

The Need to Teach Thinking from an Islamic Perspective

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Introduction**

In recent years there has been a widespread recognition of importance of thinking in the learning/teaching processes especially among western educators (Raths .et al: 1967 and Ruggiero, 1988). Accordingly, the fundamental characteristics of an educated person have been viewed as requirements for responsible citizenship in society as well as employment skills of a wide range of jobs. Creating such a person depends on different factors that might affect learning/teaching process in general, and curriculum in particular. For that, striving for excellence in education, a curriculum's effectiveness was seen in the context of its ability to achieve definite objectives stated by curricula's designers or educational authorities.

Responding to the need to bring about an effective teaching/learning process, what is called the "thinking curriculum" has come to the scene. The "thinking curriculum" according to Lauren Resnick (1989) aims to fulfill a dual agenda by integrating content and process .By this integration, which stands opposite to the traditional curriculum, the thinking curriculum is assumed to have ability to promote depth of learning to suit the objectives in real world tasks and actively connects between the content and process. The yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development stated that "thinking curriculum" is a curriculum that calls for recognition that all real learning involves thinking. This thinking can be nurtured and cultivated in everyone, and the entire educational program must be reconceived and revitalized so that students' lives are actualized from kindergarten onward ⁽¹⁾.

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⁽¹⁾ B.Resnick and Leopold , E. Klopfer (Editors), Towards the Thinking Curriculum: Current Cognitive Research, U.S.A (1989) Yearbook of the ASCD.P3.

After realization of the rationale of including thinking into the curriculum, western thinkers and educators have done much work in order to fulfill the necessities of teaching thinking. For example, various programs have been developed, different types of research are conducted to examine all possible factors that might lead to the achievement of desirable objectives of the thinking curriculum. Moreover, some curricula have been reviewed and restructured and new ones are designed to enable learners as well as teachers to cope with the change and requirements of the life.

From the Islamic perspective, the Qur'an stresses of knowledge and invitation to thinking. It initiates the spirit of inquiry, study, research and investigation, and encourages man to verify the truth. The Holy Qur'an also emphasizes critical observation and in depth contemplation of all natural phenomena in the physical world- *a'faq*, as well as oneself- *Anfus* and history, *Tarikh*.. In several verses, critical and empirical observation and practical experimentation are mentioned as tools or means that lead to proper understanding of the truth.

Indeed the Qur'an has left an indelible mark on human history, and will continue as it did for centuries, directing and perpetuating to the use of the power of intellect and reasoning for the benefit of humanity. By such emphasis the Qur'an aims at providing man with the essential equipment that may enable him to use Allah's Signs in order to shoulder his responsibility on the Earth.

Methodology of the Paper

This paper will provide an analytical study regarding the thinking curriculum. The domination of Western perspective in this field forces us to describe and analyze its importance –not only– critically and carefully, but more importantly so that the need to understand characteristics and objectives of thinking from an Islamic perspective will be highlighted. Then the researcher will endeavor to propose some suggestions and recommendations to the inclusion of thinking aspect into the Islamic curriculum. The paper also tries to show that traditional curriculum, a currently curriculum that is practiced in many contemporary Muslim

countries – is not the traditional curriculum that designed by the previous Muslim thinkers Like Al - Ghazzali- has not given due consideration to the process of thinking. At best it emphasizes isolated low – level thinking to the neglect of meaningful content and higher order thinking. This happens because the teaching of thinking is not emphasized and the traditional curriculum is essentially concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, and the ability to think is merely considered a by – product .In contrast, the thinking curriculum treats content and process of teaching and learning simultaneously. In the light of this, the researcher is keen to investigate into how the teaching of thinking can be integrated into the curriculum that has its educational objectives, which are constructed on Islamic principles.

Purpose of the Paper

The paper will examine the objectives and goals of thinking in Islam. It also aims to highlight the Islamic perspective of thinking, the importance of thinking in Islam and the characteristics of desirable thinking.

Finally, based on Islamic educational principles and goals, the researcher hopes to establish a base for the development of an Islamic “thinking curriculum”.To achieve these purposes, the following questions will be addressed:

1. Why is it necessary to teach thinking?
2. What importance does the Holy Qur’an and Hadith place on thinking?
3. What are the characteristics of thinking as espoused in the Qur’an and Hadith?
4. How can the teaching of thinking be incorporated across the curriculum.

11. The Need to Teach Thinking

In this section we will cite the writings of some scholars, Western and Muslim that are related or relevant to the study. For the purpose of discussing previous studies in the field, we classify those who have written about thinking into four groups:

A group of scholars who correlate between thinking and the growth and maintenance of free societies. This group assumes that inclusion of thinking in

learning will enhance children to be matured physically, emotionally and intellectually. Moreover, they relate students' survival in the environment of learning to the teaching of thinking (Louis and Raths, 1967, Beyer, 1988). Along the same line, Shari Tishmah, (et al: (1995) argue that the purpose of teaching thinking is to prepare students for a future effective problem solving, thoughtful decision making and long life learning. Another group of scholars maintains that one of the most important reasons for teaching thinking is the consideration of thinking skills as essential means for achieving and understanding of subject matter discipline and mastery of technical skills (Brasford, 1986 and Marzan, 1992). Similarly, Glaser (1984) in his work on problem solving indicates strong interaction between the structure of knowledge and the cognitive processes used for the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills. He adds that the effectiveness, validity and importance of curriculum content entail appropriate balance to reflect contemporary knowledge in a subject matter area. Ristow and Presseisn (1988) , support the same point by arguing that , the possibilities to increase students' creativity and critical thinking capacities have been regarded as major causes to teach thinking if schools concentrate on how to do so.

A third group considers importance of thinking as a trend to cope with the phenomenon of modern technology (Robinson, 1987, and D. Gough, 1991). According to some scholars in this group, the significance of thinking deserves to be taught across the curriculum so as to increase the student's enthusiasm towards learning. Teaching thinking across the curriculum depends on various factors such as student's age, experience and developmental levels (Collins and Brown, 1962). In this regard, Vincent Roggiro (1988), states that:

“Teaching thinking across the curriculum means focusing in attitudes, habits and intellectual skills common to all disciplines or specific to one discipline in such away that students both understand how important contributors to the discipline reached their conclusion and solve

problems, and acquire skill in reaching conclusions and solving problems themselves ... p11’’⁽¹⁾

Finally, the last group, for the purpose of dealing with Muslims’ contribution in the field of thinking, we will concentrate on the works of contemporary Muslim scholars to the extent that enable us to examine their participation in the issue of thinking. History has shown us that the efforts of Muslim scholars have contributed much to this. Therefore, it is unfair to ignore those who have done much work in this regard. From those we can choose Al – Ghazzali (AD 1085-1111), Ibn Rushd or Averroes as he is called in the West - (AD 1126-98), Ibn Khaldoun (AD 1332-1406) and Ikhwan Alsaffa who managed to play remarkable roles in the history of human Knowledge. For example, Ikhwan Al – Saffa succeeded to draw a comprehensive curriculum in its nature and scope by paying attention to all human knowledge traditionally and rationally aiming at achieving spiritual growth as well as intellectual ones ⁽¹⁾.

In addition, when writings of some contemporary scholars in the Muslim World are reviewed, it is observed that their research works to deal with thinking are highlighted generally within different issues such as philosophy of education, theory of knowledge and pedagogy of Qur’an and Sunnah. This generic scope about thinking is a fundamental factor to ensure the improvement of the Muslims’ education system. In Islam, which is a comprehensive way of life, it is inappropriate to deal with an issue without a consideration for its ideology and philosophy. For that we observe that different scholars have been dealt with thinking generally within the topics that related to education such as philosophy and pedagogy. Rosnani Hashimi, for instance, argues that Islam encourages thinking as Allah (S .W) Has provided man with two books, which contain the signs – *A’yahat* of the Author. The first one is the Revelation – the Qur’an – and the second being the natural phenomena surrounding man. Both books invite man not only to observe and reflect about the signs, but more importantly to think about

⁽¹⁾ Vincent Rayan Ruggiero (1988) , Teaching Thinking Across The Curriculum , New York , Harper and Row.

⁽¹⁾ Hashimi, R. (1996), Educational Dualism in Malaysia, Oxford, p84.

their Author. The Qur'an stresses the importance of knowledge "content" and forbids man from following unfounded speculations and blind imitation. In a number of cases, empirical of the relation and practical experimentation are mentioned as means of coming to the proper understanding of the truth⁽¹⁾.

Along the same line, Golshani states that the perception of the divine signs and their relation to the Author are within the reach of the intellect, which is capable of reflection.⁽²⁾ By the same token, Rashdan (1992), proposes that, as *Tawheed* is the essence of Islam, man has been endowed with the special noble status of being a trustee (vicegerent) on Earth. He deserves this status by being endowed with intellect to choose⁽¹⁾.

In Islam, most importantly, the mere thinking is not emphasized, but critical thinking is considered as an unending process of reading and understanding the Qur'an as well as the Universe. In this regard, Yeddullak Kazmi considers that such understanding enables a Muslim to be closer to Allah (S.W) in order to grow spiritually and intellectually to realize his role in establishing social justice and freedom. In his article entitled "The Role of critical Thinking in Islam" Kazmi states that:

"If *Tawheed* is the axis around which both social and personal existence revolve, then *Tagwa* is the process by which *Tawheed* is first internalized and then lived in both spheres. Armed with the twin concepts of *Tawheed* and *Tagwa*, a Muslim needs to look critically both at his/ her society and other societies of the world to expose at the individual and social level any deviation from *Tawheed* and falling away from *Tagwa*. These concepts are simultaneously the guide to organize individual life and determining social structures. Both are radical Islamic concepts and powerful critical tool because situated in the world yet their point of reference is outside this world...

⁽¹⁾Ibid,pp 96-99.

⁽²⁾Golshani (1997), *The Holy Qur'an and the Sciences of Nature*, Birmingham, pp 122-151.

⁽¹⁾ Muhammad Ayed Rashdan (1992), *Teaching and Teacher Qualities: Western and Islamic Perspective*, Selangor, Department of Education U.I.A.

Likewise, Malik Badri explains the importance of thinking from a psychological angle. He considers thinking as a mean of worship to purify the believer's soul and body. Through thinking a Muslim can get rid of many disasters he faces⁽¹⁾

To sum up this section, Western scholars have proposed various factors to rationalize the teaching of thinking .For most of them thinking skills are now considered essential for achieving understanding of the subject matter discipline and mastery of technical skills (Pressein 1988, Marzona 1992). Teaching of thinking also enables educators easily and properly to connect prior knowledge with new information. Consequently, such connection entails a real understanding of concepts, principles and generalization in order to achieve good judgement and a genuine intellectual performance. However, Muslim scholars relate thinking to the development of the total person (*Insan Kamil*) and to ad- din (way of life).

Reasons for Teaching Thinking

A review of research findings done by Kathleen Cotton in thinking⁽²⁾ shows that there are several reasons to teach thinking. From those reasons the following are mentioned:

- 1- Thinking skills are necessary for people to handle the rapidly changing technology of today's world .If people have to live with such drastic changes, they should be highly educated and equipped with the necessary tools,
- 2- Thinking skills are learnable, they, are needed to be developed,
- 3- Instruction in thinking skills promotes intellectual growth and academic achievement,
- 4- Many commercial thinking skills programs have been shown to bring about improvements in students' performance on intelligence and achievement tests, and
- 5- Students' performance has been shown to be improved as a result of teaching and learning of thinking skills.

⁽¹⁾Malik Badri (1993), al-Tafakkur Minal- Mushada ela Shouhood: Dirasa Nafsiah (in Arabic). Jordan, IIIT. P 5o.

⁽²⁾ For more details check ..[http: / www. Nwral. / scpd /Sirs/6/Cule.html](http://www.Nwral./scpd/Sirs/6/Cule.html).

Criticism

From the foregoing discussion and statements, the ultimate purpose of teaching thinking in the West is to prepare learners to be knowledgeable, self-determined and skillful. The criticism, which can be directed to this perspective, is that the above – mentioned objectives are considered essentially a materialistic realm. Striving for excellence and conducting of creative thinking or critical thinking are usually done to face practical aspects of life to increase productivity and solving problems. Western thinkers have not paid attention to the recognition of the Authority, of the Creator and of the universe. Thus, they have failed to investigate the Commander of the world to realize whether the man has been given a mission and a code to live for and live by or not ⁽¹⁾. In fact, emphasis on thinking is to fulfill temporal needs or benefits suitable to their paradigm of life. In other words the Western perspective lacks the sum of values or the generic concepts that organize, control and corrects the behavior of those who will be involved in thinking. For example, although Edward De Bono is widely regarded as the founder of the concept of lateral thinking and developed formal techniques for deliberate critical thinking, he failed to present reasonable causes for why people struggle for thinking rather than to fulfill temporal objectives. However, although western perspective has faced with such critique, Western thinkers have proposed systematic and comprehensive approaches, materials and logical reasons to the extent that they have achieved much in the field of education as well as other fields.

In contrast, Muslims derive their perspective of thinking from Islam, which is radically opposed to the materialistic approach in the acquisition of knowledge, science, technology and the way of thinking. Idealistically, Islam urges Muslims that they should always remember Allah (S.W) and seek His proximity as a primary goal.⁽¹⁾ As such, Islam's emphasis on thinking is to urge and motivate its

⁽¹⁾Mohammad, R. Mirzr and Muhammad Iqbal Siddiqi (1996), Muslims' Contribution to Science, Kazmi Publication, p. 278. , Lahore .

⁽¹⁾ Golshani (1997) , the Holy Qura'n and the Sciences of Nature, Birmingham , p.74.

followers to perform teachings of Islam effectively and with complete understanding and total faith. In other words importance of teaching thinking in Islam, is to enable people to worship Allah (S.W.) But unfortunately, although Muslims have been given the Qur'an, the primary source of reference, and the Hadith for them to use as guidance, Muslims are still beset with problems. This scenario is a result of the malaise of Muslims' minds that has not matured or developed to understand and formulate teachings of Islam effectively into a way of life. This is further aggravated by other situation. Catering for solutions, several reasons were investigated by scholars as causes for such situation. For example, Al – Attas proposes that the reasons led to the Ummah's dilemma are confusion and error in knowledge. He believes that the education crisis in Muslims ' World is due mainly to the borrowing of Western concepts of education and culture ⁽¹⁾ ' These reasons enabled the unqualified leaders who lack high moral, intellectual and spiritual requirements to be responsible of Muslims ' affairs .In the same regard, Abdul Hamid Abu Suliman argues that closing the door to true *ijtihad* and intellectual enthusiasm so early resulted in the Ummah's backwardness. In addition to that, interrelated causes such as inadequate studies on the general organization of the society, political conflicts and separation of political and intellectual leadership affected negatively the methodolog and content of Islamic thought ⁽²⁾.

III. Thinking in Qur'an and Hadit

a)The Place of Thinking in Holy Qur'an

The Qur'an has a comprehensive framework of thought that relates between the seen and the unseen on one hand, Revelation and Reason on the other. Thus, one of the most distinctive features of the Holy Qur'an among Muslims as well as non– Muslims, is the importance given to thinking ⁽¹⁾ The Qur'an appeals

⁽¹⁾ Al-Attas (1991) ,The Concept of Education in Islam :A framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education. Kuala Lumpur. Istak p33-38.

⁽²⁾Abdul Hamid Ahmed Abu Suliman, (1991), . Crisis in the Muslims' Mind , U.S.A. IIIT. p.44-65

⁽¹⁾Al- Agad M.Abbas ,al –Tafkeer Farida Islamiah (Thinking is Compulsory in Islam), Cairo, Nahdut Masr. p.3.

constantly to reason and experience, and emphasizes the observable aspect of Reality in several verses throughout the Book , ⁽²⁾ for example:

“It is God Who causeth the seed grain and the date – stone to split and sprout . He causeth the living to issue from the dead , and He is the One to cause the dead to issue from the living . That is God : then how are ye deluded away from the truth” (6:95)

From the above new verse some scholars support the historical claims that spirits of inquiring and new methods of experiment, observation and measurement, on which modern science is based, are all contributions of those who followed the teachings of Islam regarding the faculty of reasoning ⁽³⁾. As it was explained earlier, Allah (S.W) raises the faculty of reasoning in man by being given two books, which contain the Signs of the Creator. The first book is the Revelation –the Qur’an and the second is the Universe, the natural phenomena surrounding him. Man was given a unique position by being appointed by Allah (S.W) as a vicegerent on the earth. Such a situation bestowed on man honor and privilege because of the faculty of reasoning that charges him with a prominent role that needed to be developed

1- Qur’anic Discourse Regarding Thinking

According to Al- Attas the true Islamic concepts can only be found in the Arabic Language which being the Language of the Qur’an. Arabic Language is a scientific language, an embodiment and vehicle of true Islamic concepts ⁽¹⁾. He says:

“The scientific structure of Arabic attested to by the mere fact that it is the Language in which the Holy Qura’n is revealed. When God, Glorious and Most Exalted, says that the Holy Qura’n is Arabic contains no crookedness’ what is implied with reference to the language is that since

⁽²⁾ Mohammad , R. Mirzr and Igbal Siddigi (1986), Muslims’ Contribution to Science , Lahore , Kazmi publication,p.54.

⁽³⁾Ibid, P. 55.

⁽¹⁾AL-Attas. (1991) , The Concept of Education in Islam : A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education, Kuala Lumpur Istak . p p.1-6

the Holy Qur'an is the fountain of true knowledge, the linguistic form through which that knowledge flows and by which is made to flow, must also of such a nature that it too is not susceptible of crookedness that is, of evictions from the straight course, from the right meanings that convey truth directly, without swerving elsewhere, without distortion" ... p2.

Therefore, to discuss the significance of thinking as mentioned in Qur'an leads us to analyze some intellectual dissertations referring to the faculty of thinking In this regard we observe the following:

1) One of the fundamental characteristics of the Qur'anic discourse pertaining to reasoning is that, words used to express thinking do not occur in infinitive way. Instead, adjectives and verbs such as *yatafakkarun*, *ya'lamun*, *ya'gilun*, *tazakarun* and *yafgahun* are used intensively to show (continuously) different stages of intellectual and rational thinking. For example, Allah says in His Book:

"It is He who sends down rain from the sky. From it ye drink, and out of it (grows) the vegetation on which ye feed your cattle. With it He produces for you corn, olives date palms, grapes and every kind of fruit: verily in this is Sign for those who give thought." (16:10-11)

"It is He Who maketh the stars (as beacon) for you, that you may guide yourselves, with their help, through the dark spaces of land and sea. We detail our Signs for people who know." (6:97)

"He has made subject to you the night and the Day, the sun and the moon, and the stars are in subjection by His Command: verily in this are Signs for those who are wise." (16:12)

"And of every thing we have created pairs: that might be mindful. (51:49)

"It is He Who has produced you from a single person: here is the place for sojourn and a place of departure: We detail Our Signs for people who understand. (6:98)

In the above verses and others it is clear that the Qur'an aims to project the availability of the faculty of reasoning. Moreover the objectives of that are to

control the conscience, to realize the facts, to distinguish between things and to weigh between contradictors so as to reach a true judgement. For that, in other verses Allah (S.W) praises those who do so and describes them by being given wisdom and magnificent benefits.

“He granteth wisdom to whom He pleaseth; and to whom wisdom is granted receiveth indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding” (2:269).

From the foregoing verses and others, several terms are used in the Qur’an in reference to the faculty of reasoning and acquiring knowledge. ⁽¹⁾These terms include the ability of *aqle* or *ta’aqul*(reasoning), *ta’weel*(interpreting), *tadabbur* (contemplation), *fiqh*(understanding), *tafakkur*(meditation), *tazakkur* (remembrance), *nadhrah* (sight), *shuhood* (attendance), *Ibsar* (sight), and *hikmah* (wisdom). The Qur’an does not mention certain criteria to classify the faculties of reasoning according to their priorities in the hierarchy of intellectual processes.

Evidence associated with those words when are mentioned in the Holy Qur’an gives us some instructions to explain their meanings in the context in which they are used ⁽¹⁾

2) The Qur’an also uses various nouns or terms such as *aqle*, *qulb*, *nuha*, *hijr*, *hilm* and *fu’ad* to express the faculty of reasoning in several verses. The term *aqle* literally means the ability to control one’s self or to direct it towards good deeds. It is also means detention and verification of evidence ⁽²⁾ Allah (S.W) says:

“They will further say: Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we should not (now) be among the Companions of the blazing Fire! “ (67:10)

⁽¹⁾Abdul – Rahman Salih Abdulla (1982) , Educational Theory: A Quranic Outlook, Um al Qura University, p.87.

⁽¹⁾Al-kailani, Majid Ursan (1997) .Ahdaf al – Tarbbiah al- Islamiah fi Tarbiyat al fard wa Ikhraj Al Ummah wa Tanmiyat al ukhuwwuha al insaniyah, (Objectives of Islamic Education), in Arabic Herndon. IIIT. p.75.

⁽²⁾ Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, vol.13. p.485.

“Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the Earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which god sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth; - here indeed are Signs for people that are wise’ (2:164)

Qulb and **Iubb** are used to mean the essence or the center of a thing. They are distinguished by the fact that **qulb** has three usages, it means mind, and opinion or that organ exists in the chest ⁽¹⁾. **Lubb** is more specific than **qulb**, therefore, those who are described as *ulu al – albab* are praised because of their abilities to contemplate and capability of distinguishing truth from falsehood ⁽²⁾. The term *fu’ad* is also used to express intellect and to interpret means of perception, reasoning and understanding the Sign or an issue by using analysis to realize the connection of different phenomena ⁽³⁾ **Hilm** (plural **Ahlam**) is used to display the faculty of reasoning. According to Qurtubi *Hilm* is given high rank. While *hilm* is the talent of acquiring knowledge, *aql* is the capacity to differentiate between categories of knowledge ⁽⁴⁾. **Hijr** and **Nuhha** are also used to demonstrate the faculty of reasoning and intellect in the Qur’an. They refer to the deterrent power of mind. Thus, those who are described as *thu hiji* or *thu al – nuhha* are the ones who control themselves from not being influenced negatively.

“Is it not a guidance to such Men (to call to mind) How many generations before them We destroyed, in whose haunts They (now) move? Verily In this are Signs for men Endued with understanding ‘ (20:128).

⁽¹⁾ Qamus al-Qur'an, pp.388-89 (quoted in Abdul-Rahman Salih abdulla (1982), ucational Theory :AQuranic Outlook, p.87.

⁽²⁾ Qurrubi, Vol 4 , P.87.

⁽³⁾ Golshani (1997) , The Holy Qura'n and the Sciences of Nature, Birmingham,p.98.

⁽⁴⁾ Qurtubi, vol . 17.p.73 (quoted in Golshani, 1997).

“Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts” (22:46)

Besides the foregoing terms, as explained earlier, the Qur’an talks about the faculty of intellect and reasoning in a form of adjectives. The justification of this usage is that Qur’an considers those faculties are function of the heart that are happening inside the man before they are transferred to sensitive actions in his external organs ⁽¹⁾. Among the adjectives used for the faculty of reasoning are:

First: **Ta’weel** is the ability of the **qulb** that is used to accumulate information and retrieve it to function when is needed. It comprises all the faculties of reasoning and associated with realization of practical applications that encounter theoretical commitments. For example, the story of Yusuf (A.S) when he was asked to interpret the King’s dream Allah (S.W) Says:

“O Joseph” (he side) “O man of truth! Expound to us (the dream) of seven fat kine whom seven lean ones devour, and of seven green ears of corn and (seven) others withered: that I may return to the people, and that they may understand “ (12:46).

Second: **Tadabbur** means the ability of associating between preambles and results to find out causes that play a role in such consequence ⁽¹⁾.

“Do they not consider the Qur’an (with care). Had it been from other than God, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy “ (4:82).

Third: **Tafakkur** means the ability to use the capacities of reasoning for sake of truth ⁽²⁾.

“Do they not reflect in their own minds? Not but for just ends and for a term appointed did God create the Heavens and the Earth, and all between them: yet are there truly many among men who deny the meeting with their Lord (at the Resurrection)! “(30:8).

⁽¹⁾AL-Kailani , Majid Ursan (1997) Ahdaf al –Tarbbiah al –Islamiah fi Tarbiyat al fard Wa Ikhrey Al Ummah wa tanimiyat al Ukhuwwuh al Insaniyah, Objectives of Islamic Education), Herndon IIIT .p.76.

⁽¹⁾.Ibid , P. 76-79.

⁽²⁾ Ibid p. 77.

Fourth: **Tadhakur** indicates the ability Of remembrance of experience ⁽¹⁾ for the purpose of criticism in order to reach to the true judgement due to instruction of Qur'an and Sunnah .

“Not equal are the blind and those who (clearly) see: Nor are (equal) those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and those who do evil. Little do ye learn by admonition “(40:58)

Fifth: **Nadhar** (view) is used in the Qur'an with abilities of hearing and sight aiming to encourage and motivate mankind to think rationally and critically about the Universe and its phenomena. Allah (S.W) says:

“Now let man but think from what he is created! “(86:5).

”Then let man look at his food, (and how we provide it)” (80: 24).

Sixth: **Shuhood** (Viewing or Observation) is the ability to use the faculty of reasoning beside the other senses effectively.

Seventh: **Ibsar** (Sight, Vision) means the ability that assists the accuracy of understanding and analyzing the phenomena of the Universe ⁽²⁾.

*“On the Earth are Signs for those of assured Faith * As also on your own selves: will ye not then see* And in heavens I your Sustenance, as (also) that which ye are promised”(51:20-22).*

Eighth: **Hikmah** (Wisdom) indicates the meaning of rational ability to understand theoretical relations and sensitive rational that enables people to transfer relations to practical applications, thus, *Hikmah* seems as if it is equivalent to specific experiences that a person could have acquired throughout his life ⁽¹⁾.

“He granteth wisdom to whom He pleaseth; and he to whom wisdom is granted receiveth indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding “(2:269).

From the above discussion, intellectual, moral and ethical issues are mixed in the Qur'an to shape a whole way of life. The terms used to highlight thinking in Qur'an indicate the prominence of critical, creative and reflective thinking that has

⁽¹⁾ Ibid .p 76.

⁽²⁾ Ibid P 77.

⁽¹⁾ Ibid P 77.

been given a crucial role as tools to man as unique creature of the Universe. Thinking in the Qur'an is a continuous process that raises man to be closer to Allah (S.W) Who appointed him to be the vicegerent on the earth. Shouldering responsibilities of vicegerency (*Khilafah*) is incumbent in man and indicates the necessity of using what Allah (S.WT) endowed on him so to deserve such a position.

“We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great of Our creation” (17:70).

1) Factors Affecting Thinking

The Holy Qur'an mentions in numerous verses different factors that lead to or affect thinking negatively. For example:

“That is because they believed, then they rejected Faith: so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore they understand not “ (63:3)

“ Or have we sent down authority to them, which points out to them the things to which they pay part-worship” (30:53)

The above verses and others show that the lack of thinking has affected faith negatively. The principal role of faith in understanding is to restore man's faculty of intellect to its original command. Faith arms a thinker with a comprehensive view of things he observes and their interrelations. It also enables him to realize the insufficiency of his knowledge as well as his need to the guidance of Allah (S.W).

⁽¹⁾ Beside the lack of faith, the existence of such factors - as mentioned in Qur'an are- causing intellect's deviation, following one's desire, fancy and wishes. All those factors affect the profound way of a thinker.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Abdul Hamid Ahmed Abu Suliman (1997), *Crisis in the Muslims' Mind*, U.S.A. IIIT,p.149.

(1) Golshani (1997), *the Holy Qura'n and the Sciences of Nature*, Birmingham, pp. 149-67.

(2) *Ibid.* ,pp, 149-69.

“But if they hearken not to thee, know that they only follow their own lusts: and who is more astray than one who follow his own lusts, devoid of guidance not people given to wrong-doing”. (28:50).

Also the Holy Qur’an considers blind imitation of the ancestors, opinion of authorities, ignorance and lack of knowledge are factors that act as obstacles in the way of seeking the truth.⁽²⁾

“ And they would say: “Our Lord! We obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us as to the (right) Path” (33:67)

“When it is said to them: “follow what God has revealed:” They say: “Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers. “What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance? (2:170 and 40:83)

“Noah said: “O my Lord! I do seek refuge with Thee, lest I ask Thee for that of which I have no knowledge unless thou act like the ignorance” (11:47)

B) The Place of Thinking in the Hadith

It is well known that the Qur’an and Hadith are the fundamental sources of Islamic ideology. If Qur’an is the theoretical framework in Islam, Hadith is its application. Although the man has been created in the best of moulds (At-tin-4), his knowledge is limited. The Prophet Mohammed (SAW) was sent to mankind to teach him to realize his duties, potentials and responsibilities towards their Creator. Rasulullah (SAW) emphasized the importance of knowledge and the development of intellect (aql) to his Ummah as an Ibaddah. To enable Rasulullah (SAW) to achieve his mission, Allah (SW) commands mankind to obey the Prophet and imitate him in his acts because the Prophet’s behavior represents the highest standard that should be copied by the human beings.⁽¹⁾

“O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, And those charged With authority among you. If ye differ in any thing Among

⁽¹⁾ I bid, P. 106

yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination” (4:59).

However, if the Qur’an presents general directions or defines of the philosophy of life, Hadith- in accordance with the Qur’an- defines plans and explains suitable programs that organize the lives of individuals and societies. In this regard, Allah says:

“By the Star when it goes down Your Companions is neither Astray nor being misled* Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) Desire* It is no less than Inspiration send down to him”(53:1-4).*

The above verse authorizes and justifies characteristics that set a clear example for those who are praised in the Qur’an by Performing good deeds and following His path. It was narrated that the prophet himself Said:

“ I am appointed Apostle for perfection of highest morals and virtuous most action.”

In the field of thinking, in the same line with Holy Qur’an, the Hadith pays a great attention to the acquisition of knowledge, various classifications of thinking and scientific justification. Abdullah Bin Abbas narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said: *“ The sun and the moon are two Signs of Allah. They do not eclipse because of someone’s death or life. So, if you see them (i.e. eclipse), celebrate The Praises of Allah (i.e. pray!”*⁽¹⁾

In addition to that the Hadith contains values and attributes that are related to thinking such as love of scientific research, accuracy of observation, searching for truth, criticism and prioritizing alternatives. When we refer to discuss issues related to thinking in Holy Hadith we generally observe that the Hadith includes different types of thinking such as follows.⁽²⁾

First: Contemplating thinking which aims to motivate Muslims to be equipped with tools that enable them to think about natural phenomena and man’s

⁽¹⁾ Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Translation of Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith of Sun, The Book of the Beginning of the Creation. Vol. 4.

⁽²⁾ Abduljuad al-Syyed Bakr (1983), Falsafat al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiah fi al-Hadith al- = Shareef. Cairo, Dar al-fikr al-arabi. p. 199-225.

creation⁽¹⁾. It was narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari that the Prophet (SAW) asked his Companion Abu-thar about the sunset. He says:

“ Narrated Abu Thar: The Prophet (SAW) asked me at sunset, “Do you know where the sun goes (at the time of sunset)?

I replied, ” Allah and His Apostle know better, ” He said: “It goes (i.e. travels) till it prostrates itself underneath the Thorne, and take the permission to rise again. And it is permitted and then (a time will come when) it will about to prostrate itself but its prostration will not be accepted, and will ask permission to go in its course, but it will not be permitted, but it will be ordered to return whence it has come and so it will be rise in the west. And that is the interpretation of the Statement of Allah (S.W) “And the sun Runs its fixed course for a term (decreed). This is the Decree of (Allah) The Exalted in Might, The all-Knowing” (36:38)⁽²⁾.

Second: Scientific thinking, which aims at providing Muslims with equipment to shoulder their responsibilities as vicegerents of Allah (S.W) in harmony with what they know about religious teachings. Such a situation entails Muslims to struggle for acquiring knowledge so as to perform Allah’s accountability upon them. Herein education or thinking enables Muslims to realize and distinguish between truth and falsehood. Consequently, there are several Hadith that urge, motivate and warn Muslims not to justify or issue *Fatwas* without knowledge and evidence⁽¹⁾.

Based on the above discussion we conclude that both the Holy Qur’an and Hadith lay great emphasis on critical thinking and behavior to read the Signs of Allah. They encourage people to determine the secret of creation by themselves. Moreover, through critical observation, intellectual and rational thinking, they motivate people to connect the Signs of the Book with Signs of the Universe for the sake of Allah (S.W). To put it more clearly, the importance of thinking could

⁽¹⁾ Ibid P.199.

⁽²⁾ Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Translation of Sahih al-Bukhari, No. 421. The Book of the Beginning of the Creation. vol.4 p.283.

⁽¹⁾ Abduljuad al-Sayyed Bakr (1983), Falsafat al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiah fi al-Hadith a-Shareef.(in Arabic) Cairo, Dar al-fikr al-arabi. p. 199-225.

be derived from the authenticity that Islam, with which the Qur'an and Hadith represent its vitality and constitution, has the following foundations:

- 1) A system of belief that defines a Worldview of man towards the existence and life by explaining a particular status towards existence, human life and style of behavior (ethics). Also this system of life includes a religion, which is not, a foundation of individual's life only, but is a global discourse that urges, seeks and supports a common social identity ⁽²⁾.
- 2) Vicegerency on the earth which entails man to deal with the Universe in accordance with Allah's instructions and footsteps of His Prophets (SAW) in every thing.

“Did ye think that we created you in jest, and that ye Would not be brought back To Us (for account)” (23:115).

- 3) Moral responsibility that requires necessary qualifications to fulfill the conditions of vicegerency (freewill, potentials for learning, ability to use the faculty of intellect and acquisition of knowledge).

“Say: I am but a man like yourselves, (but) The inspiration has come to me, that your God is One God: whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him Work Righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner” (18:110).

C) Characteristics of Thinking as Exposed in Qur'an and Hadith.

Following the guidelines of the First and Second World Conferences on Muslim Education, 1977 and 1980, the foundations of Islamic curriculum are *Tawheed*, Prophet hood and Vicegerency (*khilafa*). Those foundations which are derived from Qura'n and Sunnah are the essence of characteristics of thinking in the Islamic curriculum. *Tawheed* is the essence of Islam. It represents the basic upon which Muslim actions revolve. Thus, thinking will be based on *Tawheed* to lead to the acknowledgement of the Creator. Prophethood (*Risalah*) which indicates that the Messenger Mohammed (SAW) was sent to set a model and guidance for mankind. It represents a cornerstone to be applied or fulfilled

⁽²⁾ Erfan Abudl Hamid, al-Atare al-Fikr al-A'am linadhiriyat al-M'arifah fi al-Qur'an alkareem, Islamiyat al-M'arifah, vol.15, winter 1999, p.78.

effectively. For that a thinker who wants to achieve his objectives should follow steps of the prophet (SAW) in order for not to be deviated from the right path or influenced negatively. The concept of vicegerency shows motivation to struggle for excellency (*Ehsan*) in good deeds and cease the evil ones so as to live in Paradise for ever.

D) Objectives of Teaching Thinking in the Islamic Curriculum

From importance given to thinking in the Qura'n and Hadith, it seems very crucial that curricula in Islamic countries should incorporate teaching of thinking as a major task. Thus, objectives of teaching of thinking in our Islamic curricula are to:

- 1/ Train or educate Muslims to be subjective in analyzing and criticizing their issues rather than conducting justified criticism. By this Islam teaches Muslims to be responsible when they fail to achieve their objectives rather than supposing other factors or agents to be responsible for their mistakes.⁽¹⁾ For example Adam and Eve consider themselves responsible for their mistake when they disobeyed Allah (S.W) regarding the issue of forbidden tree.

*“So by deceit he brought about their fall: when they Tasted of the tree, Their shameful parts became manifest to them, and they began to sew together the leaves of the Garden over their bodies. And their Lord called unto them: Did I not forbid you that tree, And tell you that Satan was an avowed Enemy unto you *They Said: Our Lord We have wronged our own souls: If Thou forgive us not and bestow not upon they Mercy, We shall Certainly be lost” (7:22-23).*

- 2/ Help Muslims not to conduct partial or incomplete thinking that focuses on some parts of a phenomenon or a problem instead of the whole parts. The purpose of this is to urge Muslims to think deeply about faith because incomplete thinking is always associated with imitation and weakness of intellect.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Al-Kailani, Majid Ursa (1997). *Ahdaf al-Tarbbiah al-Islamiah fi Tarbiyat al Fard wa Ikhraj al Ummah wa Tanmiyat al Ukhuwwuh al Insaniyah*, (Objectives of Islamic Education), Herndon. IIIT.p 80-88.

⁽¹⁾ Ibid p.82.

3/ Prepare learners to enhance creative thinking instead of imitative thinking ⁽²⁾. By creativity, Qur'an and Hadith aim at discovering new ideas.

“Nay! They say: We found Our fathers following A certain religion, and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps Just in the same way, whenever We sent a Warner before thee to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their steps: (43:22-23).*

4/ Motivate Muslims to perform a type of thinking which is based on evidence and to warn them against issuing judgments without conducting critical investigations and proposing clear evidence ⁽¹⁾.

“ O ye who believe! If a sinner comes to you with any news, Ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and Afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done” (49:6).

In the same regard, narrated Abu Hurraira (RAA), the Prophet (SAW) said:

“ Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for the others' faults and do not spy, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another, and do not hate one another; and O Allah's worshippers! Be brothers (as Allah has ordered you” ⁽²⁾

5/ Urge Muslims to conduct thinking collectively instead of individually because one's fate is some how associated with others'.⁽¹⁾ It also encourages them to exchange benefits among themselves as a permanent feature for developing their society.

“ And fear the trail which affecteth not in particular (Only) those of you who do wrong: And know that Allah is strict in punishment” (8:25).

In the same token narrated Ibn Umr (RAA): heard Allah's Messenger (SAW) saying:

⁽²⁾ Ibid p. 84.

⁽¹⁾ Al-Kailani, p. 85.

⁽²⁾ Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Translation of Sahih al Bukhari, The Book of the Discipline. vol.8 p.23.

⁽¹⁾ AL .Kailani.86.

“ All of you are Guardians” Yunis said: Rugaiq bin Hukaim wrote to Ibn Shihab while I was with him at Wadi-al-Qura saying “Shall I lead the Jumu’a Prayer? “ Ruzaiq was working on the land (i.e. farming) and there was a group of Sudanese people and some others with him; Ruzaiq was then the governor of Alia.. Ibn Shihab wrote (to Ruzaiq) ordering him to lead the Jumua’ Prayer and telling him that Salim told him that Abdullah bin Umar had said: heard Allah’s Messenger (SAW) saying: “All of you are guardians and responsible of your wards and the things under your care. The Imam (i.e. ruler) is the guardian of his subjects and responsible for them and a man is the guardian of his family and is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband’s house and is responsible for it. A servant is the guardian of his master’s belongings and is responsible for them.” I thought that he also said: “A man is the guardian of his father’s property and is responsible for it. All of you are guardians and responsible for your wards and the things under your care”⁽¹⁾

6/ Urge Muslims to think about the Universe in a way that glorifies the Creator and abolishes superstitious thinking. The Qur’an stresses that the Universe and social life are running according to Allah’s will.⁽²⁾ Success in life depends on one’s harmony with different elements of the Universe and its laws. This kind of thinking helps Muslims to lead a purposeful life that guides them to be closer to Almighty Allah (S.W) who Says:

“ There can be no difficulty to the Prophet in what Allah has indicated to him as a duty: it was the practice (approved) of Allah amongst those of old That have passed away. And the command of Allah is a decree determined” (33:38).

“ On account of their arrogance in the land and their Plottw of evil. But the plotting of Evil will hem in only the authors thereof. Now are they but looking for the way the ancients Were dealt with? But no change wilt

⁽¹⁾ Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Translation of Sahih al-Bukhari , No. 18, The Book of the Jumu’a. Vol. 8. p. 9.

⁽²⁾ Hashimi ,R. (1996), Educational Dualism in Malaysia, Oxford, p. 84.

thou find in Allah's way (of dealing). No turning off wilt thou find in Allah's way (of dealing)" (35:43).

IV. Incorporation of Thinking Across the Islamic Curriculum

Re-examination of Islamic curriculum is the first and very crucial step for the purpose of assurance that thinking deserves attention to be included in our Islamic curriculum. If the result of such examination is negative, critical and creative thinking should be given consideration and taken care of by adding it to the curriculum either through the direct approach, indirect approach or infusion approach. Referring to the Qur'an, we find that different strategies are used to enable man to realize the connection between the various Signs of Allah (SW). Faculty of senses, empirical observation, experimentation and verification, metaphors and parables, questioning, discussion and deductive and inductive rational are used widely and intensively to achieve the above purpose. In this regard we can say that the infusion approach is the more appropriate tool to enhance thinking within the Islamic curriculum because infusion approach takes care of both content and thinking skills. This goes or agrees with those who argue that thinking cannot occur in a vacuum. The appropriateness of this approach comes from the reality that within the Islamic perspective there is a strong link between the elements of the Universe and the *ayahs* of the Book. The importance of content in the Islamic curriculum that it is derived from unchangeable sources which at the same time provide opportunities to Muslims to strive for excellence by understanding those sources in accordance with guidelines which are revealed there.

Expansively, incorporation of thinking in the Islamic curriculum is a pertinent indispensable task to achieve the desired objectives. To do so, enormous efforts would be required in order to assist the curriculum to function effectively and successfully.

Broadly, the inclusion of thinking into the Islamic curriculum requires tremendous efforts. In this regard one can suggest that:

- (1) Creating a positive attitude towards thinking should develop a culture of thinking. To perform this task, teachers should be trained to improve their careers. Since teachers have been familiar with certain styles of teaching and dealing with their subjects' areas, they could be encouraged to take care of thinking within their specialization.
- (2) A careful attention should be paid to the selection of objectives, which are needed to be achieved. The objectives also required to be stated clearly. In addition, the content is also needs to be organized systematically in a way that suits the level of students and desirable objectives.
- (3) Teachers should be motivated to depend on instructional methods that were referred to in the Qur'an or inferred from it. These methods include telling stories, asking questions and using metaphors, observation, demonstration, induction, and deduction.⁽¹⁾ Those methods enable both teachers and students to use different thinking strategies such as comparison, connection between events or things and weighing priorities and alternatives.
- (4) Teachers, the most important agents in education, should be trained to be creative and innovative. Moreover, they should be selected carefully so as to set a good example to their students. Finding best teachers also entails co-operation of administrators as well as very high skillful training programs and sufficient budgets. All those factors assist a lot in implementing an Islamic-thinking curriculum.
- (5) Parents' involvement and co-operation is very important towards the students. They could defend them against bad mass media programs and peer influences. Parents and teachers should be complementary to each other, so as to ensure effective learning.

V. Conclusion

To recapitulate the main points, thinking in today's world is considered in the Western perspective as a very crucial factor for knowledge acquisition. Also thinking is considered more important as a means that enables individuals to have

⁽¹⁾ Hashimi , R (1996) , Educational Dualism in Malaysia Oxford , p84.

proficient and sufficient devices to cope with the technology and rapid changes of the new millennium. Proposing the above reasons to teach thinking, Western thinkers have succeeded in presenting the rational of teaching thinking systematically according to their domain.

However, Muslims always criticize that the Western perspective of thinking is incomplete because of its emphasis on materialistic dimensions that aim to achieve temporal desires. According to some Muslim scholars, such a way of thinking ignores very important issues concerning this life and the Hereafter such as the world of Unseen and most importantly, knowing one's Creator.

In fact, both Qur'an and Sunnah include a clear invitation to use the faculty of senses and reasoning not only to understand, but also to observe, contemplate, reflect and exercise our cognition so that we live up to our unique rational potential. When the Qur'an lays great importance on thinking, it aims at providing mankind with equipment that enable his to perform his responsibilities as true vicegerents and servants of Allah (S.W). Thus, the importance of teaching thinking from the Islamic perspective is to achieve the humanity of mankind who is given high position above all creatures for the purpose of worshipping Allah (S.W) according to His Will that needed to be fulfilled through the faculty of reasoning and seeking Allah's guidance.

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