

An Overview on the Philosophy and Educational thoughts of Dr. Zakir Hussain

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Abstract: *As an exceptional educator and a selfless nationalist leader, Dr. Zakir Husain has earned a stellar reputation. His contributions to Indian education are now considered seminal. He came to the realization that education was the key to achieving national unity and integrity. Zakir Hussain possessed an uncommon blend of wisdom, knowledge, and pragmatism, making him an authentic embodiment of Indian culture. Zakir Hussain's educational concept protects every facet of life. It shifts between what one might call the "poles of the eternal and the temporal," between a sense of conscience awakening and the ability to use one's skills efficiently, or from conviction to accomplishment. Education, according to his philosophy, is a journey from the shadows into the light, echoing a Platonic idea. Similar to what Kant had done, it acknowledged the intellectual component of education's Aristotelian logic but placed greater emphasis on its moral component. The ideals of Plato, Hegel, and Gandhiji informed Zakir Hussain's humanism, idealism, and liberalism, respectively. John Stuart Mill, who had connected education to the need for pleasure in his utilitarian philosophy, had his views rejected by him. The paper provides a descriptive and exploratory analysis based on secondary sources*

Keywords: Educational Perspective, Zakir Hussain

I. INTRODUCTION

Dr. Hussain was a devout Muslim who was uncomplicated by nature. He came from an illustrious line of cultured Afridi Pathans who had settled in the little town of Qaimgunj in Uttar Pradesh (Nagendra, 200). Following his enrollment at Islamia High School in Etawah, Zakir Hussain enrolled at Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh. In addition to being an involved student, he served as the union's vice president (Roy, 1972). Zakir Hussain exemplified the utmost perfection, the ultimate combination of knowledge, wisdom, practicality, and personality refinement. He stood as a shining example of Indian patriotism and intellectualism, presenting the idea that knowledge, not pleasure, should be the ultimate aim of human life. In his educational philosophy, the importance of character traits has always taken precedence above affiliation with any one social or political group (Shiekh, 1991). People widely regard Zakir Hussain as a groundbreaking educational thinker of modern India for his exceptional contributions to educational theory and practice. Dr. Hussain not only thought about education, but he also actively participated in its implementation. Instead of being satisfied with only telling people what to do, he lived his life as a model of the principles he advocated. As "Indira Gandhi" put it, "the nation had done a great honor to a teacher" upon Dr. Zakir Hussain's swearing-in as president. He devoted his life to expanding his knowledge in the public realm and the educational institutions he oversaw. Dr. Zakir Hussain's life's work was to inspire people. He used his life as a classroom (Indira Gandhi, 1982). Dr. Zakir Hussain, a distinguished philosopher, was appointed president of India, fulfilling Plato's dream of philosopher kings as outlined in Republic. Dr. Hussain was, without a doubt, the most innovative educator. Dr. Hussain not only enhanced the purpose and contents of education, but also experimented with methods and procedures, revealing its genuine relationship not only with the national past, present, and future, but also with the treasured legacy of men as a whole. While he is acutely aware of its ethical and spiritual implications, he has also demonstrated sensitivity to its psychological and social underpinnings.

Objective of the Study

- To study the Philosophy and Educational Thoughts of Dr. Zakir Hussain.

II. METHODOLOGY

The current study is qualitative in nature, and it investigated and construed relevant material in the form of articles, research papers, and books utilizing descriptive and analytical methodologies.

Zakir Hussain as Educationist

Among the most influential educational minds of our time, Zakir Hussain deserves special mention. As an accomplished scholar, writer, educator, preacher, thinker, worker, and philosopher in his own right, he had a profound impact on the growth of contemporary Indian thinking via his pedagogical and social philosophical writings. In the fields of education and social philosophy, he established a new school of thought. In his heart, he thought that reformative education could open the floodgates to a national Renaissance. An integrated scientific and ethical framework should be the goal of genuine education, he suggested. It ought to inspire a quest for principles. We should encourage an ardent pursuit of truth. It needs to strive for greatness and perfection. Its ultimate goal is to facilitate each person's complete maturation into their potential while simultaneously serving as a tool for societal transformation and national advancement. The dehumanizing, irrelevant, and alienating nature of education was something that Zakir Hussain fiercely opposed. He wholeheartedly supported the idea of education as a means to human flourishing, arguing that it should be "for the people, by the people" and that education should aim to cultivate admirable character traits that contribute to a greater good. Throughout his work, he stressed this point (Sheikh, 1991).

His unwavering commitment and immense impact on the basic education movement championed by Mahatma Gandhi stemmed from his firm belief that, in a developing nation, education must address the needs of the millions of rural residents living in poverty. When it comes to education, Dr. Zakir did not believe in the "one-and-done" model. Education for life, or continual education, was his fervent demand. His main point was that those who believe their education is over once they graduate from high school or college are completely erroneous. It is not enough for schools to teach reading and writing, or for universities to teach a few texts. That is not the purpose of education. The educational landscape is vast, with not just two or three new frontiers but also numerous opportunities for students to expand their horizons and achieve lofty goals. Dr. Zakir Hussain believes that a teacher should constantly stay at the forefront of educational advancements to effectively educate their students. He should have a spiritual yearning for knowledge. Dr. Zakir Hussain's work as an educator has given us some very deep ideas about education. In his view, a teacher's primary responsibility is to foster each student's individual development in accordance with his or her unique set of abilities. The role of the educator is to create an atmosphere that encourages each student to reach his or her full potential (Safaya, 1981).

His concept of Education

Education's ultimate goal is to understand the enigma of life and its objects. Although God has given us life, it is wisdom that truly makes existence worthwhile. A combination of talent and knowledge yields real wisdom. Aspects of education include acquiring knowledge and expertise. Education nurtures one's intellect, body, and spirit. What surrounds a man influences his behavior. His faith, belief, religion, art, craft, literature, music, manners, conscience, and the creative, comprehensive whole called culture impact his behavior. His elders, younger self, home, family, friends, enemies, and society as a whole influence his behavior. Food, shelter, income, property, and the basic needs of his life also influence his behavior. His thoughts, feelings, motives, intentions, desires, and all emotional impulses are also factors in his behavior. In this field, education is the pursuit of knowledge. The purpose of education is not only to know, but also to comprehend, value, and derive meaning from all of this (sheikh 1991).

Knowing man's place in society and the cosmos is, therefore, the ultimate goal of education. If we knew this, it would provide a fascinating picture of humanity's progress over the ages and the efforts of the many who came before us in the hopes of leaving us a better world. "Zakir Hussain had bestowed a great deal of thought on these issues and problems—the development of human society, its arts and letters, philosophy and religion, science and technology, adventure and administration, culture and way of life, and all other aspects relating to man's significant activities" (Sheikh, 1991).

Neither an armchair thinker nor one inclined to embrace any idea uncritically, he was an outstanding individual who was a brilliant educational reformer and creative thinker. He tried them out and put them through their paces to see whether they would hold up in the real world. From his talks, classes, deeds, and life, we learn about Zakir Hussain's educational philosophy, which is his perspective on the entirety of human existence from the moment man became conscious.

According to Zakir Hussain, education is all about helping people and communities grow in their intellectual, ethical, and spiritual potential. Educational experiences shape a person's intellect, personality, and outward look. Through formal educational institutions, people are able to pass on their cultural traditions, values, skills, and body of knowledge. This process not only promotes, grows, and expands the arts and sciences, but also results in their transmission. Education is a deliberate pursuit of knowledge with the hope of gaining something of value.

Aims of Education

Zakir Hussein's pedagogical ideas cover a lot of ground. In particular, he highlights the significance of each child's uniqueness while covering the full spectrum of educational theory and practice. As he sees it, the purpose of education is to help students become morally upright personalities. He has demonstrated that the teacher's role, responsibilities, and personality traits are attainable via his own example and has brought attention to these points. A new, compelling, and doable definition of educational labour has been bestowed upon it by him. According to Salamatullah (1999), he has long advocated for the view that education is primarily a means of passing on cultural values.

Since education must encompass all facets of a person's existence, Dr. Hussain does not support a singular, inflexible goal of education. His explanation of the idea—that it should "move between the two poles of the eternal and the temporal, between conviction and achievement"—is both insightful and well-crafted. At the University of Jammu & Kashmir convocation on October 22, 1962, he reiterates in his own unique style the following: "I have said repeatedly and the repetition will not embarrass me until I am convinced that it is unnecessary; the purpose of education is to establish a living and fruitful relationship between the growing mind and the cultural goods - the articles of daily use, the social forms, the aesthetic, literary, and technical achievements, philosophy, and religion - which are the product, the embodiments of minds that have built up its environments, and those for whom these achievements provide a means of understanding, a drive for further creation, a path to fulfilment, and self-realization. Because no two people are alike in terms of aptitude and taste, no two cultural commodities are equally appealing or meaningful to everyone. Not everyone's mental health falls neatly into a single box. Accordingly, "all that matters in education is a harmony between comprehensiveness of aims and precision of methods" (Vij, 1970).

Dr. Zakir Hussain firmly believes that the quality of each individual's character should be the primary focus of any education that is truly worthwhile, regardless of the purpose of education. If a teacher is only interested in imparting information to their students and doesn't care about how that information affects their students' lives, he or she is not an educator, he or she claims. Social and political structures hold some sway over him, but he values individuals above everything else (Saiyidian, 1966). According to Zakir Hussain, the purpose of education is to shape individuals into something better. Each person's role and significance in a society dictate the educational goals (Salamatullah, 2004).

Curriculum

It was not Dr. Zakir Hussain's intention for all students to take the same course of study. "To shape an educational ideal and think it valid for everyone is an entirely fruitless endeavour," he declared. A democratic society aims to develop each person's aptitudes to achieve full autonomy and ethical freedom, as stated in the 1963 Convocation Address.

Everyone should be fluent in their own language as well as one or two additional Indian or foreign languages, according to Zakir Hussain. Because social science provides the "essence" of a phenomenon—the "what," "how," "whence," and "why" of everything—while natural science explains the substance of a phenomenon, students of both fields would benefit from acquiring a basic understanding of the other. He emphasises the importance of "science with ethics" and states that scientific universities aim to produce well-rounded individuals, not just engineers and technologists. If an engineer can build machines, he should also have the ability to appreciate outstanding literature, poetry, and human connection. Mathematics should be a part of a child's education because it is important for them to learn how to quickly

and easily handle common numerical and geometrical issues that come up in their work, at home, and in society. Kids need to learn about accounting and commercial practices.

Teaching in one's native language, according to Zakir Hussain, is where it all begins. He encouraged students' healthy development through games and physical exercise. School programs that include music and dance can help students learn to work together in rhythm and harmony. Art activities like drawing and painting help kids hone their observational skills and learn to distinguish between different shapes and colours. According to Paul (1960: 960), Dr. Zakir Hussain argued for an ethically oriented curriculum that emphasises character development, humanism, and morality.

Role of Teacher

The late Dr. Hussain was also an educator. A good teacher, in his view, is someone who is motivated by an intense, irresistible desire to witness the blossoming of human personalities around them (Salamatullah, 1999). He exemplified virtue and had profound understanding. "On May 15, 1936, Dr. Zakir Hussain gave a radio address in which he praised an excellent educator. This speech, because of its profound content and oratory, is in a league of its own among literary masterpieces. Motivating quotations have emerged from a number of its works. For instance, the title page of a teacher's life book features the topic of love, not facts and figures. He cares deeply about people, about society's ideals, and about the young souls who will carry these principles into adulthood. As much as possible, in the way that works best for them, a teacher will assist students in developing these qualities. This performance fulfills his spirit and pleases his heart. Zakir Hussain's educational philosophy included Plato's focus on instructors' need for self-training. A teacher, he came to understand, must first strive to be a "good teacher" before he can earn the right to instruct students; in the process, he must always keep in mind that he is still learning. He wholeheartedly believed and lived by the idea that only proper education can liberate one from mental slavery and make their creative powers visible. That is the only surefire approach to foster creativity and originality, expand human understanding, and propel society forward.

Aside from coming up with the idea of education, Zakir Hussain was a living embodiment of the principles he advocated for. He never stopped striving to make a positive impact on his colleagues' lives by setting a favorable example himself (Salamatullah, 1999).³⁶ A skilled educator has the ability to see the big picture and take charge in order to gauge how education shapes a student's character. Dr. Zakir Hussain, a teacher at heart, exemplified the highest ideals of his profession and had profound insight into his work. He was a great scholar, with an insatiable appetite for information. Both the current sciences and the humanities were within his ken. He showed a strong affinity for Persian and Urdu literature during his time at Tibia College, Poona. He was a prolific writer in his own right, whose works in Urdu are like precious diamonds. His command of language and appreciation of literature were outstanding. To sum up, he exemplified the ideal teacher and possessed all the traits that are essential to the profession (Ragunath, 1981). In his role as an educator, Dr. Hussain has given us some really deep ideas about education. According to him, a teacher's primary responsibility is to ensure that each student develops to his or her fullest potential. The role of the educator is to create an atmosphere that encourages each student to reach his or her full potential.

Methods of Teaching

The Zakir Hussain committee study states that in order to keep talented students from leaving for greener pastures, educational institutions must meet certain standards. In order to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of highly qualified and competent educators, we need to find measures to elevate the standing of teachers (Patel, 1953). According to Zakir Hussain, "learning by doing" was the most important thing. His idea of action was both deeply spiritual and intellectual. Combining his own idea of "active education" with the academic parts borrowed from German educator George Kerchesteiner and the spiritual parts borrowed from Muslim mystics and Mahatma Gandhi, he arrived at this approach. According to him, education is the process by which a nation's spiritual and cultural values are passed down from one generation to another in such a way that they become deeply ingrained in the lives of the next. All parts of a nation's cultural heritage—its religion, ethics, science, art, etc.—incorporate these principles. Before assisting their students in doing the same, educators must experience these principles in their own work. Work is the only surefire way to put these principles into practice. Religion, then, can only come to fruition through empirical scientific study and art through creative expression" (Taneja, 1989). The project technique was implemented in primary

school, specifically at Jamia Millia. This approach was preferred by Dr. Hussain because it caters to children's cognitive and social growth. Because of his firm belief in the efficacy of the project approach to mental training, Zakir Hussain advocated for its widespread adoption in the field of education. With this guiding idea in mind, Jamia "a school of work" prioritised hands-on learning over theoretical study.

Discipline

A successful school, according to Dr. Zakir Hussain, is one that has clear goals and strict rules. However, we should not subject children to punishment. An appropriate balance between freedom and constraint is necessary. It needs to be something that the kid is interested in and enjoys. Every youngster needs to have their unique identity celebrated. Discipline should guide a learner along the appropriate path and ultimately arrive at the right destination. Freedom and authority, according to Dr. Zakir Hussain, are not mutually exclusive but rather complement one another. Since schooling does not acknowledge individual autonomy, the two must go hand in hand. The same holds true for the absence of order and regulation: freedom. Government does not imply coercion, and liberty does not mean caprice. "There is no autonomous personality having no principles; without regulative principles, society would be chaotic jumble" (Taneja, 1989), as put forward by Dr. Zakir Hussain. That is why Dr. Zakir Hussain pushed for self-control rather than external punishment. In an open and equitable setting, discipline must bring out his best traits.

Jamia Millia Islamia as Zakir Hussain's Laboratory

Because it was so isolated from Indian culture and focused on the "three Rs," Dr. Hussain was profoundly unhappy with the English educational system. The English system never fully integrated its graduates into Indian society, and their achievements had little to do with fulfilling their social duties. Dr. Zakir Hussain held the belief that authentic Indian education required a foundation in Indian culture and national character, as the English system failed to instruct individual market organizations on how to efficiently transport commodities and services to the right places at the right times. He did not believe in theories, but instead established and oversaw the operations of Jamia Millia Islamia, also known as the National Muslim University. According to K. G. Saiyadian, "It was national in the sense of being rooted in national culture and Muslim in the sense of drawing inspiration from Islamia thought." Dr. Hussain's intellectual imagination has yielded the finest result with this institution. Dr. Hussain has transformed this institution into a testing ground for innovative pedagogical tools and methods, having implemented numerous educational projects there. Teaching patriotism and cooperation, the institution sought to establish a national educational system. It laid the groundwork for adult education and basic education. Jamia's "life members" include Drs. Zakir and Abid Hussain, as well as M. Mujeeb. Considering Jamia's meagre means, Dr. Zakir Hussain and his dedicated companions toiled away for twenty years (1926–1946) on a stipend of little more than Rs. 200. Every brick at Jamia reflects the life, blood, and sweat of Dr. Zakir Hussain and his dedicated companions.

We present modern approaches here, such as Dewey's project method. Preschool instruction, the relationship approach, and democratic leadership were all fruitful attempts. In terms of the country's basic, adult, and rural education systems, Jamia Millia has done an outstanding job. It pioneered a culture of communal living and learning, promoted decentralisation of power, disseminated ideals, preached the importance of civic duty, and prepared students to be productive members of society. Jamia was his chance to put his theories about education to the test. The amalgamation of Eastern and Western knowledge took place here. We welcomed individuals from diverse faiths and ethnic backgrounds. There was a full and successful trial run of every educational innovation that had been considered, including the project method, communal living, citizenship training, integrated curriculum, etc. "Taneja (1989)" was cited. For nearly three decades, Dr. Hussain served as Vice Chancellor at this institution. Throughout this time, he was able to successfully carry out a number of experiments thanks to his visionary leadership and genuine personality traits, such as honesty, devotion, and devotion to the noble cause of education.

II. CONCLUSION

He devoted his entire life to being an outstanding educator, fighting for the rights of students and the principles of secularism. Educating the populace, and Muslims in particular, was one of his loftiest goals. He was so enamored with educators' goals that he did not want anything to detract from their quest for knowledge. There were points when he

deliberately avoided political involvement and instead vowed to devote himself to teaching. He once remarked that national education has the responsibility to protect national history. Just as a person's memory holds significance for them, education plays a crucial role for society. There are connections to both the past and the present. He believed that ignoring a nation's history puts its existence at risk, just as forgetting one's own history renders an individual's existence meaningless. We must ensure that it maintains its distinct characteristics and persists in actively participating in the global community. "Education should be the basic instrument of national purpose," says Dr. Zakir Hussain. The English educational system, in his view, was heartless and inadequate for the country's demands. After authoring a report on basic education in 1937, he became a national icon in the field of education. Gandhiji frequently expressed his disapproval of the education system for young children in India. The Education Conference established Dr. Zakir Hussain as the head of a committee to develop a basic education plan based on its guidelines. Mahatma Gandhi also advocated for the development of a national education policy to meet the needs of the Indian people. As a result, a National Educational Conference in Wardha was convened in October 1937. Dr. Zakir Hussain was among those who received an invitation.

The Jamia and Gandhiji's Wardha Scheme were important in Dr. Zakir Hussain's rise to fame. Among his many appointments to educational commissions and organisations are those of the University Grants Commission, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the World University Service. He has also spoken at the commencement ceremonies of other prestigious educational institutions. "I wish that there was more education in our politics and less political education," he once said along those lines. "Jamia Millia should be the model of Islamic life," he said on November 17, 1946, during the Silver Jubilee celebration of Jamia Millia. Jamia should be able to provide accurate information about Islam to everyone who wants to learn about it. An educated man, he would remark, must have an optimistic view of cultural deities, or ultimate objective values. Beyond this, a man of education would have a wide perspective, be receptive to new ideas, strive for personal moral development, and be adaptable to both people and their surroundings.

He insisted throughout that education must be socially oriented and work toward satisfying social demands; otherwise, it will have failed in its goal of producing productive, socially apathetic adults. Solid education enriches each person's life and develops their spiritual potential. Learning new things is why people go to college. In conclusion, the educational work of Dr. Zakir Hussain is extensive and noteworthy. KC Saiyda outlined the Jamia's goals in his writings, which included establishing a community-based approach to living and learning, fostering student self-governance and preparing them for responsible citizenship, attracting students to art underrepresented in mainstream education, and, most importantly, instilling in both students and teachers a sense of idealism and a commitment to social and national service.

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