



Diversity, Education and Young People in Europe

5/7 February 2017

University College Arteveldehogeschool, Ghent/ Belgium

WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

*Rethinking Islamic Pedagogy within the
Context of Culturally and Religiously Diverse
Modern Europe*

Dr Abdullah Sahin
Reader in Islamic Education
Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit
Centre for Education Studies
Warwick University
a.sahin@warwick.ac.uk



Outline

- The rationale for rethinking 'Islamic Education' within cultural/ religious diversity of modern secular Europe
- A psycho-social research framework to explore religious life-world of Muslim young people in Europe (*Empirical Theology*)
- How do we discern the meaning of education in Islam? (*Educational hermeneutics as a method to reveal the theology of education in Islam*)
- Towards an '**empirically-grounded transformative model of Islamic Pedagogy**' capable of responding to the religious/spiritual needs of European Muslim children and enabling them to appreciate the diversity within Islam and develop competence for interfaith/intercultural dialogue
- The implications of the model for: *curriculum, teaching methods and training of Muslim educators and faith leaders.*

Why do we need to rethink 'Islamic Education'?



Historical and socio-political dynamics:

- European Muslim diaspora and the uncertainties of an inherited post-colonial world and the desire to re-create 'identity narratives' borrowed from parents' country of origin
- Increasing Islamophobia and hostile attitudes towards Islam/Muslims

Education Specific Challenges :



- *Limits of a transmission- instruction and teacher-centred Islamic education model:*
- Run by unqualified teaching staff some of whom may be expert religious scholars but operate without formal teacher training qualifications
- the content of teaching –the curriculum- often is organised around certain texts and does not aim to provide proper religious literacy to help students to contextualise their knowledge and understanding of Islam
- The knowledge of the wider world and 'the other' are often missing within the curriculum
- The assessment and monitoring concerning the process of nurture and faith development are often less visible.

IE in Secular Context



Can Islam be taught critically?

The challenges of Islamic-Ethos schooling

The future of Muslim theological training in western Europe

And

Is there a inherent contradiction between Islamic and secular perception of education?

A Psycho-Social Model of Exploring Religious Life-World of Muslim Young People



- Muslim Subjectivity Interview Schedule (MSIS) which includes:

*Sahin-Francis Attitude towards Islam scale
Self- Characterisation Sketch
Semi-Structured Identity Interviews*

- This model was applied in both Muslim minority (UK) and majority (Kuwait) contexts
(See: Sahin, 2014, *New Direction in Islamic Education: pedagogy and identity formation*)

Further Ref:

E. Erikson (1968/1982) & Marcia, J (1993)
Kelly, G (1957)PCP
Kegan, R (1982) etc.....

Components of Traditional Muslim Religiosity

W
WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

- Essential faith articles –(*Itiqad: Tawheed/Iman/Islam*)
- Worship (*Ibadaat*)
- Teachings informing Social interaction – (*Muamalaat*)
- Morality (*Aklaq/Adab*)

Erikson's Eight Stages of Identity development

W
WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

1. Trust v. Mistrust – *Infancy*
2. Autonomy v. Shame and Doubt – *Toddlerhood*
3. Initiative v. Guilt – *Preschoolers*
4. Industry v. Inferiority – *School Aged*
5. Identity v. Role Confusion – *Adolescence* 
6. Intimacy v. Isolation – *Early Adulthood*
7. Generativity v. Stagnation – *Middle Aged*
8. Integrity/ Wisdom v. Despair – *Maturity*



| <i>MODES OF RELIGIOUS SUBJECTIVITY</i> | | |
|--|----------------------|------------|
| Commitment | No-commitment | |
| Exploration | Achieved | Moratorium |
| No-exploration | Foreclosed | Diffused |

Note: for the criteria used to understand the psycho-social processes of commitment and exploration to determine the formation/resolution of specific religiosity modes see Sahin, 2014.



| THE APPLICATIONS OF MSIS WITH DIVERSE GROUPS OF BRITISH MUSLIM YOUTH AND FAITH LEADERS | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overwhelming presence of 'foreclosed religiosities' among British Muslim young people and diverse groups of Muslim faith leaders and teachers... • High positive attitude scores toward Islam • Foreclosed and Diffused Identity Modes are mostly observed strongly indicating vulnerability towards extremism and alienation • Growing inter-generational difference in understanding Islam • <u>Inadequate Islamic education provision at home, mosque, school and University ..(Sahin, 2014)</u> | |

Engaging with the core educational narrative of Islam

WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

- What is the connections between human nature and educational process?
- How does the Qur'an define human nature, faith and education ?
- Reflections on *nafs, fitarah, khuluq, hidayah and tarbiyyah*
- Discern the educational ideas, principles from the passages of the Qur'an and Hadith
- Qur'an as Divine curriculum: what are the implications?

Sahin's "cloud-grass theory of education' in Islam: Tarbiya as Islamic Paideia:

WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

- ".....However like in any genuine educational process, as distinct from indoctrination or mere training, there is a mutual balance and respect between the authority of educator and the autonomy of the learner.. Facilitating a growth process by looking after, nurturing and guiding those who are to be educated are central to the meaning of tarbiya."
- And:
- Based on this it can be easily deduced that an important feature of Islamic education is that it should facilitate growth by guiding and attending to the needs of the learner in the hope of bringing about a balanced faithful personality. As such according to the Qur'an possessing knowledge is not sufficient to be called a genuine educator (9:31,3:79,62:5-6)". (Sahin, 2014)
- The wholistic, integrative and transformative dimensions of the 'cloud-grass theory' of education are summarised in the next diagram:

Tarbiya as Transformative Islamic Paideia:

- Nurture critical-faithfulness and critical-openness (*ta’aruf*)
- Facilitate;
- contextualisation/ indigenisation of Islamic religious authority and
- emergence of authoritative/ authentic and meaningful European expressions of Islam



Conclusions and Ways Forward



- Consider the implications of the *reflective/transformative model* of Islamic Education for designing curriculum and improving pedagogic practice including :
 - Developing competence to *think educationally* about Islam.
 - Facilitate ‘research-based reflective practice’ within the community of practitioners in Islamic Education.
 - Through interdisciplinary research integrate the voices and experiences of the learners into the theory and practice of Islamic Education
- Work on developing Muslim Teacher Training programmes and Professional development pathways for the Muslim educators.



Encourage collaborations with other faith-based and wider mainstream Universities



Islamic Education: an interdisciplinary field of research and professional practice

See:

New MA in Religions, Society and Education
(*Islamic Education Pathway*) at Warwick University
For details of the programme see:
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ces/prospective/postgraduate/taught/islamiceducation>

References



Sahin, A. (2014) *New Directions in Islamic Education: Pedagogy and Identity Formation* (Markfield, Leicestershire: Kube-Academic).

Sahin, A (2016) 'Islam's Heritage of Critical Education: The Missing Catalyst in Addressing the Crisis informing Modern Muslim Presence', *The Muslim World Book Review*, Spring (36:3/6-20).

Sahin, A (2015) 'Critical Faithfulness: the heart of prophetic monotheism', MWBR, 35:4 (51-56).

<https://warwick.academia.edu/abdullahsahin>

Sahin A (2016) "Let's tap into Islam's heritage of critical education to defeat extremism in schools", *The Guardian*, 12/01/2016
(<http://gu.com/p/4fjzx/sbl>)



WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

- Sahin, A (2011) "The complex inheritance of first generation; identity, secularity and education", *Oasis*, V.6 No 12, pp.45-50
- Sahin, A (2011) "Islam, Secularity and the Culture of Critical Openness; a Muslim theological reflection", Y. Birt et al (eds) *British Secularism and Religion*, Kube, Leicestershire. pp.3-25

For different applications of Sahin's 'Muslim Subjectivity Research protocol' see:

- Khan, I (2015) *The Development of Leadership through Islamic Education: An Empirical Inquiry into 'Religiosity' and the styles of 'Educational Leadership' experienced by contemporary graduates of Muslim Institutes of Higher Education in the UK*, *Unpublished PhD Thesis University of Gloucestershire*.
- Mahmood, T (2013) *An Islamic Education Approach to Rehabilitation of Muslim Prisoners within the UK Penal System: An Empirical Case Study*, PhD Thesis University of Gloucestershire.