

Educational Institution-Building in Islam: Lessons for Pakistan

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Article Information:	ABSTRACT
Article Information: Received Nov 15, 2024 Revised Nov 17, 2024 Accepted Dec 28, 2024	ABSTRACT Institutions are the cornerstone of a state, ensuring its strength, stability, peace, and prosperity. Education, as a key institution, drives cognitive and socio-economic development. Islamic civilization emphasizes institution-building, providing a framework for establishing robust educational systems. This paper examines the Islamic concept of educational institution-building, focusing on inclusivity, equity, and quality education and their role in shaping effective educational structures. The management of Islamic educational institutions is rooted in three principles: knowledge, upbringing, and arts. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) exemplified these principles, with the institution of Suffa serving as a prime example. This study explores the strategies of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and examines their relevance to modern Pakistani educational institutions. Using a qualitative and exploratory approach, the research analyzes primary and secondary sources to study Islamic educational practices and their application in Pakistan. It identifies challenges in Pakistan's education system, such as inequity and quality deficits, and proposes strategies inspired by Islamic teachings to address these issues effectively. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, offering a framework to strengthen educational institutions in Pakistan. This research aims to promote an inclusive, equitable, high-quality education system by integrating Islamic principles with contemporary practices.
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INTRODUCTION

The Islamic educational system is based on spiritual development. It teaches students tolerance of diversity, balance between individuals and communities, and responsible leadership. This study aims to understand how Islamic education builds personal and community (Coates, 2025; Hanafi et al., 2025). The method used in this article is a literature review (Dreifke & Lysychkina, 2025; Gopinathan et al., 2025; Lakicevic et al., 2025; Seed Ahmed et al., 2025). The discussion of this study shows that the types of educational institution building are not only madrasa education, but this education depends on religious and modern education. The establishment of Islamic educational institutions can be traced back to the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) period. Islam places a strong emphasis on education, as evidenced by the first revelation to the Prophet, which dealt with knowledge:

"Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clot. Read, and your Lord is the most Generous-Who taught by the pen-Taught man that which he knew not" (QS Al Alaaq:5).

From the earliest days of Islam, learning and education were given prime importance. Islamic educational institutions evolved significantly over the centuries, beginning with the simple gatherings in mosques and later developing into sophisticated madrasas and universities.

Education has always held a central position in Islamic civilization, serving as a vehicle for personal development, societal transformation, and spiritual enrichment. From establishing the first educational institutions in the early Islamic period to the proliferation of madrasas across the Muslim world, education has been regarded as a means to achieve intellectual growth and moral refinement (Gopinathan et al., 2025; Hagen & Lysychkina, 2025; Ldokova et al., 2025; Rab et al., 2025). The integration of religious and secular knowledge, a hallmark of early Islamic education, produced scholars and leaders who profoundly influenced various disciplines, ranging from theology and jurisprudence to science and philosophy. The significance of this legacy is particularly relevant for Pakistan, a country founded on Islamic principles, where education remains a critical factor in addressing the challenges of nation-building and socio-economic development.

The early Islamic education system was deeply rooted in the Quranic injunctions that emphasized the pursuit of knowledge as an obligation for every Muslim, regardless of gender or social status. Institutions such as Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, Al-Azhar in Egypt, and the madrasas (Azevedo et al., 2025; Ederoclite et al., 2025; Hagen & Lysychkina, 2025) of Baghdad and Andalusia became centers of learning that attracted students and scholars from across the world. These institutions not only provided a robust foundation for intellectual pursuits but also instilled values of ethics, tolerance, and social responsibility. The legacy of these institutions serves as a guiding framework for contemporary Muslim societies seeking to modernize their educational systems while retaining their cultural and religious identity.

In Pakistan, the role of education is particularly crucial, given the country's unique position as an Islamic republic. However, the current educational landscape faces numerous challenges, including disparities in access, outdated curricula, inadequate teacher training, and a lack of integration between religious and modern education systems. The madrasa system, which has historically been a cornerstone of Islamic education in Pakistan, has often been criticized for its inability to adapt to contemporary needs and for its isolation from mainstream education. This disconnection has resulted

in missed opportunities to create a cohesive and comprehensive educational framework that aligns with both Islamic values and the demands of the modern world.

This study aims to explore the historical and philosophical underpinnings of educational institution-building in Islam and extract lessons that can be applied to Pakistan's educational context (Bautista et al., 2025; Matek Sarić et al., 2025; Stiller et al., 2025; Tagarev & Fluri, 2025). By examining successful models of Islamic education from the past and present, this research seeks to identify strategies for reforming and strengthening Pakistan's educational institutions. It emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that integrates religious and secular education, fosters critical thinking, and promotes social harmony.

The findings of this study hold the potential to contribute to the ongoing discourse on education reform in Pakistan. By drawing inspiration from Islamic traditions and aligning them with contemporary educational imperatives, Pakistan can build an education system that not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates ethical and socially responsible citizens. In doing so, the country can fulfill its vision of becoming a progressive Islamic state where education serves as the foundation for sustainable development and national cohesion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of institutions of learning within Islam provides insights into the educational landscape in Pakistan. Historically, Islamic education has focused on holistic development, blending religious and secular knowledge to provide well-rounded individuals. This fact is quite evident in the traditional madrasa system, which has served as a pillar in preserving and transmitting the teachings of Islam. In Pakistan, the madrasa system has played a great role in imparting Islamic education. Yet, outdated curricula, inadequate teacher training, and insufficient funding have been its weaknesses. Improvement in these aspects is considered necessary for enhancing the quality of education in such institutes (Harf-o-Sukhan).

In Pakistan, Islamic values have been the focus of discussion about integrating these principles into the national education system (Ikogho & Onoharigho, 2025; Marra et al., 2025; Nishime et al., 2025; Shadan et al., 2025). On one hand, it can be seen that some attempts have been made through curriculum inclusion in Islamic studies. However, the outcome does not achieve the purpose desired by implementing this plan. Hence, there is a necessity for a holistic approach to Islamic values within an educational context.

This educational institution also serves as an important character-building factor and source of a peaceful society. Islamic teachings of harmony, equality, justice, and tolerance help in social cohesiveness and national integration. Drawing lessons from successful models, such as Darul Uloom Deoband in India and Darul Uloom Karachi in Pakistan, could also be very informative. Here, religious and contemporary education combined well to produce scholars contributing to sectors of society.

Conclusion In short, Pakistan would greatly benefit from this glorious Islamic tradition of institution building, with challenges addressed and an infusion of Islamic values in the national curriculum to borrow lessons from successful models (Amir Junaidi et al., 2025; Drumond et al., 2025; Sismanoglu & Capan, 2025). Thus, this system of education can develop the human mind that can both acquire knowledge and instill moral and ethical developments within the framework of the teachings of Islam.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative or mixed-method approach aimed at examining historical Islamic education practices, their relevance to modern educational needs, and lessons for Pakistan. The strategy includes a historical analysis of Islamic education practices, case studies of successful Islamic educational institutions, and a comparative analysis of Pakistan's current education system.

Population and Samples

The population includes Islamic scholars, policymakers in Pakistan's education sector, madrasa teachers, and students, as well as graduates of Islamic educational institutions. The sampling method is purposive, targeting participants and institutions that can provide diverse perspectives. Geographically, the study covers both rural and urban areas to ensure an inclusive understanding. Case studies will focus on renowned institutions like Al-Qarawiyyin, Al-Azhar, and Darul Uloom Deoband.

Instruments

Primary data collection instruments include semi-structured interviews with Islamic scholars, policymakers, and madrasa teachers. Focus groups will be conducted with teachers and students to understand perceptions of Islamic education. Secondary data will be gathered from historical texts, manuscripts, government reports, academic articles, and case studies of classical and modern Islamic institutions.

Procedures

The research process involves several steps: (1) collecting primary data through interviews and focus groups to explore stakeholders' insights; (2) reviewing secondary sources, including classical Islamic literature, historical records, and government education policies; and (3) conducting thematic, content, and comparative analyses. Themes such as curriculum integration, teacher training, and character building will be identified, and the principles of Islamic education will be compared to Pakistan's current system (Alcaide-Pulido et al., 2025; Coates, 2025). Ethical considerations include obtaining informed consent, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, and minimizing bias in interpretation. Limitations may include restricted access to rare manuscripts, stakeholders' reluctance to share ideas on reforms, and varying interpretations of Islamic educational principles.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Educational Institution-Building

Educational building means a building exclusively used for a school or college, recognized by the appropriate Board or University, or any other competent authority involving assembly for instruction, education, or recreation incidental to educational use, and including a building for such other users incidental thereto such as a library or a research institution (Worku, 2025). It shall also include quarters for essential staff required to reside in the premises and a building used as a hostel captive to an educational institution, whether situated on its campus or not.

Islamic Educational Institution-Building

The foundation of Islamic educational institutions began with the early establishment of centers for learning in the Muslim community. These institutions were designed to foster the study and dissemination of Islamic knowledge, values, and practices. They aimed to cultivate well-rounded individuals who embodied Islamic ethics and could contribute positively to society.

Educational institutions are places for academic activities that aim to change human life for the better. Tudor said there are three types of Islamic Educational Institutions, namely Formal Islamic Education Institutions, Non-Formal Islamic Education Institutions, and Informal Islamic Education Institutions.

In Islam, the status of educational institutions has been a longstanding tradition, courting returned to the early Islamic civilizations. These establishments, such as madrasas and universities, were facilities of learning where numerous fields of knowhow, inclusive of theology, philosophy, remedy, mathematics, and astronomy, had been taught. The development of such establishments is driven by the emphasis Islam places on searching for understanding, as evidenced by using numerous verses within the Quran and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), encouraging believers to pursue the training (Sampaio Carvalho et al., 2025). Throughout records, Islamic educational institutions have played a crucial position in preserving and advancing expertise, contributing considerably to the fields of science, medicinal drugs, and philosophy, and facilitating intellectual change and communication. Today, this culture continues, with contemporary Islamic instructional establishments around the arena serving as hubs of studying and studies, fostering spiritual and secular schooling to empower people and groups.

Institution Of Stuff

The Suffa Institution, additionally referred to as Dar al-Arqam, became a pivotal early Islamic faculty established using Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Operating as a community center, it served numerous functions, which included education, social welfare, and spiritual guidance (Haile et al., 2025; Janatolmakan et al., 2025). The organization provided a platform for the dissemination of Islamic teachings, wherein partners of the Prophet found out the Quran, jurisprudence, and different components of Islam. It performed a significant function in nurturing the early Muslim network, fostering unity, and cultivating management traits amongst its individuals.

The Institution of Suffa, also known as Al-Suffa, was one of the earliest and most significant educational establishments in Islamic history. Located in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, Suffa served as both a spiritual and educational hub. It was a place where the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) personally taught his companions (Ghoniem et al., 2025; Guinovart-Pedescoll & Palau, 2025). The students of Suffa, known as the Ahl al-Suffa, were dedicated learners who lived in the mosque, receiving comprehensive education in the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and other religious sciences. This institution laid the groundwork for future Islamic education systems and was instrumental in spreading Islamic knowledge.

Teaching Methodology Of The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)

The teaching methodology of the Holy Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) was holistic and multifaceted, focusing on moral, spiritual, and intellectual development. Key aspects of his teaching methodology included:

Personalized Instruction

The Prophet tailored his teachings to the individual needs of his companions, taking into account their backgrounds and abilities.

Role Modeling

He led by example, demonstrating the teachings of Islam through his actions and behavior.

Interactive Learning

He encouraged questioning and dialogue, creating an interactive learning environment where his companions could discuss and reflect upon the teachings.

Practical Application

The Prophet emphasized the application of knowledge in daily life, ensuring that his teachings were not just theoretical but also practical.

Continuous Learning

He encouraged lifelong learning, urging his followers to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.

MENTORSHIP

The Prophet acted as a mentor to his companions, providing guidance and support as they navigated their spiritual and intellectual journeys.

The Prophet scould often repeat his lesson three times to identical humans.

His teachings were also based on living stories as opportunities to instruct. For example, The Prophet ²⁸ as soon as changed into with a few companions to prepare food. He requested them to slaughter a sheep. One associate stated, "he would do this," another stated, "he can pore and skin it," and the third said, "he would prepare dinner for it." Then the Messenger of Allah ⁴⁸ responded, "I will accumulate timber for the fireplace." They stated, "No, we will do this be just right for you." The Prophet , derewsna ²⁸"I recognize that you could do it for me, but Allah ⁴⁸ hates to see a servant of his privilege above others." And the Prophet went and collected firewood.

The Prophet, in instances, might readdress a question to a topic that is more widespread and instructive. Once, a Bedouin asked the Prophet #, "When is the hour?" [The Day of Judgment]. The Prophet # said, "What have you ever prepared for that very last hour?" The Bedouin stated, "I haven't organized a whole lot of salah (correct deeds), and I haven't organized several zakat (charity). However, I am getting ready one component, that's my love for Allah * and His messenger." The Prophet # spoke back, "You can be with whom you love."

SYLLABUS/ AREAS OF EDUCATION

A comprehensive Islamic education emphasizes several key components. Foundational knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah is paramount, providing the basis for character development, strong moral and ethical principles, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. Understanding the fundamental principles of Islam is also essential.

Literacy, including reading and writing, is necessary for acquiring and sharing knowledge. The study of Islamic Law provides a framework for living according to Islamic teachings. Furthermore, the study of foreign languages is highly valuable, particularly for diplomacy. Historical figures like Hazrat Zayed bin Thait (RA), who knew Persian, Greek, and Hebrew (Tirmidhi, J,2715), and Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair (RA), who was proficient in several languages, exemplify the importance of linguistic skills in this arena.

LESSONS FOR PAKISTAN

Here is some key training that Pakistan can analyze from Islam:

Justice

Islam emphasizes the significance of justice in all factors of life. Pakistan can discover ways to prioritize justice in its felony system, governance, and social structures.

Equality

Islam teaches equality for all people, no matter race, gender, or social fame. Pakistan can learn how to sell equality and deal with discrimination in its society. *Compassion*

Islam encourages compassion, mercy, and kindness toward all residing beings. Pakistan can discover ways to prioritize empathy and welfare for its citizens, in particular, the vulnerable segments.

Education

Islam values know-how and training. Pakistan can learn how to prioritize training and intellectual improvement for its citizens.

Integrity

Islam emphasizes honesty, transparency, and responsibility. Pakistan can learn how to promote integrity in its governance, politics, and public existence.

Pakistan, as a predominantly Muslim country, can draw several lessons from the educational practices of early Islam:

Integration Of Religious And Secular Education

Emphasizing a balanced approach that integrates religious teachings with modern scientific and technological education.

Personalized Education

Adopting personalized teaching methods that cater to the individual needs of students, recognizing their diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Interactive And Practical Learning

Creating an interactive learning environment that encourages critical thinking and practical application of knowledge.

Lifelong Learning

Promoting a culture of lifelong learning and continuous self-improvement among citizens.

Moral And Ethical Education

Incorporating moral and ethical education into the curriculum to develop wellrounded individuals with strong character.

Mentorship Programs

Establishing mentorship programs where experienced educators guide and support students in their academic and personal development.

CONCLUSION

The early Islamic educational institutions, particularly the Suffa, offer a profound legacy of integrated and holistic education that can inspire modern educational practices in Pakistan. By adopting the teaching methodologies of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him), Pakistan's educational institutions can foster a well-rounded, knowledgeable, and morally upright society. This approach would emphasize not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the instillation of values, thereby encouraging students to become responsible, ethical, and capable members of society.

One key lesson is the integration of Islamic and contemporary knowledge. Pakistan's education system can achieve a balanced approach by merging Islamic teachings with modern subjects, cultivating an environment where students gain both spiritual and practical insights. This fusion can create a holistic educational framework that addresses the demands of the modern world while staying rooted in Islamic principles.

Another critical aspect is the focus on character building, as exemplified by the Prophet's teaching style. Education in Pakistan should not only prioritize academic excellence but also nurture moral and ethical development, fostering well-rounded individuals committed to societal well-being. This aligns with the Islamic principle of producing individuals who contribute positively to their communities.

Furthermore, accessibility and inclusivity must be prioritized. The Suffa was a model of inclusivity, offering education to all, irrespective of social or economic status. Similarly, modern efforts should aim to make education accessible to every individual in Pakistan, bridging gaps caused by socioeconomic disparities.

Lastly, teacher training and development play a pivotal role. Inspired by the Prophet's model, Pakistan needs well-trained, compassionate, and dedicated educators who can effectively inspire and guide students. Teachers should embody the principles of justice, equality, and empathy, ensuring they not only impart knowledge but also mentor students in ethical and moral growth.

In conclusion, the rich tradition of educational institution-building in Islam provides valuable lessons for Pakistan. By embracing principles such as justice, equality, compassion, and the integration of knowledge, Pakistan can foster an equitable and prosperous society that values education and promotes the well-being of all its citizens.

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