Computer based system for Madarasa Education

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Abstract In this study an attempt has been made to understand the use of computer and computer education as an innovative approach to Madarasa education. The Madarasas are now being spread throughout the Muslim world and are progressing by leaps and bounds. Thus, there exists an urgent need to bring innovations in education in general and Madarasa education in particular. The computer has made its existence everywhere and is responsible to bring laurels in every domain of life. It has enhanced the pace of development in all sorts of life. The computer has also enhanced the scope of non-formal, formal and informal modes of education. Nowadays there is least scope of traditional modes and tactics in education. It is a need of the hour to introduce certain novel techniques, innovative approaches and need based tactics in Madrassa education in order to enhance its quality and improving its effectiveness for increasing the outcome of learning and for keeping the pace with and being parallel to the modern system of education. It was found that in Madrasas the traditional approach of teaching is being followed. It was found that there is no scope of secular subjects. It is suggested that Madarsa students must be equipped with latest know how of computer technology in much the same way as the students of different levels of traditional schooling.

Key words: Madarasa Education; Computer based Education; Innovative approach

An Innovative Approach

Education is an important investment and every society seeks to educate its people. Whether formal or informal, education aims at effective changes in behaviour under the planned guidance of teachers or changes which occur as a result of media exposure and social environment.

Education of the children takes place in a particular society therefore the curriculum will be affected by two factors: 1) The nature of the society and, 2) the nature of the individual. Curriculum is also a medium for transmission of cultural heritage of a society. Therefore in considering the above two factors the curriculum of a particular society will also be geared to the cultural heritage which a particular school seeks to transmit.

Education is Islamic Society is totally committed to perpetuating the way of life as laid down in the Holly Quran and Sunnah or hadith. As such the content of Islamic education will emphasize Islamic teachings and practices. In Islamic secular education cannot be weaned away from religious life because it is fundamentally concerned with moulding the personality of a Muslim in accordance with the basic tenets of the teachings of Islam taking into account both worlds i.e. the spiritual and the physical world.

Dr. Syed Sajjad Husain: From Crisis in Muslim Education

“The true aim of education is to produce men who have faith as well as knowledge, the one sustaining the other Islam does not think that the pursuit of knowledge by itself without reference to the spiritual goal that man must try to attain, can do humanity much good. Knowledge divorced from faith is not only partial knowledge; it can be even described as a king of new ignorance. The man who has lost his faith in God is not recognized by Islam as a man whose knowledge can be described as deep. Such a person, however extensive his acquaintance with books has but acquired only a fragmentary view of the universe”.

For early Muslims the Holy Quran was the complete way of life. The sayings and deeds of the Prophet provided another source of inspiration. As Islamic territory extended, it came into contact with new races and civilization. There arose a necessity to teach the verses of Quran and hadith to Non-Arab children. This contact also brought with it awareness that Non-Arab societies were culturally superior in many respects. Such a cultural quagmire awakened Muslims to bring about changes and extend the base of Islamic Education that resulted in the establishment of Madarsahs and Maktabs. These were either attached to mosques or housed in their own buildings. The subjects of this early period consisted of (1) Grammer (2) Logic.
The study of the following subjects:

1) Natural Philosophy, 2) Theology, 3) Astronomy, 4) Geometry, 5) Arithmetic, 6) Rhetoric, 7) Logic, 8) Law, 9) Grammar in Arabic and 10) Persian etc.

In 1980 English and Bengali were introduced and later English was made an optional subject. By 1927 a new examination could obtain admission to a college which awarded the degree of “Alim and Tadil” equivalent Intermediate and B.A. degrees respectively. Kamil was equivalent to M.A.

During the British period the Indian Muslims were confronted with competition by the Hindu society which was making good progress in educational and economic developments with education brought in by Christian missionaries. This awakened the Muslim scholars to the necessity of equipping students with secular knowledge in addition to Islamic knowledge. The champions to this cause were Darul Uloom Nava and Anglo-oriental College Aligarh. Finally in the post independence period it easy realized that the study of subject like geography, English, History and Political Science was required. However the extent to which they are taught cannot be said to be quite satisfactory.

A survey conducted on the study routine being followed at Madarsahs revealed some interesting facts. The study schedule of Madarsah students was found to be far more strict, punctual and rigorous than that of the regular school. A Madarsah pupil rises at the time of morning prayers (Fajr) and in involved in recitation of Holy Quran till breakfast time. After a short break they attend class till 11:30 am. This is followed by break for afternoon prayers (Zuhur) and pupils recommence classes till the time of Asr. From Maghrib (evening prayers) onwards the classes of Alim and Tadil continue till after Isha (night prayers). This is the continuous routine of students and teachers. It is evident that Madarsah on an average devote more time on their studies than the students of regular schools which run from 8:00 am in the morning to 2:00 pm afternoon or it may vary from place to place.

The above time table of Madarsah can be more efficiently time managed to encompass the study of secular subject without compromising on the standards of Islamic pattern of Education in private of Government Madarsahs.

- **Identifying Students’ Needs**

On the basis of the above survey of curriculum being followed in various Madarsah today, the author has attempted to structure a new approach towards secular education which can be absorbed in Islamic education system productively and help step up quality teaching in Madarsah. It was felt that students passing through technical education will not be lagging behind the other prosperous communities. In facts Madarsah students must be equipped with latest know how of computer technology in much the same way as a student of Senior Secondary School Certificate.

- **Computer Applications for Islamic Education**

Needless to say, computers have invaded every sphere of life. In fact the computer constitutes a means to self access and antimony in learning. Software Packages are available for study of various subjects. Such packages can also be used and are already being implemented in developed countries for the teaching of Holy Quran and Hadith, Tiqah and Mantiq making it user friendly for even a layman who wants to know about a particular surah, and related interpretations of different schools of thoughts viz., (1) Hanafi (2) Shafei (3) Maliki (4) Humbali.

For example, a student wants to read a particular Surah or Hadith of Bokhari Shareef, Termizi and so on can access by giving instruction or simply by pressing selected keys to obtain the desired information in nano seconds. This will save the arduous task of searching for Mas’alas, surah, Parahs the various terms and explanations. All these should be in the form of Menu driven systems with on-line help menus. These days in Emirates and abroad packages on Quran and Hadith are available. Such type of menu driven packages can also be developed for Tiqah and Mantiq. The Tafsir of Quran given by different Ullemas such as Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi (R.A.), Maulana Abul Ala Mandoodei(R.A.), Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan(R.A.) should also be computerized. This simplifies the task of accessing the explanation of a particular Verse of Holy Quran as given by different Ullemas within one window. Such type of packages will reduce the amount of time and effort to purchase different Tafsirs and related books.

- **The Module**

The following module has been presented as an example of how Tafsir of Quran given by different Ullemas can be computerized.

The software developed for commentary of Quranic verses will include the following notations.
Main Heading: Holy Quran

Code : chapter Outline

01 : Parah 01 to 08
02 : Parah 09 to 16
03 : Parah 17 to 25
04 : Parah 26 to 30

This would form the main menu display by opening another window the user can seek further information with various interpretations as given by Ullemas.

The user then selects the code [01] and the computer will display Sub-Menu like this:

Code : Subchapter Outline Regarding 1-8

011 : Parah 1 (Interperetion & Quranic Version of 1st Parah)
013 : ..............................................
014 : ..............................................
015 : Parah 8 (Interperetion & Quranic Version of 8th Parah)

The user can then selecte various codes [011] to read the verses of Quran and an interperetion of ullama’s. In the same pattern the other menu will be coded like submenu of outline regarding parh 1-8.

Further improvement may be added as described for example one parah may be divided as four quadrant (Ruba) and this may be developed as submenu of submenu for code 011.

- Submenu of Para 1

Code : Outline of the Para 1.

0111 : Quranic version of Explanation of 1st ruba of parah 1
0112 : Quranic version of Explanation of 2nd ruba of parah 1


Suppose someone wants to read and known the meaning and explanation of 2nd ruba of first parah- he will the press the following code in he following sequence. (01) (011), (0112).

In this way various, Masala, Fiqah Mantique may be coded.

- Utility

By introducing computers in Madarsah education we can utilize valuable time for study of secular subjects. The Madarsah students will develop an understanding of modern world and its sciences. Moulana Shibli Numani had also hoped to produce such educated Muslims who were well versed in Islamic thoughts and the same time would be aware of the new trends and ideas of the changing world. He worked zealously for the development of Nadwa of this pattern.

Such type of package will have implications for task and time management since the study of Islamic jurisprudence, Literature, Fiqah, Mantique are the focus of Madarsah education most of the time consumed in its deep study. The packages suggested will allow more efficient task set by and simplify complicated task set by teachers. With more time available the students can now use some of their energies on learning other secular subjects will help bridge the wide chasm that exists between the regular schools Madarsah. It is expected that from a very young age pupils will become pre-efficient in computers skills which will enhance their knowledge of Islamic teaching.

This new approach will also reduce the burden of teachers, and the relieve the students from heavy satchels of books Madarsah students will be computer literate and well equipped to carve out a niche in their respectively professional fields. Madarsah education will thus serve as transmission of culture and simultaneously produce students who will not be out of tine of modern emerging trends in society.

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