# The Educational Philosophy of Allama Iqbal

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#### **Abstract**

In the substantial design of creation, man is given with a pivotal role as the representative of Allah Almighty, regarded as the noblest creation with the unique endowment of knowledge about the universe. In this demand, the present age grapples with a myriad of dilemmas particularly within the educational sector. These dilemmas include a lack of understanding regarding the challenges faced by contemporary mindsets and the learning experience in Islamic educational institutions. There is need of an educational framework that bridges the gap between spiritualism and materialism in education. This study aims to explore two primary aspects of Iqbal's educational philosophy (I) In what ways modern Muslims can foster self-actualization in the light of Holy Quran. (II) How acquiring modern knowledge and methods at Islamic institutions reshape individuals' perspectives in the contemporary world. This study employs on a comprehensive analysis of Iqbal's lectures, poetry, and reviews of contemporary, and Islamic educational practices and integrates them with self-experience to present hybrid educational framework. The research method used to obtain data in this article is qualitative research from primary sources including Iqbal's writings, while secondary sources encompass scholarly articles and studies on Islamic philosophy and modern education. These objectives result high value on stable educational framework. In the contemporary needs, educational institutes can play a role in providing equal opportunity of religious knowledge and educational experience.

Keywords: Educational experience, Self (Khudi), modern knowledge

The essence of education exceeds the boundaries of traditional learning in the quickly changing world we are living in today. It aims to reconcile contemporary scientific and technological breakthroughs with spiritual enlightenment. The integration of Iqbal's educational philosophy with contemporary educational practices offers a transformative pathway for modern Muslims. His ideas are extremely important to the Muslim educational system as well as the educational system in Pakistan. Iqbal's educational theory is based on the idea of self-actualization (*Khudi*), which heightens a person's ability to reach his or her full potential in terms of goodness. His basic philosophical beliefs are based on Islam.(i) Allah (swt) is the ultimate reality; (ii) revelation (*wahi*) is the ultimate source of knowledge; and (iii) ultimate is total surrender to Allah's will, are paramount to his theory of education (Abdul Wahid, 2018).

This holistic approach not only enhances personal and intellectual growth but also equips modern mind to tackle the challenges of the modern world with wisdom and integrity, Studies (Lunevich, 2023; Graciano et al., 2023) emphasize the importance of purposeful engagement

in creative activities, leading to the generation of original ideas and solutions. These activities fostering creativity in young minds can help self-actualization and effective learning prospects. It can also help talents to reach their full potential. Therefore, in order to nurture creativity as a human development element, Iqbal's concept of self-renewal (*Khudi*) is discussed as dominance of creativity in today's world order of education.

In the book of Lunevich (2023, p. 1), Plato, Kant, and Vygotsky defined "creativity" as a mental condition in which a person experiences goodness, stillness, connection to one's surroundings, inspiration, renewal, growth, self-discovery, and a greater meaning of life. Lunevich (2023) emphasizes the status of creativity and human factor in teaching, although in today's classroom, technology and current methods are necessary to keep the human element front and center. This could involve figuring out the social, emotional, and cognitive needs of the students in order to create a more productive learning environment. It will produce students who are not only competent but also socially and ethically aware (Lunevich, 2023).

In above paragraph a person's creative abilities: goodness, stillness, connection to one's surroundings, inspiration, renewal, growth, self-discovery, and a greater meaning of life are much relevant to self-actualization philosophy of self to embrace the modern education along with Islamic practices. In particular, this study is focused on the concept of self-actualization by Allama Muhammad Iqbal philosophy and poetry. In later this study objective is purely to explore how these ideas are relevant to address current Muslim educational challenges.

Iqbal's philosophy of self, which possesses three levels 1) I'm-ness, 2) Self and others, and 3) Self and God (Zeb & Qasim, 2015) is central to understanding the process of self-realization. This process, which is essential for spiritual growth, parallel to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where self-actualization represents the highest level of human needs (Maslow et al., 1943).

The main goal is to examine self (*khudi*) to determine applicability of moral guidance in the context of educational institutional changes, to link philosophy of self with both Islamic and modern educational experiences.

Jabeen (2017) emphasizes the importance of responsible citizenship and ensuring good governance, aligning closely with the principles enshrined in Pakistan's constitution. From an educational perspective, Allama Iqbal's philosophy advocates for nurturing self-awareness and moral integrity among individuals, aiming to cultivate leaders and citizens who are not only socially and economically conscious but also equipped to combat social injustices. Iqbal foresees education as a means to rouse the collective consciousness, instilling a balance of realism and hope to guide both leaders and independent people. In today's modern civilization Muslims public wellbeing implementation is challenging discussed by Telwani (2019), lack of education, ideological confusion, extremism, sectarianism etc. The realization of the concept of Self, as emphasized by Iqbal, is central to this approach.

Asim (2020) recognizes that self-realization—particularly understanding "*Haqeekat-e-Insania*" (the reality of man)—is vital to recognizing one's internal forces and the purpose of life. Without spiritual activation and empowerment, an individual cannot influence with meaningful change.

In literature the philosophy of self, educational needs like lack of education, self-awareness, and Islamic concepts of modern education are briefly explained, on which basis integration of modern educational methods within Islamic institutions can reshape individual perspectives in the contemporary world.

### (I) Faith and Spiritual Self (Khudi)

Man has given potential with new sense of superiority and opportunity to rediscover his inner self under true guidance of faith. The concept of 'faith' and 'Philosophy of self' is discussed here with Iqbal's lectures "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam". The 6 lectures which were undertaken at the request of the Madaras Muslims Association and delivered at Madaras, Hyderabad, and Aligarh. Where Iqbal emphasize Muslims to learn modern Islamic thought to improve their status (Ali, 2018).

If people's understanding evolves beyond basic scientific principles of cause and effect, it will undoubtedly influence the modern Muslim perspective. New-age Muslims need a fresh approach to understand themselves, which will offer them a new perspective and language for engaging with the modern world. This idea discussed in, Iqbal's lecture I, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.

In the first chapter of Iqbal's lectures, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, where the relationship between religious experience and new scientific knowledge is discussed. Iqbal believes that religion ought to be seen as a potent force that influences Muslims thoughts as a whole rather than just as a set of personal beliefs. It allows to understand perseverance, and realization of one's abilities in both Islamic and social contexts. Through this critical examination, individuals can achieve a deeper self-awareness sense with independent decision: *Ijtihad* (as expressed with different meanings) According to Allama Iqbal, *Ijtihad* is Islamic legal concept of independent judgment and thought process. It is crucial for the progress of the Muslim community to adopt change with Islamic teachings to fit with modern circumstances (Nawaz, 2023). The ultimate reality of self-actualization is to reach the truth. Iqbal in this essence considers Islam as ultimate reality. As in "Gabriel's Wing-053" Iqbal says about self-realization and faith:

Develop the self so that before every decree; God will ascertain from you: "What is your wish?"

(Iqbal, 1979, p. 267)

The universe is ever growing as new elements are added to it, but humans have main role to realize their cause for which they were sent down to the earth and added to the creations. Here their self-actualization realizes their aim.

Iqbal relates embodiment of atom and its abilities with divine powers and explains in his lectures "*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*" this way:

The essence of atom is independent of its existence. This means that existence is a quality imposed on the atom by God. Before receiving this quality, atom lies dormant, as it was, in creative energy of God, and its existence means nothing more than Divine energy become visible (Iqbal, 2013, p. 56).

In the Holy Quran, creation existence is decreed this way, "Allah adds to His creation what He wills." (Al Qur'an, 35:1). In the light of the Quranic verse, Allah guides towards his creations.

The studies in the previous paragraphs emphasize that the creative abilities granted to humans and all of creation by Allah Almighty should be recognized as a fundamental aspect of discussion. Where the only way for a man to know his creator is to discover purpose of his life. Where Iqbal addresses the knowing of creator '*Ma'rifah* of Allah Almighty' and the purpose of prayer, in The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, emphasizing the ways in which these rituals promote a feeling of moral obligation and self-awareness to create modern mindset (Iqbal, 2013).

Allah Almighty sent man in independent state to choose between right and wrong and instilling in him the knowledge of all creatures in the universe. By recognizing his inner strengths and understanding the knowledge bestowed upon him, a person can become a true representative (Naib) of Allah Almighty. As Allah Almighty says in Al-Quran:

And (remember) as your Lord said to the Angels, "Surely I am making in the earth a successor." They said, "Will you make therein one who will corrupt in it and shed blood (Literally: bloods) while we exalt you with praise and declare your perfection?" He [Allah] said, "Surely I know whatever you do not know (Al Qur'an, 2:30).

These verses mentioned above, particularly emphasizes the significance of self-actualization and the incorporation of Islamic values in current education to address the issues Muslims confront today, is in line with the objectives of this study. Islam's leadership empowers people to realize their own potential and promotes individual and collective development.

The opportunity is to actualize one's self which may ultimately allow for realization of one's potential to know his deeds (actions).

As Qur'an says:

"And for trial will we test you with evil and with good." (Al Qur'an, 21:35)

Self-actualization/awareness emphasizes the profound necessity for individuals to comprehend the purpose of their creation and the essence of their Self (*Khudi*). In the poem "The Rise of Islam", Bang-e-Dra verse 163 (Iqbal, 1924), Iqbal articulates this sentiment, assertion with a deep understanding of one's own identity and purpose as a divine representative.

You are the secret of creation, see yourself in your eyes; Share the secret of your own self, become the spokesman of God.

(Iqbal, 1914, p. 220)

# Source of Iqbal Philosophy of Self (Khudi)

Iqbal as true believer taking Holy Quran as source of knowledge, self-awareness, and actualization (Abbasi et al., 2023) as Quran says: (Al Qur'an, 59:19):

"Do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget their own selves. Those are the sinners." (Al Qur'an, 59:19)

The concept of Iqbal Philosophy of *Khudi* is ultimately related to perception of God (knowing his creator) that self-recognition at highest is deeply related to knowing of Allah Almighty. As in *The Rise of Islam Bang-e-Dra-163* Iqbal says:

Immerse yourself in your self, my forgetful one, this is the secret of life; Come out from the fetters of evening and morning, become immortal.

(Iqbal, 1914, p. 221)

# **Modern Islamic Thoughts**

In response to today's issues, modern Islamic thought places a strong emphasis on important issues including social justice, gender equality, education, political participation, and moral dilemmas. A living experience of the kind of biological unity requires today a method physiologically less violent and psychologically more suitable to a concrete type of mind. In this essence such a method for scientific form of religious knowledge is only natural. (Iqbal, 1930) "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" In the Preface of this book The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, of Iqbal, (1930) he correlates religion with science this way that in today's modern world "the present moment is quite favorable for such an undertaking. Classical physics has learned to criticize its own foundations. As a result of this criticism the kind of materialism, which it originally necessitated, is rapidly disappearing; and the day is not far off when Religion and Science may discover hitherto unsuspected mutual harmonies" (Iqbal, 2003, p. 7).

He emphasized that it is right time that Muslims must develop sense of harmony to learn knowledge of modern world and work for development of Islamic educational setup. He also reconstructs religious experience with nature through his lectures: "The Reconstruction of

*Religious Thought in Islam.*" He discusses Muslims should learn new sciences where the source of knowledge is, advance research by modern world scientists who are motivated and want to solve many problems (Iqbal, 1930).

There are several publications that give an overview of the educational system with much of the focus centering on Islamic educational institutions with modern Islamic thoughts. These institutions need to evolve now in order to adapt the demands of the contemporary world. These institutions can have a significant impact on the education of future generations of Muslims by creating a hybrid educational system that combines Islamic studies with general and higher education.

As Iqbal says about educational system in his poetry of Bang-i-Dara poem "Sayyid-Ki Loh-E-Turbat" about Muslim world educational system:

If your aim in the world is din's education; Never teach your nation world's abdication

These statements above imply that if the purpose of life is to educate individuals or a country, then education shouldn't cause people to abandon their responsibilities to the outside world.

Allah Almighty made man superior to all other creations and given him knowledge. He is being sent to Earth to discover the purpose of his existence. Man must set aside all mental taboos in order to recognize his responsibilities. As stated in Al-Quran:

"Verily Allah will not change the condition of people until they change what is in themselves." (Al Qur'an, 13:11)

Universe around man is so immense that it is ceaselessly expanding. Allah Almighty has mentioned his creations in many places in the Al Qur'an, (29:20) and (24: 44)

"Say - go through the earth and see how God hath brought forth all creation; hereafter will He give it another birth." (Al Qur'an, 29:20)

The verses above inspire modern Muslims to ponder in nature and education related to modern world. Although, Allama Iqbal believed that a person's spiritual beliefs, knowledge, and deeds determine their genuine worth rather than their financial status or physical existence. Iqbal highlights that in order to become closer to Allah, people must seek knowledge, particularly in universe. He exhorts Muslims to make it their mission to lead in this quest for knowledge.

In Gabriel's Wing (1935), Iqbal expresses this idea in verse 151, highlighting the importance of intellectual and spiritual growth over worldly possessions.

Build in love's empire your hearth and your home; Build Time a new, a new dawn, a new eve!

(Iqbal, 1979, p. 294)

### (II) Muslim World Education

In the world of Islamic Education Holy Qur'an is a vital source of knowledge as discussed in previous sections of this paper. According to Islamic belief, the Holy book narrates and promotes many concepts that lead to respecting, tolerating, accepting others, actualizing and exploring self-existence. It is also important to consider that the modern educational system may not always align with the values and beliefs of the Islamic faith. While Islamic education is specifically designed to incorporate these beliefs (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). Given this foundation, it is important to consider the potential conflict between the principles of Islamic education and those of modern educational systems. While the later may not always align with the values and beliefs embedded in the Islamic tradition, Islamic educational institutions strive to uphold these values and emphasizing their importance in their curriculum (Aderibigbe et al., 2023).

The choice of educational system, therefore, becomes a reflection of an individual's goals, values, and specific educational needs. Ultimately, the choice of educational system is based on an individual's goals, values, and educational needs. According to study of Shah et al. (2015). There are different Islamic educational systems, with focusing on their level of religious education and the type of students they serve (Shah et al., 2015). Where Islamic educational system lacking modern methods of teachings discussed by Abu Bakar et al. (2023).

Shah et al. (2015) presented educational segregation, and division of students based on racial, religious, or socioeconomic considerations, can be detrimental to the segregated individuals as well as for society. Exclusion in education may take place along several axes in the Muslim world, such as between different religious or ethnic groups or between urban and rural areas.

The quality of education and possibilities for academic and professional growth may be uneven in various institutes because of educational level segregation. Due to the possibility that students from underprivileged backgrounds may have fewer resources and opportunities available to them. Here is a detailed explanation of Islamic educational systems along with their respective curricula:

1. *Exclusively Islamic Education* —Focuses solely on Islamic teachings, including Quranic memorization, basic Arabic, and fundamental arithmetic. The aim is to provide students

- with foundational Islamic knowledge without integrating general education subjects. These institutions are often informal, and community based.
- 2. *Islamic Education with Minimal General Education*—Offers a strong emphasis on Islamic subjects while including only a minimal amount of general education. The curriculum may cover essential Islamic teachings, such as Quranic studies and basic religious practices, but lacks a comprehensive approach to general academic subjects.
- 3. *Mixed Islamic and General Education*—Combines a significant Islamic education component with a general education curriculum. This type of institution aims to provide a balanced education, covering subjects such as Quranic interpretation, Hadith, and Islamic jurisprudence alongside general subjects like mathematics, science, and literature.
- 4. *Mixed Islamic and High-Quality General Education* This emerging model offers high-quality general education while maintaining a strong emphasis on Islamic education. The curriculum includes advanced general subjects and rigorous academic standards, alongside in-depth Islamic studies, appealing to the modern/religious middle and upper classes.
- 5. General Education with Minimal Religious Education—Primarily follows a general education framework with only superficial religious instruction. These institutions focus on secular subjects such as mathematics, science, and language arts, providing minimal engagement with Islamic teachings, often limited to occasional religious classes.
- 6. Exclusively General Education—These institutions offer a curriculum that is entirely secular, with no Islamic education component. They focus solely on general academic subjects and are rare in the Muslim world, as most countries require some form of religious education.
- 7. *High-Quality General Education with Some Religious Education* This type of institution provides a high-quality general education while incorporating some elements of religious education. The curriculum is designed to meet high academic standards while also addressing the spiritual and moral development of students through limited religious instruction.

Each of these types of educational institutions reflects different approaches to integrating Islamic teachings with general education, providing the diverse needs and preferences of students and their families within the Muslim world. If the number of student are seen from the Shah et al. (2015) perspective, the transition from exclusively Islamic education to exclusively general education reflects a significant shift in educational dynamics. The later type of education attracts a large percentage of students from various segments of society, and effectively merges academic standards with no religious education, thereby appealing to a diverse demographic.

# **Iqbal's Educational Philosophy**

Iqbal's educational philosophy is centered on the idea of personal and religious development through education and institute environment. He believed that education should

be focused on the development of the individual rather than just the acquisition of knowledge and skills as discussed above in Muslim world educational segregation. He also believed in the importance of critical thinking and the use of reason in education. Iqbal believed that education should aim to produce individuals with social contribution (Jabeen, 2017). Where Islamic educational institutes needed hybrid setup with Islamic values and modern methods of teaching (Abu Bakar et al., 2023) that can take part in student spiritual and mental development activities. Iqbal's educational philosophy is heavily influenced by belief in Islamic teachings and describes the duty of institution. As Iqbal says:

Was it book-lesson, or father's glance, that taught? The son of Abraham what son should bear?

(Iqbal, 1979, p. 253)

In these verses, Iqbal pursues whether Ismael learned the proper conduct and obligations of a son from the book or from his father. The phrase "Adaab-e-Farzandi" refers to the manners or etiquette that a son should have. It refers to us the meaning of the above lines is that education and religious background can play a role in shaping a person's mindset and character development. Whether it is received at an educational institute or through a religious family background, can provide a person with knowledge and understanding that can help them to develop their beliefs and values. This, in turn, can influence individual character and the way they interact with society.

### **Muslim Educational System Challenges**

In the modern world, Muslims do indeed suffer several difficulties and problems, such as lack of access to Quality Education, Curriculum and Relevance with modern skills, and majorly educational segregation as discussed by Shah et al. (2015). Even Islamic education is frequently "crowned" solely for the benefit of the destitute or needy people, generating people who are exclusive, extremist, and even at very extreme levels of behavior. Nevertheless, the predicate of backwardness and decline remains attached to it. It is regrettable that "terrorism-even" is thought to have arisen from Islamic educational institutions. However, this "assumption" can be disproved because no Islamic educational establishments exist with the intention of creating or printing such a set of people. But in actuality, there is a lot of aggressive behavior in the name of Islam (Ilham, 2020).

These Muslim world educational challenges require approach that involves improving access to education, investing in the quality of education, promoting self-actualization, addressing extremism, promoting tolerance and inclusivity, and methods of communication in education (Abu Bakar et al., 2023). As in *Insan aur Bazm-e-Qudrat*, Iqbal enquires about present situation of Muslims in this way:

Why chained in the dark, past reach of any ray; Ill-faring and ill-fated and ill-doing must I stay?

(Iqbal, 1914, p. 141)

# **Analysis and Insights**

We are seeking the answer to the development of Muslims. In this condition Muslims should actualize their own self as discussed in section (I) of this study. According to Aslam et al. (2023) self-reliance (*khudi*) entails depending on one's own powers and resources rather than relying on others. He divides his innovative doctrine into three elements: It is the combination of *Irfan-e-zaat* (knowing oneself), *Kayinaat ki hakikat ka idraak* (knowing the reality of the universe), and *Alllah ko pehchanana* (knowing God). This is possible by striving to improve both spiritual and material aspects to eliminate backwardness and ignorance to promote mutual self-awareness as explained in the section of this paper "Source of Iqbal philosophy of self (Khudi)". In section (II) Islamic educational system is discussed to improve Muslims educational growth in theory and practice. This is only way they can contribute to the betterment of society with education. Training young people to be knowledgeable and ethical leaders in the fields of technology is a laudable goal (Razzaq, 2024). It is important to nurture philosophy of self in the next generation of leaders with the skills, values, and character necessary to navigate the complex and rapidly changing world of science and technology in a responsible and ethical manner.

The concept of *self*, as articulated by Allama Iqbal, is deeply needed with the mission of Islamic educational institutions, to offer a foundation for instilling moral and ethical principles. Islamic educational institutions can foster students' self-awareness and sense of personal accountability by emphasizing self-actualization (*Khudi*). This will help students to connect their quest of knowledge with a dedication to honesty, integrity, and responsibility. The incorporation of *khudi* guarantees that education encompasses more than simply knowledge acquisition; it also involves developing a moral compass that directs learners in both their personal and professional domains.

Islamic Institutes should adopt training and resources to help students for ethical values awareness and educational experience with new methods (Abu Bakar et al., 2023) includes unlimited access to technology, communication, and collaboration materials focused on topics such as honesty, responsibility, integrity, tolerance and respect. Additionally, the use of hybrid learning models in Islamic educational institutions that investigate the connection between science and religion improves students' perspective of self-awareness, and critical thinking.

In this context Allama Iqbal message gives us insight to our future. In *Baang-e-Dara:* 25, *Insan aur Bazm-e-Qudrat* Iqbal says:

If you would weigh your worth at its true rate; No longer would ill-faring or ill-doing be your fate!

(Iqbal, 1914, p. 141)

#### Conclusion

New world order shows it is certainly desirable and crucial to prepare young people to be educated, professional, and ethical leaders. To accomplish this, it is important to learn ethical principles, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, most importantly self-actualization. By developing a clear code of conduct, offering resources and setting an example of ethical behavior, promoting discussion and offering chances for leadership and services, Islamic educational institutions can play a significant part to accomplish these goals.

This study delves into the educational philosophy of Allama Iqbal, emphasizing its role in promoting self-actualization and shaping perspectives in contemporary Islamic education. It explores the concept of self-actualization as proposed by Maslow and its importance in Iqbal's educational philosophy (Maslow et al., 1943). Furthermore, it examines how Iqbal's ideas are relevant and applicable in modern Islamic education. Other aspects we analyzed from previous studies of Asim et al. (2020) are philosophical insight of Iqbal, as we know Modern world Muslims are unaware of their potential. This may be due to a variety of factors, including a lack of emphasis to concepts of *Khudi*, Islamic practices, and educational segregation in terms of curriculum and types of students attend this education as discussed in section (II). Muslims should be aware of these ideas and consider their own potential and duties.

This may entail taking part in activities that promote self-discovery and self-actualization, such as discovering one's own values, making goals, and working toward them, and looking for chances for career and personal development. Muslims can work for a deeper comprehension of the hidden message of Allah in the natural world and lead more fulfilling lives by embracing the concept of Khudi. In a man code of conduct, Faith in Allah Almighty is essential aspects of life which are discussed briefly with the reference of Holy Quran perspective and knowledge of self-realization. In Islam faith is crucial for the spiritual and moral development of Muslims. It helps to shape their perspective and provides a sense of purpose and direction in life. By strengthening their faith and developing their pledge to life according to the teachings of Islam. Furthermore, immersion in modern knowledge must have synchronization with the principles exemplified by Holy Prophet and Quran, these values can significantly transform individuals' perception and interact with the contemporary world.

There are a few possible strategies for resolving Islamic educational issues with Islamic Programs and initiatives that promote diversity, and inclusivity can be implemented by hybrid Muslim educational institutions with general education. Examples include cultural exchange programs, diversity training for faculty and staff, and curriculum that emphasize the contributions of many cultures and communities. Religious and contemporary education

community members can group together to promote change and increase awareness of how segregation affects children and their families. To bring about change, this may entail implementation of new methods in education, self-actualization and carries Islamic principles to community members.

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