The Use Of Mass Media & Information Technology In Islamic Education

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Abstract: The extremely important function of transmitting religious beliefs and cultural values to younger generation, was performed by the parents, the elderly members of a family, by the educational institutions before the advent of technology. On the other hand, in this age of technology, cultural values, ideologies of life, and other important beliefs are constructed, regulated, and transferred to younger generation through the use of media. The role of parents' and teachers has diminished significantly in this regard. This is exactly the reason why the world is turning into a global village with the people of different cultures, religions, and countries professing remarkably similar ideologies of life, and lifestyle in general. The aim of this paper, is to explore and discuss the used 0f mass media as a tool to build an ideal Islamic society. Media enable us to have contact with other Muslims brothers all over the world. We can utilize the media to spread the true message of Islam, to preach and teach the Islamic doctrine of peace and love to one another, and to promote the SUNNAH of our beloved Prophet (PBUH). Also, modern technology can be used in educational institutions for effective teaching and learning Islamic values. Mass communication and information technology make it very easy for people to access information about any subject in the world. Different channels, magazines, and websites are providing great services in disseminating awareness about Islam. Consequently, this paper aimed at exploring the role played by mass media and information technology in preaching and teaching about Islam. Secondly, the paper would innovates the ideas about using media and technology creatively and effectively in educating people about Islam.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancement has changed our live style in various ways. Especially in underdeveloped countries, it has redefined the way of communication with each other. It has enabled us to communicate with people all over the world quickly and efficiently. It has changed our transmission and construction of our cultural values. Under these circumstances, the mode of preaching religious teachings has also undergone significant changes. The paper also aim at exploring the role played by mass media and information technology devices in teaching Islamic education. Also, the paper will offer useful innovative ideas about the outilization of the above mentioned technology in spreading the message of Islam. In the modern world, mass media have emerged as a significant tool for disseminating information, entertainment, and education to humanity. Education is not confined to educational institutes alone. It is an activity which never ceases in life. Education begins as soon as a child is born, he starts learning the language he/she is exposed to. Later on, the parents or elderly family member teach the child the religion and culture. Next, the child starts learning things from school, friends and so on.

However, the most influential way of injecting ideals and viewpoints into human brain is by imparting messages in an implicit and subliminal manner. This technique is widely used in today's media industry. Advertisements, news, stories, films, etc. may penetrate into the subconscious minds of the viewers and place opinions and views about significant issues. These views are like seeds which may later germinates when the right time comes. Also, when human mind is continuously and persistently bombarded with certain ideas, it eventually begins to accept them. The above mentioned potential of the media can be utilized in imparting knowledge about Islam, and to building more favorable opinion for our religion of

peace. Media can be used to spread the Islamic message all over the world, making it possible for everyone to learn Islam. This is a very important role in the modern world. For information, people today rely heavily on media, like,

Television channels, internet, online sources, etc. We can see that conventional schools are losing their value because of their outdated and traditional practices. In other to attract people to Islam, we must upgrade and update our techniques and practices. Along with the media, there is need to use information technology for this purposes. If these modern technologies are utilized, the following would be the result:

✓ "Both teachers and learners can work with one other at remote areas.
✓ The community of learners can expand to include virtually anyone who wishes to obtain information and who is not excluded by policy or cost.
✓ They can provide real access to experts in universities, research laboratories, the business community, government agencies and political offices.

Information technologies can restructure the educational process. To clarify things let us have a look at the definition of information technology. It "is any computer-based tool that people use to work with information and support the information and information processing needs of an organization. Information technologies are "set of tools that can help provide the right people with the right information at the right time. Fortunately, many of these modern technologies are already being used for educating masses about Islam. On the other hand, in the past, information was limited and confined to the elites but "the advent of printing enabled information to be truly widespread throughout the world, to move to a more equitable level in terms of access to knowledge.

II. IMPORTANT OF MASS MEDIA IN MODERN TEACHING DEVICES

Currently, print, audio, and electronic media are playing a significant role in informing the world about Islam. Television channels, like, "Peace TV" are providing an important service of clarifying the image of Islam and enlighten people about Islam. Given below is the list of some popular Islamic channels in the world.

✓ Sunnah TV, Hausa/English in 2007 by Jamaatu Izalatul bidah wa iqamatu sunnah in Nigeria.
✓ Al-wisal TV, is also founded in 19 march 2013,in Nigeria, most of the programs are in hausa language.
✓ Manara Television and Radio station, launched in Nigeria, led by sheikh Bala lau.
✓ Islam Channel English. It is the third Islamic television channel founded in December 2004 in the UK and available throughout UK and Western world.
✓ Noor TV, English\Urdu October 2006 Programs in approximately 70% Urdu, 20% English and 10% are based on Sufi principles of Sunni Muslim.
✓ Peace TV English/Urdu September 2007, owned by Zakir Naik In 2009, a separate Urdu language channel was also launched.
✓ IQRA TV, UK English\Urdu April 2009

✓ Hidayat TV, Urdu\English February 2009 Shia channel
✓ Ahlebait TV, Urdu\Farsi channel September 2009 Shia channel
✓ Ummah Channel English channel November 2009 Sunni Islamic teachings
✓ Takbeer TV, Urdu channel February 2010 Sultan Bahu Trust, based on Sufi principles of Sunni Islam.
✓ Muhammadiya TV/Napoleon English\Urdu Full launch TBA Micro channels broadcasting via Up & TV channel.
✓ Aalim online Islamic Channel launched in Pakistan by Jang group Geo news.
✓ ARY Islamic Channel in Pakistan
✓ QTV Islamic Channel in Pakistan

The number of Islamic channels is increasing dramatically which shows that viewership is increasing as the channels are offering an incredible service.

Internet is a wonderful medium for getting information about anything. It can be used to spread Islam. Websites can be designed where everyone can get the teachings of Islam according to their need. Hadith collections such as Sahih-Bukhari, Sahih-Muslim, Sunan Abu-Dawud, and Malik's al-Muwatta with their translation are available in many languages on the internet.

These Hadith collections have been arranged properly by topics. Collections are also available in many searchable formats. Collection of Fiqh books, answers of problems related to Islamic teachings.

III. MASS COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

Information technology has made it very easy for researchers to find and access Islamic literature and its teaching which is not available in specific areas or countries in any other form. In past, very limited literature was available mostly written by the local scholars or writers. But now the internet has made it very easy to find books on Islam, Islamic culture, and Islamic literature written by many well-known scholars of the world. Large collections of books are available in different formats such as pdf and online readable format, which can also be downloaded from the internet.

Hence, "the development of high performance computing and communication created new media such as the World Wide Web and virtual realities. In turn these new media enable new type of messages and experiences, such as interpersonal interactions in immersive synthetic environments lead to the formation of virtual communities. The innovative kinds of pedagogy empowered by these merging media and experiences promoted the opportunities of distance education and at present virtual education and eliminated the barriers of distance and time.

New and innovative learning experiences would be enhanced and encouraged by these technologies, as by virtual communities, which exist by interactions across the globe through global network of computers round the clock. The global sharing of experiences would make possible the group presentation form of instruction in distance education. Distance education encompasses and relies on the use of information technologies to make learning more productive

and more individualized, to give instruction a more scientific base and make it appropriate and more effective, learning more immediate and access to resources more equal. These remarkable aspects can expand the quality and quantity of instructional resource. Information technology has changed the educational process by offering alternatives to the teacher, by providing information, access to unlimited resources and opportunities for true communication, collaboration and competition. The pattern for this educational process is described as,

- ✓ developing awareness – recognizing that something is wrong or different;
- ✓ exploring alternative–researching for new ideas from other institutions and acknowledging that change is needed;
- ✓ making a transition–leaving the old approaches behind (or dramatically changed);
- ✓ achieving integration-putting the pieces from the transition phase back together;
- ✓ To take action-putting new ideas into operation. Information technology has made it easy to attend Islamic classes without leaving home. People from different places can now attend the virtual classes. Now the people who cannot afford to travel and especially women who cannot go outside for Islamic education, they can attend virtual classes and lectures from their houses. People can get any information related to their need just in seconds. Information Technology has also made it possible to carry Quran and Hadith with us everywhere at any time. Downloadable version of Quran, Du'aen, and Hadith and many other Islamic software are available in video, audio, and text formats for mobile phones, computers, and other hand carry devices. These software are free of cost and available on internet and can be installed in phones and computers just in seconds. Information technology can help those Muslims who are living in non- Muslim areas where they cannot have hard copy of Quran or other Islamic material tremendously. Adhan (Calling for Prayer) software can also be downloaded in mobiles and computers. This is especially useful in such areas where it is not allowed to call Adhan on loud speakers. Direction of the Qibla can also be found by using the Islamic software's such as Islamic Finder or compass.

IV. ISLAMIC SOFTWARE AND APPLICATIONS

It would be better to introduce some Islamic Software and its applications. This collection has importance in some ways. Due to busy life the need of Islamic knowledge regarding books and articles in digital media is recognized over the world. We could take advantage of Technology to develop software of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic books, Articles, Calendar, Zakat, Timings of prayer etc.

Secondly, if anybody has problem in searching Islamic application and recognize that software is spam or fake. This collection will help all those who are in search of Islamic software or application and they will also get the applications on one platform. Muslim should make their religious software and applications to achieve their responsibility by their own to

protect their religious activities form confusion. As well as this study also helps the software developers to get different ideas to develop other software in various fields.

This study gathers very few software made on several applications list is attached on Annex 1:

V. INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR THE USAGE OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Media and information technology has immeasurable potential. Following are a few suggestions about their usage:

TELEVISION CHANNELS

One important thing to consider and understand as a Muslim is that the job of Islamic education should not be confined to Islamic channels only. In fact, all other national (private and government) channels in all Muslim countries should play their role in this regard. Islamic programs, game shows, plays, and talk shows should be produced and aired on entertainment and family channels as such channels attract more viewers than outright Islamic channels. In addition, game shows and dramas are easier an effective ways for teaching and indoctrinating people. An interesting technique would be to have animation films and series made on Islamic issues and topics to educate children at a very early age. We see that Hindus have already made this effort by making cartoon films on their gods Ganesh and Lord Shiva. Also, movies and daily soaps should be made on the stories of Islamic heroes, like, Salahuddin Ayubi, etc to inspire and attract people towards Islam. This effort will certainly create a society better educated in Islamic values.

VI. PROVIDING OF WEBSITES IN THE AREA OF RESEARCHING ISLAMIC STUDIES

Islamic madrassas and schools should have websites with Islamic teachings and information for not just the people affiliated with them but for everyone. These websites should be maintained and updated regularly. Furthermore, our religious scholars should participate in blogging and become members of different social networking sites as this is the modern method of voicing one's opinions. They should build Islamic communities encouraging and inviting people from different parts of the world to become their members. Websites should be utilized in Islamic schools as well. There are plenty of Islamic websites,

Arabic language websites, etc which can be accessed in the classroom to broaden students' horizon.

Online practice exercises can be done to have variety and make classes more engaging.

VII. USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN SOME ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

It is important to encourage Islamic schools teachers to use modern technology. If we examine the benefits of information technology, we find that it can help in numerous ways.

As far as teaching is concerned information technology can help the following:

✓ Present the material in more interesting and attractive way.
✓ Guide and help students in searching the qualitative material.
✓ Make best use of time.
✓ Coach the students.
✓ Provide individualized instruction.
✓ Direct the students toward cooperative as well as collaborative learning activities.
✓ Prepare learning material for students, rather teaching in conventional situations.
✓ Diagnose the learning problem of students and help them to overcome.
✓ Solve the study problems of students."

The frequent use of information technology by the teachers will inspire students and make learning more interesting. The more the students get familiar with computers, the better the can utilize its potential for learning and developing intellectually. This as a whole will contribute greatly to change the general perception of Islamic schools in third world countries.

VIII. POWER POINT SLIDE SHOWS FOR TEACHING ISLAMIC STUDIES

Multimedia presentations also make teaching and learning more interesting. Power point slide shows have this amazing quality of allowing a speaker to stay focused. Likewise, they also secure maximum attention on the part of the student. Plus, teachers get the opportunity to engage all types of learners be they auditory, visual, etc. Not only should that teachers use slide shows or transparencies for teaching, but also students should be encouraged to make presentations using multimedia. This will enhance students' computer skills and make them more confident. They should be encouraged to use more visual aids to be more effective at communication.

IX. USE OF VIDEOS IN TEACHING ISLAMIC STUDIES

Video clips, documentaries, and other visual aids should occupy an important position in the teaching and the learning process. Teachers should use relevant video material and conduct a post viewing activity. Also, students should be given assignments and projects where they will be required to make informative video clips on different topics.

X. CONCLUSION

We can say that media can play a very vital role in the spread of Islamic teachings and education in the world.

Whereas, technology has made it quite easy for the people -living in different parts of the world- to access Islamic information, teachings, and literature. Information technology is making a very bright impact in the whole world especially by providing ways for teaching and getting education while sitting at home. Now all the Muslims and even non-Muslims can listen to talk shows of great scholars, can attend their lectures, classes and can even participate in such activities. Muslims have now realized the importance of media and technology and they are really working hard in these fields. It sounds like that in very near future we can be able to create a single platform where all Muslims from different parts of the world would able to discuss their problems and whatever information they would be looking for will be found there in. Hence, a little more effort for the spreading of Islam and its teaching using media and technology can take Islam arisen.

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