Human beings, as Peter J Mitchell avers, are born into the world knowing little, but having immense potential. Education is one of the major ways of unlocking these potentialities and of enabling individuals to develop their own skills and abilities and become capable of leading satisfying and worthwhile lives. Mitchell admits that everyone does not have similar gifts and some seems richly endowed than others. For this reason, an adequate education is not always easy to obtain. However, for most people education can open new life chances and offer fresh opportunities for self-betterment and improvement (Mitchell, 1997, p. 5).

Unaided education, undoubtedly, cannot achieve any of these goals. There are many other contributing factors, social, economic and personal, that have to be in place before they can be accomplished. It has been acknowledged by educators throughout the world that education serves a dual purpose, one for the individuals and one for society. Through proper education, an individual's potentials—physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and emotional are drawn out, cultivated, and developed. In this sense, Socrates referred to a teacher as a midwife because his or her role is to draw out something already innate in a child. Of course, what is drawn out and how soon depends very much on the skills and ability of the teacher.

Education also serves another important role, which is to transmit and transform the cultural values, and legacy of a particular society. Education is said to be playing a conservative role when it merely transmits the prevailing cultural values and beliefs from one generation to the next. It is also capable of playing a more radical role when it attempts to reform society. In general, education plays both a conservative and a radical role in the progress of civilization.
Prominent educationists categorize education into three types: informal, formal, and nonformal.

The home is the most important institution of informal education. In it, learning takes place in an unstructured and indirect manner. It is the first “school,” and the mother is the first “teacher.”

School is the most important institution of learning for formal education. In it, learning experiences are structured and organized systematically to achieve specific learning outcomes. In formal education, the school curriculum and the school teachers are very important facilitators of learning. In addition, learning occurs nonformally, which means that education is provided through institutions or organizations other than the formal school, for example, adult literacy classes.

Education covers a broad spectrum of issues. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Muslim Ummah have been consistently reminded and cautioned by its scholars that the state of its education seems to be the root of its problems and it’s needed to be Islamized.
Mahmoud Hamid Al Migdadi is of the view that Islamization of education “as a methodological foundation for cultural and social reform brings the Muslim world and Muslim intellectuals and political leaders to the step of second-stage of effective and comprehensive reforms to rebuild the Ummah’s life and institutions. At this stage, the central question is where to begin rebuilding — in the economic, political, scientific, or military sectors? Indeed in education lies the answer, and hence, Muslims should coordinate their efforts and establish their priorities, where education comes at the top” (Al Migdadi, 2011, p.13). Muslims should give much emphasis to the cause of education with a view to creating sound Muslim mentality and psychology and it will make them get hold of superior capabilities in all other fields (Abu Sulayman, 1999). Education is defined as a process in which we determine and extend this aptitude. According to Langgulung (2002), education covers three aspects:

a) Individual: Human is seen to have a bunch of potentials and abilities that are unknown either to the individual themselves or to others in general. Therefore, through the education process, all these potentials and abilities will be discovered and developed to benefit the individuals as well as the societies.

b) Society: Education is seen to play its role as an instrument to internalize and transmit the culture from one generation to another.
c) Interaction between individual and society: Education as a process of transaction between the individual and the society that is the development of potentials of the individuals will contribute to the betterment and improvement of the societies.

Islamic thinkers opine that if we are really going to achieve any consequential Islamization in the Muslim education, we need to expose what truly works. To seek it out, we need to have a comprehensible idea of the function of the teacher, the school, the home and the society in which we live in. To facilitate achieving the aims of Islamization of Education, we have got to make every effort to generate the mental, spiritual and physical Islamic atmosphere in our educational institutions motivating them to “enjoin the good and forbid the evil”.

With a view to unfolding the very heart of the Ummah’s crisis, Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman in The Crisis of the Muslim Mind exposes the present backwardness of the Ummah’s culture, its political degradation, and its human suffering. It is inevitable, Abu Sulayman argues, that such a backward and aimless existence should be of major concern to the spirit of the Muslim Ummah which has at all times represented the conscience of a pioneering and constructive people. It is thus natural that the Ummah seeks to reform, replenish, and revitalize itself. What Abu Sulayman intended by “reformation, renewal and revival is going a step forward from a mere process of Islamization of knowledge to a practical process of Islamization of education” (qtd in Al Migdadi, 2011, p. 15).

Abu Sulayman further opines that the meaning of Islamization is adherence to the fundamental values and purposes of Islam “by means of practical, sound, and realistic shura (consultation), and by educating the Ummah and the political base in the fundamentals of that adherence and its forthright ways” (Abu Sulayman, 1993, p. 33). Abu Sulayman’s spotlight on Islamizing education is unequivocal in his words when he said: If we ever expect to put the politics of the Ummah back on the right course, we must realize that the key to all this is the kind of education and upbringing that we provide for our youth (Abu Sulayman, 1993, p. 133).
As said by Abu Sulayman, the task that lies ahead of Muslims in the 21st Century is a dreadful one that entails them to fight, “not a military war, but an educational one”. Muslims involved in education need to arm themselves and the younger generation with the proper sources of knowledge. Relaying only on the Qur’an and the Sunnah, they can get hold of the tawheedic worldview, which will ultimately help them steer clear of the perplexity fashioned by secular knowledge. The proper orientation will assist them to live tranquil, balanced lives, and make them an asset to their own communities and the communities of others, like their forbearers …a single unitary path stemming from the vision of Islam and integrating all of man’s tendencies and activities into one integral surge toward Islamic self realization in History. (Abu Sulayman, 1993, p. 29)

Abu Sulayman, one of the founders of the International Islamic University in Malaysia (IIUM), put a profusion of stress on Islamizing education. In consequence of his great efforts, the Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human sciences where Islamized disciplines are taught in all departments was established in 1990. Later, Abu Sulayman shifted her attention from the university education in general to children education because of his credence in the importance of education as a major vehicle for instilling correct values, principles and fundamental Islamic concepts in students. Abu Sulayman averted that the sidelining of religion in schools was a precarious trend which leads to an inconsistency in the Islamic personality between what it claims and what it actually does or capable to do. This inconsistency can be corrected only by the right type of education (qtd in Moten, 2000).

Thus, Abu Sulayman continues, if Muslims want to change their current status; they have to direct their attention to education and children. He adds that the task before Muslim scholars is to reform the school system so that it imparts education laced with Revealed Knowledge and the methodology of behavioral sciences.
Abu Sulayman argues that the movement for Islamization of Knowledge has provided Muslim thinkers with the capabilities and potential for the reform of contemporary thought and methodology. It has identified and distinguished Islamic sources of knowledge and established a comprehensive, analytical and systematic methodology, free of timespace problems in dealing with historical and contemporary challenges. The ummah has succeeded in sowing the seed, but the fruits (political, economic, technological and all other contributions) are not coming: The seed – Islamization of Knowledge – once planted, needs to develop a robust trunk and a system of branches – the education (tarbiyah) system – which will bear the fruit of increased capability and progress (qtd in Moten, 2000).

Abu Sulayman sees Islamization of education as the Islamization of the Muslim child that will at the end of the day free them from a culture of fear and superstition and help them recapturing and reestablishing the spirit of tawheed (the oneness of Allah swt) along with istikhlafl (trusteeship). Islamization of education will bequeath them with the spirit of righteousness in altruistically attaining noble goals (islah), right knowledge (ma’rifah), and good as well as constructive development (taskhir and imran) (qtd in Moten, 2000).

There is no denying of the fact that Muslim educational pedagogy and the tarbiyah system requires methodical restructuring of the aqidah discourse with a deeper understanding of the nature and psychology of human being. It is time for the Muslims to go beyond the system of sermons and daydreaming. They are required to produce educational materials, tarbiyah directions and school textbooks as efforts to build a quality Muslim generation. It requires evolving a method of instilling values, principles and fundamental Islamic concepts appropriate to the mentality and level of development of the children. In all of this the example of the Prophet, Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, needs to be emulated. The correct starting place for Islamic education, according to Abu Sulayman, is not admonition and intimidation but caring and love as was done by the Prophet (sm). The education system should create men of strong character with sense of independence and self-reliance, those who are motivated to fulfill their mission in life with pride and the desire to excel (qtd in Moten, 2000). Abu Sulayman dreams that the Islamization of Education “should enliven our ideas, triangulate our views, and push our experiences forward” (qtd in Moten, 2000).
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