was launched in 1976 as a result of the deplorable and appalling state of education. The revised editions in 1981 and 2004 articulated the following objectives of Nigerian education:

- 1.** the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
- 2.** the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for survival of the individual and the Nigerian society;
- 3.** the training of the mind in understanding the world around; and
- 4.** the acquisition of the appropriate skills, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in society.

From the objectives above, it is obvious that the philosophy, world-view and objectives of the Nigerian educational system conform to the world view of western education which perceives development in material terms alone. The relationship between education and development is well documented. Currently, education is globally acknowledged as a key development index. It



is not surprising, therefore, that different countries channel educational policies towards increasing access. But the real issue here is what kind of development do we have in mind. A development which addresses the body and not the soul is narrow and cannot really endure.

In Nigeria, the curricula in use, the textbooks and the general orientation of education reflect a heavily secular content. Certification has been placed above knowledge and every means, fair or foul is deployed to ensure that the individual procures a certificate for the purpose of securing a tangible income. The certificate is perceived as the means of earning higher emoluments and not a symbol of one's intellectual profundity. The system thus produces graduates with neither knowledge nor wisdom, the core goals of Islamic education.

Contemporary philosophy of education emphasises economic advancement, democracy and technological advancement. The focus on the material values of education at the expense of the more important moral and spiritual values has inexorably produced individuals who are oblivious of the vices they perpetrate. Nigeria's education system is a product of the long period and process of Europeanization which has little regard for non-western values and spirituality. No wonder then that education in Nigeria is becoming more and more commoditised and commercialised thereby widening the gap of access. It is ironical that educational institutions established by Muslims with the imprint of Islam implement curricula that discountenance the ethos of Islam.

### **3.1 The Pitfalls**

The accomplishments of Nigeria's educational system are usually gauged by popular variables and benchmarks such as literacy level, access of citizens to education and enrolment into schools, girl-child education, rate of drop-out as encapsulated in both the MDGs and Education For All (EFA). Marginal improvement has been recorded in many of the variables highlighted. The fact that basic education is free in public schools is commendable. Education is also tuition-free in higher institutions owned by the Federal government

but not so in a majority of the state-owned institutions. Government's attempt to solve the Almajiri problem through integration is also a welcome development.

However, in view of the fundamental nature of the shortcomings of the Nigerian education system, it should be expected that considerable attention be devoted to it here. It is fundamental because it runs counter to the divine educational scheme. By implication, therefore, man will be unable to benefit immensely from the facilities offered by the ideal educational system designed by man's Creator. In specific terms, the main shortcomings are immediately identified and discussed:

### **3.1.1 Deficient Philosophy of Education**

The philosophy of education of any nation should form the kernel of its goal in life. The absolute adoption of the Western educational philosophies with their merits and demerits is ominous. The Nigerian philosophy of education as contained in the National Policy on Education (2004:7) has as its foundation five national objectives which are:

1. a free and democratic society;
2. a just and egalitarian society;
3. a strong, united and self-reliant nation;
4. a great and dynamic economy;
5. a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The import of the five targets highlighted above is the strong emphasis on materialism which, today, has translated into unbridled corruption, the main bane of the Nigerian nation. The rat-race for money and the concomitant criminalities made the country to establish two agencies: the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). Both are charged with the sole responsibility of checkmating corrupt Nigerians and their collaborators. The product of the Nigerian philosophy, according to Bidmos (2008:10), "thoroughly in romance

with materialism". We see clearly a situation whereby the philosophy of education puts too much premium on economic achievement regardless of the means by which this is realised.

### **3.1.2 Missing Spiritual Component**

The submission that Nigeria is a secular state is usually canvassed by some analysts. This supposition suggests that the state is officially "not connected with spiritual or religious matters". However, this claim has no basis in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or in the practice of the Government. No where in the constitution is it stated that Nigeria is a secular state. Besides, government sets up religious agencies backed by law to coordinate some religious activities at the national level. Examples are the Muslim and Christian Pilgrim Welfare Boards. Government also declares public holidays to mark religious events. In reality, therefore, Nigeria is a multi-religious country. Yet, conversely, by virtue of the secular posture of government resulting from the colonial legacy, the curricula prescribed by government are almost entirely secular. Epistemology in Islam conceives of knowledge as being made up of spiritual and material components made available to the learner in a balanced proportion. The expected outcome of this form of balanced-education is a righteous and skilful individual. The lopsidedness or disequilibrium between spiritual and secular education is responsible for contemporary world crises. According to Alwani (1999:9), "nothing will begin to go right unless and until the equilibrium is restored".

### **3.1.3 Disregard for Accountability**

The education system in Nigeria, today, has failed to conscientize the educator or the recipient to develop the value of being accountable to man and to God. Examining bodies go the extra mile to prevent examination malpractices which thrive with the active collaboration of the teachers, students, parents, dubious officials of the examination councils and security personnel. Even with malpractices, WAEC and NECO results have been woeful. The cut-off mark for 2013 admission into tertiary institutions has been reduced from 180 to 160 due to underperformance. The Universities

turn out many uneducated and undisciplined youngsters who are unemployable. The few that succeed in getting jobs demonstrate irresponsible behaviour of inestimable dimensions. An ideal education system should nurture individuals who strongly anticipate accounting for their actions or inactions before a Supreme Authority.

#### **3.1.4 Imperfect Pedagogy**

Three fundamental Qur'ānic methods which should form the basis for other teaching strategies are absent in Nigeria's teacher education programmes. These have to do with self-education which, if properly implemented, provides the strong platform for the learner to surpass his teacher. This process involves the training of the will which leads to self-surrender to higher or more sublime values. This might take a combination of instruction, training and indoctrination (Abdul-Haqq, 2002). The development and mastery of these are possible through:

1. *Dhikr* and *Fikr* (Remembrance and Contemplation) as forms of instruction;
2. *Salāt*, *Saum* and *Hajj* (Mandatory formal prayers, fasting and Pilgrimage) as training;
3. *Al-Amr bi l-Ma'rūf wa an-Nahy 'ani l-Munkar* (Enjoining good behaviour and Discouraging noxious practices) as indoctrination.

#### **3.1.5 Dichotomisation**

With reference to the Muslim citizen, the Nigerian system of education tends to produce two types of personnel: (1) the expert in religion usually an Islamic scholar who is a graduate of one of the numerous Arabic institutes but who did not pass through Western education. He is thus limited in comprehending and contributing to the dynamics of modern civilization. (2) The western educated elite who operates from another extreme. He/she is an expert in a secular discipline but seriously deficient in or disoriented from religion. Thus, he/she is unable to appreciate or demonstrate the ideals of Islamic culture.

The two are constantly at loggerheads and unable to cooperate in building a progressive society.

### **3.1.6 Inequality in Education**

The education system in Nigeria as championed by government creates inequality of educational opportunities among Nigerian children. There are two types of public schools in the country. The first category, usually called 'Model Schools' or 'Unity Schools' is well-equipped, well-staffed and the students are well catered for. Similar sophisticated facilities are found in first private schools. The second which is the ordinary public school is understaffed, ill-equipped and overpopulated. This segregated arrangement does not provide equal opportunity to all citizens to excel. In most cases, only the children of the influential and powerful members of society benefit from the services of the Model Schools while the children of the downtrodden or low social class are denied the potential of excellent academic achievement because of inadequate learning environment.

### **3.1.7 Frequency of changes in Education Policies**

Policy somersault is a major feature of Nigerian education. The 6-3-3-4 educational system replaced the 6-5-4 system in 1977. The 6-3-3-4 did not pass through a "try-out phase". The equipment for the vocational component of the system was unavailable in many schools. Before implementation therefore, the system was collapsed into 6-6-4 and later, in 1999, restructured into 9-3-4 with the launching of the Universal Basic Education (UBE). Presently, the 9-3-4 is being modified into 1-6-3-3-4. Successive administrations have failed to articulate the deficiencies of previous policies before proposing new ones. For instance, the Education Reform Act of 2007 was followed by an Education Sector Roadmap in 2009. Two years later government set up a Presidential Education Task Team on Education Reform in August 2011 which has culminated in the 4-year Strategic Plan: 2011-2015. It is obvious that each successive regime intends to be identified with a programme for the education sector not minding the consequences of incessant policy alterations.

#### **4.0 The Way Forward**

Several approaches recommend themselves for the correction of inherent abnormalities in any educational system. In the Nigerian context in which the whole nation is disadvantaged, the most credible approach will be the modification of the existing philosophy, objectives, curriculum, pedagogy and teaching-learning aids - especially textbooks – so that they become agreeable to the tenets of Islam. This approach requires extensive research on the previous, present and potential contributions of Muslims in this part of the world to scholarship. The intellectual output emanating from such research activities should be good enough for both Muslims and non-Muslims. The outcome of this research endeavour should be a unique addition to universal intellectual heritage. The intellectual transformation being contemplated should be encyclopaedic in its scope spanning all fields of academic engagement. However, extreme objectivity is required if true integrated knowledge which is the hallmark of Islamic education will issue out. This also means that all hands must be on deck. Integration is a task for all and sundry. Therefore, opportunities should be created to ensure that all potential contributors actively participate.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

Education is recognised across the world as the most vital public service. But the attention that has been paid to education in Nigeria is perfunctory and haphazard. The tragedy of education in Nigeria is that it has been operating under the weight of a secular ideology that has failed to recognise the significance and indispensability of *tawhīd* (Unity of God) and its implication for education. The current educational system has failed the Nigerian nation. It has dashed the hopes and aspirations of many Nigerians. Education is yet to serve as a catalyst of change in Nigeria. Getting out of the doldrums should not be cosmetic. Every Muslim must be in position to grasp the real concept of education in the light of how it should function in the lives of people. This means that we must be able to proffer correct answers to: why education? Education for what and education for whom? It is instructive to end this discourse with the thought-provoking declaration of the Qur'ān:

*“Never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change that which is in themselves”*

(Qur’ān 13:11).

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# PRACTICAL MANUAL

Name.....

School.....

Discipline.....

This is an attempt to individually get involved in the practical aspect of the project. The project, by concept, is to reconsider our perception of knowledge in terms of its functionalism in relation to human existence and welfare. The debate is on the adequacy of the existing knowledge otherwise called Western education vis-à-vis the Islamic view of knowledge. Having considerably whet our appetite regarding the pro and con of the project, it is therefore auspicious to enter into the nitty gritty of the restructuring exercise which falls into two spheres; namely debunking some of the Western concepts and provision of alternatives using the Qur'anic paradigm.

## **The Debunking Exercise**

The use of scientific proof has remained a potent instrument to widen the horizon of knowledge across ideological lines. In other words, it is globally accepted that science remains handy for the purpose of expanding the horizon of knowledge. To that extent, can the evolution theory stand the test of a scientific proof? For example, if, according to Charles Darwin, the coming of man into existence gradually spanned a period of six million years, two implications emerge: first, the term transformation can be rightly used for the process of emergence of man from the base of Amoeba to Orangutan and finally to full erect man.

By the use of scientific proof, if a slice of yam is planted and it germinates into a plant and finally grows into a tuber of yam, can the substances of the three stages of transformation co-exist? In other words, is it feasible to have the slice of yam which was planted as well as its plant when germinated to co-exist with the tuber of yam when it is finally harvested?

In the case of Charles Darwin's transformation theory, we can see that the Amoeba, Orangutan and the full erect man co-exist. Is this scientifically possible?

Secondly, if man reached his present posture through gradual transformation from one stage to another, it should be expected that the transformation process will continue taking man to another level of development whereby he may grow more hands or more legs or a totally different organ.

Furthermore, in humanities, it could be noticed that whenever, the history of education, Medicine or Philosophy is treated, the Western writers and their disciples always find it convenient to skip the medieval period with a view to concealing the unique Islamic contributions. We should be on the watch out for such scheming in all disciplines to establish the fact that, scientifically, there is no vacuum in all spheres of human development.

**Exercise I:** Is there loophole consciously or unconsciously created by the Western intelligentsia in your discipline? How do you describe and debunk the loophole with a scientific proof?

### **Using the Qur'anic Paradigm**

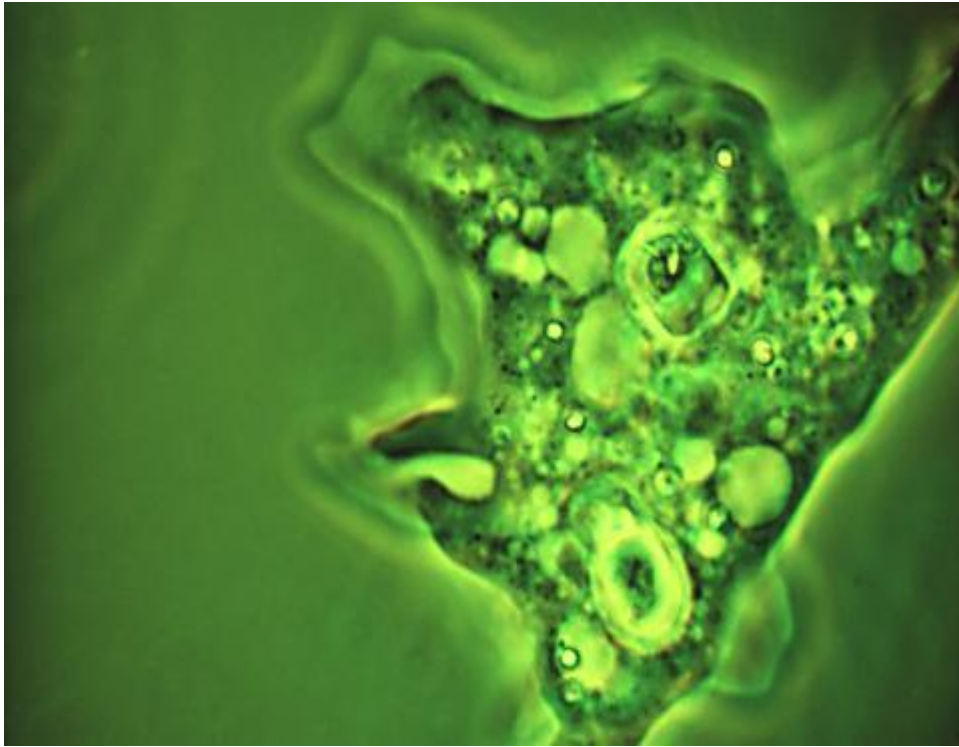
Using the Qur'anic paradigm in this context goes beyond merely quoting some Qur'anic verses to buttress some modern scientific studies or discoveries. Dr. Maurice Bucaille, the author of "The Bible, the Qur'an and Science" does that extensively. For example, he treats, among other natural phenomena, animal kingdom as well as human reproduction as in Suratul Hajj (Q. 22:4) and Suratul Muminin (Q.23:14) in a matching fashion. The episode of the Big Bang tallies neatly with the Qur'anic account that reads thus: Do not unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before We clove them asunder (Q.21: 30)? So, using the Qur'anic verses to match scientific discoveries is not the focus of this segment. The intention is to explore the possibility of teaching science or any discipline for that matter using the Qur'anic paradigm with a view to

expanding the horizon of knowledge devoid of Western genuine or intentional errors.

The main thrust of this segment, therefore is to use the Qur'anic verses to create new ideas, expand the horizon of the existing knowledge, in a manner that aligns with the morass of Islam. In Suratul-n Nahl (Q.16:5-8), there is a narration about the creation of camel with a full description of its functions, benefits and numerous advantages to man. The narration begins with the verb *khalaqa* – in past tense- that is, (He) created but the narration ends with the verb *yakhluqu* – present tense – that is, (He) creates. This indicates that the process of creation in Allah's reckoning is a continuous process as He (SWT) keeps creating.

**Exercise II:** Is there any fresh idea in your discipline you can describe and teach in a manner that depicts the continuous creation by Allah?

**Exercise III:** Identify from the Qur'an some pedagogical inferences you can adapt to teach your own discipline?



AMOEBA



**ORANGUTAN**



MAN



**TUBERS OF YAM**



**YAM BARN**



**TUBER OF YAM**





**YAM PLANT**

# SEMINAR EVALUTION INSTRUMENT

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