

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Alif Laila Book Bus Society** <aliflaila_lhr@hotmail.com>

Date: Aug 26, 2009 10:48 AM

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: ismat Riaz <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>, "Dr.Baela" <itacec@gmail.com>, Zehra <nationalsecretariat@pcep.org>, educacyfoundation@hotmail.com, riaz.kamlani@thecitizensfoundation.org, fareeha-SAHE <fareehazaf@gmail.com>

Thank you Ismat ji, for forwarding this lively yet enlightened debate encompassing many ills that ail our system

I am going back to earlier part of this debate, the boxed lines are from NEP 2009, please note the highlighted lines.

Apart from infusing Islamic and religious teachings in the curriculum, wherever appropriate, Islamiyat is being taught as a compulsory core subject from Early Childhood Education to Higher Secondary School levels extending up to graduation in all general and professional institutions so as to create a tolerant and peace loving society with vision of finding solutions to the real life problems through the teachings of Holy Qura'an and Sunnah. To further augment Islamic teachings, Advanced Islamic Studies has also been introduced at Grades IX-X and XI-XII as an elective subject.

Policy Actions:

1. The objectives of teaching of Islamiyat shall be to ensure that all Muslim children are provided opportunities to learn understand and apply the fundamental principles of Islam in their lives with the purpose of reformation and development of the society on the principles of the Qura'an and Sunnah

Should you believe this?

It seems these decisions of *infusing Islamic and religious teachings* are fairly arbitrary (speaking morally, not statistically) and unpredictable, since the decision processes are driven by goals of multiple government agencies (as is evident from the *quick* contemporaneous response to Russian invasion in the seventies and eighties by opening Dini Madrassas all over Pakistan with the foreign financial support and the subsequent country's religious parties -punctuated governance and politics)

And to believe we will reform society through teaching Islmiyat...Our Prophet PBUH laid the ultimate truth when he PBHH said the society based on Kufr can be sustained but not when there is injustice in it. Each decade in Pakistan brings new sets of inequities (not to mention NROs- how to reconcile teaching Islamiyat with this reality) while strengthening the already existing.

Education is supposed to be the great equalizer.

You are right when you say that we have very little time left in our hands.

A smart non-partisan plan designed to our needs and situation, cutting across all political and ideological agendas, duly taking account the regional realities, designed and implemented on emergency basis, is a way forward.

Thank you again.

Rabia

Pakistan Coalition for Education

Date: Tue, 25 Aug 2009 21:30:33 -0700

From: ismatriaz@yahoo.com

Subject: FW: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: itacec@gmail.com; aliflaila_lhr@hotmail.com; nationalsecretariat@pcep.org; educaacyfoundation@hotmail.com; riaz.kamlani@thecitizensfoundation.org; fareehazaf@gmail.com

--- On Tue, 8/25/09, Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>

Subject: FW: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: "RIAZ iSMAT" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2009, 7:11 PM

From: professorsiraj@hotmail.com

To: ilyasjans@yahoo.com; ismatriaz@yahoo.com

CC: shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

Date: Tue, 25 Aug 2009 20:19:44 -0400

Dear Mrs. Ismat Riaz and Ilyas Khan, Please forgive the misprint earlier.

Allow me to facilitate both of you on a very useful dicussion on education in Pakistan. May I have the liberty to attempt summarizing the major problems of education in Pakistan based on our exchange of thoughts and let you evolve the solutions.

1. The lack of will on the part of the rulers since 1948 that include politicians, generals and the bureaucrats whose own children are admitted to expensive elitist schools but for the common man they only give lip service.

2. The absence of universal basic education in Pakistan. Only half of the children (6.4 Million) between the age of 5-9 have schools to go to. What is the fate of the

50% out of school children is not the concern of our governments, hence the rising poverty, crime, violence, extremism and terrorism.

3. The Financial Issue, Corruption and inefficiency. Minimal allocation of 2.2 % of GDP as against the minimum recommendation of 4 % by United Nation. 80 % of the allocated funds for education are not used but returned to finance department in the month of April every year. Most of the 20 % known to be used are imbazzled resulting in 30,000 Ghost Schools drawing funds reported by Consumers Rights Commission of Pakistan in 2006. No accountability of those involved so far.

4. Poor Quality education. This particularly refers to non-elitist schools in the public sector and some in the private sector opened for business and not service. The reasons for this are as follows:

a) Poor quality of head teachers/principals. They are mostly not trained in administration, unaware of modern development in education and their appointments are based on seniority plus favoritism and not on their aptitude for this highly challenging job.

b) Poor quality of teachers due to low status of teachers, poor and highly unattractive service conditions of teachers that do not attract talent, lack of pre-service and in-service teachers training, outdated teachers training, absence of accountability for their performance, automatic promotions on seniority, lack of incentives and recognition for better performance and their selection on favoritism and nepotism and not on merit.

c) Outdated Curriculum. National Objectives of Education are general. They need to be translated in to more specific objectives for all levels of education i.e. primary, secondary, higher secondary, graduate, professional and postgraduate education, to be meaningful for conversion into learning content or syllabi. Objective based learning resources are absent or of poor quality. Locally authored text books are substandard. Imported books are excellent but expensive and are not used. Libraries in schools hardly ever exist, computers are not there, Extracurricular activities that are essential for holistic education to develop character and personality are missing.

d) Out dated methods of teaching/learning relying on passive transfer of information through lectures or dictation of notes tuned to rote memorization are least likely to lead to mental growth for critical thinking, problem solving applied abilities and creativity.

e) Outdated system of exmnations held at long intervals with choices in the essay type question papers, entirely subjectively assessed, unjust, invalid and unreliable are dictating the methods and style of teaching and learning putting all reliance on selective memory work that has prevented any change in our system of education and must be outrightly rejected and replaced.

d) Poor participation of Parents and the Community in education of children perhaps partly due to unawareness of both but to a larger extend due to its neglect by the schools is contributory to the poor quality of education,

E) The lack of physical facilities in public sector schools as pointed out by several servays are deplorable.

Finally education must be openminded, holistic, encompassing all sources of knowledge and free of all prejudices. I hope that I have not wasted your pressious time by saying something that you all know but wiyhout their solution no progress can be made to solve the problems of Pakistan.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely.

Siraj

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **ismat riaz** <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>

Date: Aug 25, 2009 10:20 AM

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>

Cc: Siraj Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>, Shahid Siddiqui <shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com>, Baela Jamil <itacec@gmail.com>, Beena Raza <beena.raza@gmail.com>, ateed riaz <ateed@imrooz.com>, Mubarak Ali <mubarakali21@yahoo.com>, Rabia <aliflaila_lhr@hotmail.com>, Amera Hamid <educacyfoundation@hotmail.com>, Zahra Ahmed <nationalsecretariat@pcep.org>, Mobeen Sheikh <mobydoc@hotmail.com>, abeera Sheikh <abeerasheikh@yahoo.com>, Umar Riaz <uariaz@gmail.com>, s.tariq@princeton.edu

Dear Ilyas Sahib

You have come up with some very valid points and you have not taken up my time. The whole point now is to widen debate and discussion on educational policy and our efforts should be for that - for too long our system has stagnated and and 'quick fixes' have not helped. For once and for all we must overhaul the system (my suggestion since the last 10 years at least) so that all aspects of education are uplifted at the same time for maximum benefit.

I have also suggested that an independent body of committed, honest, selfless Pakistani citizens should be given the task of effecting change and then diligently monitoring it. The Chief Minister makes these Task Forces on such and such matters but hardly any solid work gets done. The govt and NGOs both have their interests to protect so people from there do not sincerely wish the reform to take effect as they are also pressurised by

other bodies whose vested interests are at stake. There is also the aspect of not thinking the reform through - for example, universities are now adopting the 4 year B.A/B.Sc degree but the pedagogy is the same. The modules have been made but the thinking patterns are again not being tapped because teachers have not been trained to change their teaching styles.

Consequently, a massive effort has to be done to get anywhere and the further it deteriorates despite the interventions these days, the more difficult it will get to make effective reforms. We need an aggressive 5 year phased plan to accomplish something like this. It should also look 20 years ahead for what it wants to achieve for the progress of the country. Short term reforms are a waste of time, money and effort.

Very warm regards and best wishes to you

Ismat Riaz

--- On **Mon, 8/24/09**, Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: "ismat riaz" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>

Cc: "Siraj Ahmed" <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>, "Shahid Siddiqui" <shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com>

Date: Monday, August 24, 2009, 6:32 PM

Dear Ismat Riaz,

Thank you for your email again. Yes there is no comparison between any two phenomenon in the world but paradoxically there IS comparison everywhere . You cannot compare two flowers with each other on the one hand but on the other hand you can compare an flower with a thorn(and quite often this comaprison and contrast helps in broadening our horizens and understandings). And I think the difference between the two education systems we are discussing here is no sharper than the difference between a flower and a thorn. There are of course connections everywhere and the connections here are quite obvious. Our conditions may have more similarities with what Marx or Freire says but ironically it is the West where their ideologies/works have got the real audience and if we wish to know about and try to introduce their ideas in our education system, probably we would need to reach them through the 'western' medium. So no escape here. I would again say connecting 'rote-learning' with this phenomen (colonialism) is not entirely justified. How long should we live in and mourn the past? Rote learning has something

more to do with the overall culture of corruption, selfishness and incompetence that is prevailing in our country. The biggest issue that contributes to this phenomenon for me is the totally outdated evaluation/examination system which is certainly not based on 'western' model and the pathetic conditions in our educational institutions plus the miserable lot of the school teachers. Time and time again we blame our colonial past for our present problems. Of course history cannot be overlooked in finding out roots of problems in the present but living in history, keep on cursing it, and not moving on (like as you pointed out the West has moved on) is the curse we need to pay heed to. If they can impose their bad things on us at one point of time, why can we not take their good things at another point of time in history? However I understand your point that is that we should develop our own culture of research based on our own needs and requirements. I have to some extent read the books/articles of both Dr Shahid Siddiqui and Dr. Siraj (I read Dr. Siraj's book 'Quality Education' a few years ago and there were a few sections in it which were beyond me at that time! Dr. Siddiqui's recent book which is lying under my pillow even now and his articles in newspapers are quite eloquent and I love his style of presenting ideas, excellent work) and some from the AKU people (on reflective practices). I feel their works are very genuine and rooted in our problems. I wish we have some more like them. Genuine research on our own issues and coming up with our solutions to problems that we face is something that must always be welcome, but that does not in anyway mean some kind of chauvinistic blockage to every 'foreign/western' idea which I think is what some hardliners would like people to do. Of course I understand your point of view and I know what you want to convey has nothing to do with that kind of 'exclusivist' thinking. I fully agree with you that we have very little time left in our hands. We need to right the wrong that has been accumulated for years by the wrong policies of those who matter in our country. Keeping our eyes and ears and most of all our minds open to learning from anywhere (East or West or North or South) but holding on to the 'centre' is what is the need of the hour. Probably I took a lot of your precious time. Sorry for that!

Warm wishes and regards

Ilyas

--- On Sat, 8/22/09, ismat riaz <ismatriaz@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: ismat riaz <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: "Ilyas khan" <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>

Cc: "Siraj Ahmed" <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>, "Shahid Siddiqui" <shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com>

Date: Saturday, August 22, 2009, 11:46 PM

Dear Ilyas Sahib

I am not against accessing western research or its effects on teacher education in Pakistan but was trying to make this point that the standard of education is so low especially in educational provision in Pakistan whether they be students, teachers or administrators in schools and colleges. Just a small example that I was forwarded a journal article written by a teacher at Univ of Education, Lahore, in which the research had been to compare UK and Pakistan in terms of how the provinces were equal in number and how they were similar in provision of education. Firstly, there is no comparison between UK and Pakistan (as a Norwegian International Education expert critiqued my journal article when it was sent to him as a second referee). That's is what I meant that at present our understanding of this field is quite poor and the BA/BS B.Ed four year programme syllabus is entirely made up of books produced in the West i.e USA and UK.(All books being produced in Pakistan by AKU-IED and also, to name Professor Siraj and Shahid Siddiqui Sahib- these are genuine research based books on our conditions+ western educational literature).I hear that Universities who have taken it on the BS BEd are just making the students rote learn again - So, will conditions improve in the classroom??

I would like to contest your following staement:

'Reception model' and 'rote learning' cannot be attributed to 'western/English' education. We can see rote learning is more rampant in Urdu medium educational institutions than is probably the case with English medium institutions. So the problem is not the 'medium' it actually is the 'mode/type' of education that we provide and the overall culture of (incomptence, corruption and irresponsibility) our educational institutions that has reduced them to 'degree producing mills'

I am afraid my research fo my M.A thesis was on colonial education in the sub-continent and the findings revealed that it was the system of western education set up under Lord Macaulay that had rote learning as its basis and the lecture method of transmission as the pedagogy. We have continued to do that (now both in Urdu and English medium schools and made them just result orientated or performance based) although the West has moved on and people like John Dewey (USA) and others made a break to find better learning techniques. Why don't we apply Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" that may address our problems better or Karl Marx's theory. Their conditions reflect ours more than the West whose system was suited to their own conditions.

The debate, Sir, is not that 'Why should we not access what the West has to offer' but find ways and means to sit done and evolve what is suited to our NEEDS and not make the

mistake of using terms to show how well we know the educational literature (as is the case in Pakistan) but be able to get to the underlying meaning to adapt it. Pakistan has precious little time left to put its education on track and eliminate corruption and intellectual piracy with laws that will curtail all this. Only then will we succeed in our goals as a nation.

With best wishes for a prosperous Pakistan

Ismat Riaz

--- On Sat, 8/22/09, Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: "ismat riaz" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>

Cc: "Siraj Ahmed" <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>, "Shahid Siddiqui" <shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com>

Date: Saturday, August 22, 2009, 4:48 PM

Dear Ismat Riaz,

Thank you very much for your emails and for sending me your article and that photograph from the tribal areas. I agree with you, conditions on the ground in Pakistan are not ripe for the thorough application of many modern 'western' educational ideas including ideas from research in the field of teacher education. The reason being that unfortunately education has never been one of our top priorities resulting in a complete absence of necessary infrastructure for the adoption of modern educational theories and research. But just because we fail to provide for the needful in this vital area of our life, we cannot say we should not have 'access' to the 'western' educational ideas. Let me explain this point: one such idea which has been established in the field of educational psychology is that it is always good that the teacher pay individual attention to the problems of students. Now we know it is not easy for a Pakistani teacher to apply this concept in the classroom as he/she has to usually handle an overcrowded classroom where its extremely difficult to pay individual attention. But does this 'practical difficulty' in any way means that the teacher should not have 'access' to this 'western idea' of 'individual attention' just because it 'does not suit our conditions'? I dont think so. There are many educational ideas that we find difficult to apply in practical life, but this does not mean we should discard them for we must be cognisant of the 'potential value' that awareness about such ideas can bring to us. Your concern that Pakistani educational standards have fallen over the years also in no way lead to the conclusion that it is

the case because we have 'access' to western ideas. We must know what are the real causes of this overall deterioration. Lack of educational facilities/infrastructure should not be made a ground for denying our youth 'access' to modern 'western' research, rather efforts must be made to provide the necessary infrastructure to enable our educational system to catch up with the developed world.

'Reception model' and 'rote learning' cannot be attributed to 'western/English' education. We can see rote learning is more rampant in Urdu medium educational institutions than is probably the case with English medium institutions. So the problem is not the 'medium' it actually is the 'mode/type' of education that we provide and the overall culture of (incompetence, corruption and irresponsibility) our educational institutions that has reduced them to 'degree producing mills' instead of real centers of learning. Lack of political will and consequently the availability of resources is the real issue. As for the secular/religious debate, I wish to know how should teaching of sciences (and preparation of teachers for such subjects) such as physics, chemistry, biology and many social sciences be different in 'religious' education system from the one that is 'secular'? And let me clarify here 'religious studies' is very much there in the curriculum of even many 'secular' countries.

As for the 'lots' of books that are now 'written' in Pakistan according to 'our conditions' I hope they are genuine, a result of some real inspiration, research and creativity and I hope these authors acknowledge the original sources and not just 'write' their own books. I remember one professor in a university once handed me over a flash drive telling me 'Ilyas I have written most part of a book on educational psychology which is in this drive, kindly go through it, edit here and there and then I'll get it published and you would be a co-author with me'. When I went through his 'book' it was all copy and paste from the internet! Probably he was trying to 'adapt' from western sources. When you suggest 'adaptation' from western sources as far as research/knowledge in teacher education is concerned, I feel you talk on the 'tactical' level, in that you are right and actually this is what happens in reality! But for me the ultimate aims remain the same and I don't find much of a difference in the western or eastern concept of a 'competent, skillful, resourceful, honest, responsible' person that a teacher should be.

Regards

Muhammad Ilyas Khan

--- On **Fri, 8/21/09**, ismat riaz <ismatriaz@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: ismat riaz <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>
Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif
To: "Ilyas khan" <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>
Cc: "Siraj Ahmed" <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>, "Shahid Siddiqui" <shahidsiddiqui@yahoo.com>
Date: Friday, August 21, 2009, 9:08 PM

Dear Ilyas Sahib

Assalamo-alaikum

I just read your mail to Professor Siraj in which you ask:

So what is it that is 'harmful' about 'accessing' from western education in terms of Teacher education and how is it 'ironical' please?

My reply is:

Firstly, in the West systems are highly developed and teachers are educated (We cannot doubt the good standard of a teacher's own education before they acquire teacher training there) and then highly trained with no corners cut or corruption to get degrees and so forth. In Pakistan, the standard of education has fallen so much that our degrees are not recognised abroad any more. Most of the better intake into professions is taken up by Medicine and Engineering/MBA etc. Most of these do not opt for a career in teaching as used to be a norm some years back. There are economic imperatives in taking up teaching but that is fine too. One needs to earn. Unfortunately, the teacher cadre now suffers from our own down graded system of education. The books accessed on teacher education from the West are

- 1) In English and in educational terminology that the West has made into a discipline.(You will agree that understanding is crucial to application)
- 2) A lot of the new methodology is not suitable for Pakistan whose educational infrastructure is weak, and suffers from lack of resources (If you have power shortages, how can you use technology in the class?? etc)
- 3) Research in education in the West is constant and is applied to their System (Secular Schooling as opposed to Pakistan which focuses on religious education as part of education) as interventions. When some of that systemised infrastucture is not available in Pakistan, how can you just apply that in Pakistani classrooms and hope for the best? Some schools in Pakistan have tried to change according to Western research but the

teachers still use the reception model of teaching and learning, eventually where stuff is rote learned.

4) The ironic part is that Knowledge generation has been from the West in the last so many years and we have accessed that in Pakistan. No problem with that and we should continue to do so. However, where teacher education is concerned the scenario in Pakistan is different and unless we adapt western teacher education material to adjust to our conditions, change will be minimal. You train a teacher in the best Western books but when they find conditions in classrooms different, what do they do? Regress to their old ways.

An article of mine was published in a UK Journal "Improving Schools" and I am copying a sentence from there which explicates this point:-

Furthermore, this has made all schools autonomous in affecting change for themselves. A lot of borrowing from other countries' education systems takes place but issues in knowledge dissemination arise. Real change is not effected because as Fullan (2005: 10) explains: 'the *terms* travel well, but the underlying *conceptualization and thinking* do not.' For this reason most schools implement measures which are only skin deep and cannot be sustained, while ignoring the damage being caused to the learning potential of students.

Secondly, Pakistan has followed the pre-partition courses for PTC, CT and B.Ed for the past so many years and now needs to improve and bring in a curriculum for teacher education that will suit our conditions and combat the deficiencies in our system. Blind followin from the West will only delay the process. Abdullah Sadiq Sahib sent a photograph showing how an examination is taking place in the NWFP border areas. A lot of the African nations have also adpted the West's educational material but to suit their conditions.

A lot of books are now being written in Pakistan based on Western research methods on Pakistani education and, these should be accessed and read as Teacher training curriculum material, too.

I will attach later a number of my articles which might make my insight into all of this clearer.

Best regards to all

Ismat Riaz

--- On Fri, 8/21/09, Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Ilyas khan <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: "RIAZ iSMAT" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>, "Sirajuddin Ahmed" <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>

Cc: naeemsadiq@gmail.com, "Abdullah Sadiq" <asadiqr@gmail.com>, daudpota@gmail.com, ejaz@lums.edu.pk, itacec@gmail.com, basitb@lums.edu.pk, "Ahmad Iqbal" <driqbal@isb.paknet.com.pk>, aimal@void.co.jp, "Akmal" <akmal@usc.edu>, "Alaf Khan" <alafkhan1972@yahoo.com>, "Amjad Hussain" <aghaji@buckeye-express.com>, "Arshad Rehan" <arshadrehan@hotmail.com>, cymah80@hotmail.com, "Dr. AZIZ Salyani" <nargis@swiftmombasa.com>, "Dr. Ijaz Ijaz Ahsan" <drijaz@wol.net.pk>, "Dr. Abdulaziz Salyani" <abdul3sal@africaonline.co.ke>, "faridullah Dr" <farid_ullah@hotmail.com>, "Hidatullah Arbab" <huarbab@brain.net.pk>, "Iqbal Dental Surgeon" <driqbal7@gmail.com>, "Irrum Dr.Sher Muhammad" <sher@pes.comsats.net.pk>, "Mohammad Dr.Ishaq" <khyber50@yahoo.com>, "Mohammad Faiq" <teachereducator2003@yahoo.com>, "Muhammad Umar" <umarsas@hotmail.com>, muradali@invitation.sms.ac, "Murad Ali" <alisafi1@hotmail.com>, "Mushtaq Hussain Shah Bukhari The Educator" <mushtaq_h_shah@yahoo.com>, "Omair Siraj" <omair_siraj@hotmail.com>, "professornajib" <professornajib@yahoo.com>, "Ruhul Amin" <nasiramin78@yahoo.com>, "Shehzad Roy" <headoffice@zindagitrust.org>, "Shiraz" <shiraz@megaplus.com.pk>, "Tahir Mujib Dr." <fefacademy@hotmail.com>
Date: Friday, August 21, 2009, 3:49 PM

Dear Dr. Siraj,

I cannot agree more with whatever u have said on the issue. The real issue is our incapacity to dig out the 'spirit' from the 'body'. Of course it is the ultimate end of a long road of literalism spread through the self serving machinations of the forces who's interests lie in keeping our people ignorant and away from the real spirit of religion. 'Follow' and not 'think'(the recurrent message of Islam) is what these forces would wish our people do. This has turned Islam from a force of internationalism and humanitarianism to one of parochialism and brutal subjugation.

There is an interesting end to one reply to your email which is: *"The irony is that most of our teacher education curriculum is being accessed from books written for the western education systems. Will we find an answer there?"* Does this mean there is something wrong with taking something out of 'western' ideas? If 'yes' what is it that is wrong? Could those who would advise us against 'accessing western books/ideas' enlighten us, what harmful effects would this course bring us? I mean it would be great to know some of the 'western ideas' that have come/been coming into our 'Teacher Education' and are

potentially harmful to our national health. So could a few such 'ideas' be identified? Interestingly some of us also take pride in the fact that the West has actually taken many of their modern ideas from our great muslim scholars while at the same time take it as an 'irony' if we take some of 'those' ideas back! Some of the 'western ideas' that I know have been included in our Teacher Education courses are: Reward is better than punishment in bringing positive change in the child's behaviour, the teacher should be well-prepared before going into class, the teacher should understand the psycho-social position of the child before he is able to teach him, parents should be involved in the process of education, lessons should be properly developed, students should be treated with care and respect, they should be respected as thinking human beings not as statues or empty boxes, it is the responsibility of the state and the society to provide education to every child, the teacher should have sound knowledge of his subject, he/she should be a symbol of moral integrity, honesty and efficiency and most of all he/she should be a 'thinking, creative, rational individual' and that he/she should deal with educational issues in a pragmatic, scientific manner. These are but a few of 'western ideas' that I know about and I feel there is nothing wrong with any of them if we 'access' them. So what is it that is 'harmful' about 'accessing' from western education in terms of Teacher education and how is it 'ironical' please?

Regards

Ilyas Khan

--- On Tue, 8/18/09, Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>
Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif
To: "RIAZ iSMAT" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>
Cc: snqvi@hec.gov.pk, naeemsadiq@gmail.com, "Abdullah Sadiq" <asadiqr@gmail.com>, daudpota@gmail.com, ejaz@lums.edu.pk, itacec@gmail.com, basitb@lums.edu.pk, "Ahmad Iqbal" <driqbal@isb.paknet.com.pk>, aimal@void.co.jp, "Akmal" <akmal@usc.edu>, "Alaf Khan" <alafkhan1972@yahoo.com>, "Amjad Hussain" <aghaji@buckeye-express.com>, "Arshad Rehan" <arshadrehan@hotmail.com>, cymah80@hotmail.com, "Dr. AZIZ Salyani" <nargis@swiftmombasa.com>, "Dr. Ijaz Ijaz Ahsan" <drijaz@wol.net.pk>, "Dr. Abdulaziz Salyani" <abdul3sal@africaonline.co.ke>, "faridullah Dr" <farid_ullah@hotmail.com>, "Hidatullah Arbab" <huarbab@brain.net.pk>, "Iqbal Dental Surgeon" <driqbal7@gmail.com>, "Irrum Dr.Sher Muhammad" <sher@pes.comsats.net.pk>, "Mohammad Dr.Ishaq" <khyber50@yahoo.com>, "Mohammad Faiq" <teachereducator2003@yahoo.com>, "Muhammad Umar"

<umarsas@hotmail.com>, "Muhgammad Ilyas Khan" <ilyasjans@yahoo.com>, muradali@invitation.sms.ac, "Murad Ali" <alisafi1@hotmail.com>, "Mushtaq Hussain Shah Bukhari The Educator" <mushtaq_h_shah@yahoo.com>, "Omair Siraj" <omair_siraj@hotmail.com>, "professornajib" <professornajib@yahoo.com>, "Ruhul Amin" <nasiramin78@yahoo.com>, "Shehzad Roy" <headoffice@zindagitrust.org>, "Shiraz" <shiraz@megaplus.com.pk>, "Tahir Mujib Dr." <fefacademy@hotmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2009, 7:11 PM

Dear Mrs. Ismat Rtaz,

Thank you for your detailed letter on the place of religious teaching in education. I have my own thoughts on the subject which are based on certain beliefs that I have acquired over the years as follows:

- 1, I regard religion as a means to an end and not an end by itself. To my mind the end is achieving the pleasure of God that lies in serving the best and most beloved of his creation, the humanity, that involves adherence to human values and human rights. Basically all religions of the world teach the same but recommend different rituals to achieve the end.**
- 2. I believe that Islam teaches research in uncovering the secrets of a highly diverse universe that requires liberation of mind and uninhibited reasoning.**
- 3. God sent 124,000 prophets to earth with the holy books and miracles, some known and many more unknown, to convince the nonbelievers that there is one God the creator of Universe who is omnipotent, omnipresent, loving, forgiving, almighty and wise.**
- 4. I believe that reason is the basis of religion as expressed by the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in reply to Hazrat Ali, saying, " Knowledge is my capital, reason is the basis of my religion....."**
- 5. I believe that Islam (Quran) teaches peaceful co-existence with all other religions and does not approve of compulsions in matters of religion.**
- 6. I believe that Islam teaches equality, inclusiveness and pluralism.**
- 7. I believe that Islam delegates to members of the nations the authority to streamline their affairs for their own good.**

In view of the above beliefs based on reason I consider that Islam is a

progressive and inclusive religion and as a result there should be no objection to teaching the substance of all religions which promote human value and the welfare of humanity. I do not agree with the secular school who are against religion every where neither do I agree with the exclusiveness of the religious extremists. As you have mentioned both the schools exist in every country and every religious group. We must evolve our own system based on reason and free of the bias and the prejudices of the extremist religious groups as well as those of the secular groups.

I do not know when and how a consensus can be evolved on this issue. I always say God is the only uniting force for humanity. Unfortunately on such issues people get emotional and say good bye to reason. Pakistanis are a very emotional and unreasonable selfcentered people as obvious by the present price hike in food article completely defying the purpose of Ramzan.

**Wishing you a very happy Ramzan.
With warmest regards,
Yours sincerely
Siraj**

Date: Mon, 17 Aug 2009 10:03:00 -0700

From: ismatriaz@yahoo.com

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: professorsiraj@hotmail.com

CC: snaqvi@hec.gov.pk; naeemsadiq@gmail.com; asadiqr@gmail.com;

daudpota@gmail.com; ejaz@lums.edu.pk; itacec@gmail.com; basitb@lums.edu.pk

Dear Siraj Sahib

Thank you for your clarification. Since this is now an ongoing debate, let me introduce a couple of more ideas.

Firstly, there is a school of thought that firmly believes that religion should not be part of education in schools. The entire public education system of the UK and USA is based on this premise. Where religion is part of the curriculum, those schools are private and are called 'Faith' schools. The highest number of Faith schools in the UK are Catholic and others are Islamic such as the one run by Yusuf Islam in London. Ofcourse, missionary activity became an integral part of colonialism and thus faith schools were in large numbers in the Indian sub continent, and some of these still exist but they teach Islamiyat as per national curriculum requirements since the majority of students are Muslims. Christians are taught the Bible instead of Islamiyat.

Secondly, the tradition in Muslim countries rested on the madrassa (school in Arabic) and it imparted Islamic teachings/disciplines as well as subjects like Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, Mathematics and others - it was a mix of religious and secular subjects plus languages. You could rarely find people who understood less than three languages- Arabic, Persian, Turki and even Latin where the need arose.

Thirdly, in the case of Pakistan, it is felt that Islamic teachings must be taught along with modern subjects. As one scholar rightly pointed out that it is a case of 'grafting' i.e making Islamiyat a subject in itself and adding it on to, for example, O Levels which are a UK based curriculum. The other subjects perhaps may not be promoting the idea of a Divine reality and are divorced from the 'Truth' taught in the religious sense. The fact that Darwin's theory can be part of this curriculum is questionable as it was in the USA when the Christians opposed it and it became a part of a court hearing and so forth.

Fourthly, the argument would then be 'should religion be part of the educational curriculum or not?' My son categorically says that it should not be taught at all. According to him, it indoctrinates people into on particular mode of thought where everything is interpreted subjectively in the context of one religion. Secularly, everything is taught objectively from no particular standpoint. (I am not familiar with this perspective so cannot explicate further on this idea)

Finally, where do we stand vis a vis a Pakistan perspective? Science, Astrology, Astronomy, Geography, Historiography, Mathematics, Philosophy, Medicine, are all part of Islamic civilisation, too. Then what is the gap in the understanding of a modern, progressive thought process that will lead to an analytical and tolerant viewpoint in education.

The irony is that most of our teacher education curriculum is being accessed from books written for the western education systems. Will we find an answer there?

Warm regards to everyone

Ismat Riaz

--- On **Mon, 8/17/09**, Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>
Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif
To: "RIAZ iSMAT" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>
Cc: Date: Monday, August 17, 2009, 6:04 AM

Dear Mrs. Ismat Riaz,

I never suggested to remove Islamic studies but only proposed to make

them a part of broad based religious studies focusing on character building. This study should be made meaningful and implemented at school level. I also agree that Pakistan studies should be followed by Islamic history and history of the neighbouring countries and world at large. Historical events that convey a lesson must be high lighted in school education. I also agree with Abdullah Sahib that character cannot be built by sermons alone but must be supported by the role model of teachers, parents and the leaders in society. That is why I suggested a code of conduct for the teachers.

Regards.

Sincerely

Siraj

Date: Sat, 15 Aug 2009 22:15:02 -0700

From: ismatriaz@yahoo.com

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

To: professorsiraj@hotmail.com

CC: snaqvi@hec.gov.pk; naeemsadiq@gmail.com; asadiqr@gmail.com;

daudpota@gmail.com; ejaz@lums.edu.pk; itacec@gmail.com; basitb@lums.edu.pk

Dear Siraj Sahib

The issues are not controversial to the extent that what should be taught or not taught but HOW they should be learnt to become lifelong values which we, as Pakistanis, are rapidly forgetting in our lives. I am not the one that says that religious teaching should be compulsory, it is the Constitution of Pakistan which makes it mandatory and OUR education policies has a whole chapter given to it- instituting a rationale for the teaching of Islamic Studies to the Objectives Resolution and what should be the syllabus for it.

My take it that the Quran (for Muslims) and Bible (for Christians) and other minorities who have a value book should all be learnt by their followers as the Primary Source of value teaching in schools. We organise the syllabus in such a way that the same thing is repeated year after year and children get bored and inattentive. A simple translation and key points in a Surah and its relevance and practice in daily life is all that should be required for school leaving children- as academic terminology puts it - the whole or the sum of its parts? Partial and disconnected knowledge does not transform a person. Most children can read the Quran in Arabic but never get to know its meaning (even Islamiyat at school does not take care of this gap). How will these children practice Islam's essence and spirit? The rituals are taken care of and that's it - the sum of its part.

At least as educationists, we should be aware of these technicalities. Remove Islamiyat as a subject if you want but the Constitution will have to be changed. But, as long as the law is there, do not waste children's time by making them rote learn some religious aspects of Islam. As for Islamic History of the 11th/12th century when the Muslims made great strides in innovations and knowledge is completely a gap in my education in Pakistan. I wish I had some role models in my schooling to motivate me to create and innovate in the tradition of the great Islamist scholars. The whole subject of Ophthalmology was initiated by Muslims (not Pakistanis,I guess!!), the concept of a hospital care to contain infectious

diseases was taken up in the Muslim world. Are our children aware of this?

Let's come to Pakistan Studies. Every country of the world studies its own history, its past achievements and failings. In Pakistan we study the same history content from Class 4 to university level. We ignore Primary Sources as reading material so that our children never get to know the "real or actual" root of what is dished out to them in tampered history books. My suggestion is to pick up the Quaid's speeches and just do that at B.A & M.A. level under Pakistan Studies. We have to make our archives strong for future generations. Today, a lot of the people say Pakistan should never have come into existence. So much for Pakistan Studies!!

Have we have gotten rid of Blasphemy Laws, Honour killings, women being married to the Quran, and taliban beheading our army officers and jawans? The problem is far deeper than just substituting Ethics for Islamiyat and so forth. We, as an Islamic state are sanctioning these uncivilised actions and nothing is being done to eradicate them.

We need to make our school children think and not make them parrots-the change for the better lies there.

Best wishes to all.

Kind regards

Ismat Riaz

--- On Sat, 8/15/09, Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Sirajuddin Ahmed <professorsiraj@hotmail.com>
Subject: RE: Recommendations fpor Mr Shahbaz Sharif
To: "RIAZ iSMAT" <ismatriaz@yahoo.com>, snaqvi@hec.gov.pk
Date: Saturday, August 15, 2009, 4:49 PM

Dear all,

Three issues contained in the recommendations of Mrs. Isamat Riaz for Shahbaz Sharif are controversial but I did not comment on them in my earlier communication. But since Ilyas Khan has raised the issue I would like to add my comments.

1. Islamic studies. To satisfy the needs of non-muslim students this subject should be called Religious Studies and all that is good for humanity in other religions to which Quran also refers should be taught in addition to Quran and Hadis for developing the values and character of all students. To go one step further we may even better label this subject as study of Ethics which will be acceptable even those belonging to the secular school or even agnostics and atheist who are covertly present all over Pakistan. After all Islam teaches equality, inclusiveness and pluralism that we must promote to liberate minds and create enlightened thinking.

2. Languages are a must means of communication that are best learnt in early childhood. Regional languages being mother tongue, Urdu being national language and English being international language must be taught from class one. Arabic and Persian can be taught as optional languages from class five.

3. Pakistan studies being another controversial subject should begin from class 5 as a part of history which should develop into history of the sub-continent and then Asia and finally world history as the child moves up the ladder up to class tenth.

4. Mathematics and Science subjects are most essential for developing intelligence and must start from class one and continue till class 12.

5. Agreed that at the end of tenth class every student must possess one productive/earning skill so that he/she can earn living if he/she decides not to continue education.

Professor Sirajuddin Ahmed

From: professorsiraj@hotmail.com

To: ismatriaz@yahoo.com; snaqvi@hec.gov.pk

Subject: RE: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif

Date: Thu, 13 Aug 2009 19:31:30 -0400

Dear Mrs. Ismat Riaz,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your excellent paper on Educational Reforms that mainly concern BASIC EDUCATION. I have the following comments that you may find useful:

1. Please share proposals on education with all the four provinces and the federal government to have a national consensus and uniformity.
2. Teachers play a central role in the implementation of any reforms. Today teachers are in general substandard, frustrated and irresponsible, predominantly, in the schools in **public sector**. Teaching profession is the last priority of the educated youth and does not attract the talent. How do we attract the best talent for teaching needs a serious consideration as follows:
 - a) New attractive working conditions for teachers must be laid down and offered to all new entrants' with enhanced pay scales and other benefits in the public sector schools matching those in the private sector.
 - b) Prior training and qualification in pedagogy must be compulsory for all new entrants to teaching as already stated.
 - c) In service training in pedagogy must be made compulsory.

- d) Recertification of teachers in pedagogy and their subjects every 3 years for new employees and every 5 years for the present employees should be introduced.
- e) A code of conduct for teachers should be made and implemented to enable teachers to play role models for students .
- f) teachers should be appointed for specific schools or districts and transfers to other schools or districts must be stopped to remove one cause of corruption.
- g) New teachers must be appointed on contract basis and renewal of their contracts and promotions of teachers must be performance based.
- h) Administrative cadre must be separated and given attractive service conditions. The performance of any school to a great extent depends on a competent head-teacher. Head teachers should be those with the aptitude for and be trained and qualified in administration.
- i) Schools should be made accountable to parents and the local community.

3. EXAMINATIONS. Type of Examinations dictate the content and style of teaching and learning. Present examinations dictate rote memory, promote guess work, do not provide frequent feedback to students and others concerned, are highly prone to corruption, are subjective, invalid and unreliable and are responsible for the gross deterioration in the education in the public sector schools.. Change to a modern system of objective examination being a mixture of continuous internal and annual external examinations is a must for which the present stock of teachers and educationists are not prepared and not trained. I believe that our educational standard will never improve at all levels unless the system of education is modernized.

4. The private sector and the government-employer partnerships should be allowed to continue and encouraged but regulated to prevent exploitation by the entrepreneurs. Private sector schools if encouraged will set a higher standard of education and will play a role model for the schools in Public Sector.

5. Schools in public sector are responsible for education of the majority or nearly of all the children of the poor and lower middle class. All efforts must be made to lift their quality and bring them at par with the private schools. This is the only way to initiate progress towards the mitigation of class system in education and consequently in the society. It is through quality education of the lower classes that we can reduce poverty and cut some of the roots of crime, religious extremism and terrorism.

6. Half the children (6.5 million) between the age of 5 to 9 years, in Pakistan, have no schools to go to. These out of school children loiter in the streets, resort to begging, addiction, crime or go to Dini Madrassas to become religious fanatic or Talibs. The religious extremists realized the role of education in the seventies and eighties and

opened Dini Madrassas all over Pakistan with the financial support of Saudis and America. They later used them for defeating the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The government of Pakistan must realize the role of education in defeating extremism and must double up the number of schools and make basic education compulsory and free.

7. The poor condition of schools in the public sector needs serious attention to provide all facilities that are badly lacking including facilities for indoor and outdoor games that play a very important role in development of personality and character of students.

8. Finances. The allocation of funds to education must be enhanced to 4-6 per cent of GDP. According to Federal Ministry of Education only 20 % of allocated funds are used. This situation needs to be rectified at both Provincial and Federal level so that one hundred per cent of allocated funds are used and also utilized through ensuring transparency, accountability and close monitoring by the Government and the community.

Yours sincerely,
Sirajuddin Ahmed
Former Principal
Khyber Medical College

Date: Sat, 8 Aug 2009 22:23:06 -0700
From: ismatriaz@yahoo.com
Subject: Recommendations for Mr Shahbaz Sharif
To: snaqvi@hec.gov.pk

Dear Sohail Sahab

I am forwarding these recommendations put together by me in May this year for Mr Shahbaz Sharif (in the hope that he'll take action). However, HEC plays a crucial role in handling the universities and this is where the staff for teaching comes from.

I have listed some improvements that might be made to the teaching and learning of Pakistan Studies and Islamiyat. It seems the 1st Aug Review of NEP on MOE website is again set in its old ways. Learning by heart and reproducing for examinations is making sure that students stay away from learning the actual underlying essence and spirit of the religion. Yes, Islamiyat be taught but in an innovative way as Egypt did in the 2000 when they revised their courses for Islamic teaching in their schools.

The same goes for Pakistan Studies because students dislike it and shun it as it is taught

in such a boring fashion - it can be made into a really interesting subject for students.

This attachment has some articles attached that throw light on the way we should approach education in our country.

Dr Munawar has so far not contacted me by e-mail.

I hope that you will pass this attachment to people in the education bureaucracy.

Thanking you

Kind regards

Ismat Riaz