

The Educational Philosophy of Kant and Iqbal: A Comparative Study

**Ajaz Ahmad Telwani¹, Dr. Najmah Peerzada²,
Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Ganai³**

¹Research Scholar, Iqbal Institute of Culture and Philosophy, University of Kashmir.

²Asst. Prof., Department of Education, University of Kashmir.

³Asst. Prof. Iqbal Instt, of Culture and Philosophy, University of Kashmir.

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to compare the educational philosophies of two great philosophers namely, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) a German philosopher of the 18th century, and Allama Iqbal (1877-1938) 20th-century philosopher from the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Both came from two different periods with their respective social, cultural and educational background but occupy a unique place in their respective areas of influence in the modern, western, and eastern philosophical worlds. Kant's worldview and educational thought are based on the ideas of rationalists and empiricists. While Iqbal's educational ideas are based on idealism and spiritualism. Kant's philosophy is known as critical philosophy and is blended with experience and reason. While Iqbal's philosophy is based on the concept of self and is blended with oriental, western, and spiritual values. Both worked for the progress of humanity and considered education as the main weapon for the upliftment of the nation. They insisted that education should be imparted according to the needs of society. Kant believed that human beings are unique existence and need moral education but held the view that religion as a theology should not be taught to young people while on the other hand Iqbal also stresses moral education along with religious education. Hence through this paper, an attempt has been made to explore and analyze the educational philosophies of Kant and Iqbal and find out how much there are similarities and differences between them. The nature of the present research is qualitative and the researcher has analyzed both primary and secondary sources related to the theme through the approach of content analysis.

Introduction

A comparative study of different philosophies having different springs and sources of inspiration is self-rewarding even if they seem to represent the divergent interest and divergent points of view. As is the case with the philosophies of Kant and Iqbal deriving their inspiration from two different religions and cultures. However, both occupy a unique place in their respective area of influence in modern philosophical thought and had a common fiber of love for solving the metaphysical problems of philosophy. Both the visionary faced different controversies but their common aspirations were aimed at one objective i.e., freedom from political slavery, the emancipation of the masses through moral education, and prosperity of the nation through scientific and technological advancement. Kant as a critical rationalist is a representative of the Western climate of thought whereas Iqbal as a mystical intuitionist is a representative of Eastern predictions and presuppositions. Iqbal thinks that epistemology, metaphysics, morality, politics, etc. are

organically interlinked. Kant separates epistemology, metaphysics, morality, and politics and accords them into their respective jurisdiction. Thus, Iqbal's approach may be said to be synthetic while that of Kant is analytic. Kant sees the human being as a unique existence who needs education and the main task of education according to him is disciplined thinking, creation of a cultivated outlook, enhancement of civilization, and imparting moral rectitude while Iqbal's educational thought is based on the man, his nature and the development of moral individuality in the social milieu.

Statement of the Problem

“The Educational Philosophy of Kant and Iqbal: A Comparative Study.”

Research Objectives and Methodology

1. To study the Educational Philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Allama Iqbal.
2. To compare the Educational Philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Allama Iqbal.

Keeping in view the importance, excellence, and relevance of the educational philosophies of Kant and Iqbal, the aim of the present research is to bring out their experience, contribution, and methodology in a methodological form. The nature of the present problem is philosophical as well as historical. The researcher has used a comparative analytical approach while analyzing primary and secondary sources related to the educational ideas of these thinkers.

Kant's Educational Philosophy:

Kant's philosophy is the system of triad books which includes Critique of Pure Reason, Critique of Practical Reason, and Critique of Judgement. He believed that among the innumerable diversities in the world, man is the only creature who needs education because education helps him to get superior over others. He further says that education includes nurture, discipline, instruction, and moral training and believes that nurture is the trending and feeding of the child. As per Kant's view, man can be a man only by education. He is educated by a man who is themselves educated. Through education, human nature would be improved and will be worthy to be called men. Kant believed that there are many germs undeveloped in man and it is only education that develops his innate capacities and also fulfills his destiny. He further says education is an art and it should bring absolute perfection and advances towards its destiny. Kant's thoughts concerning education are related closely to his nature. He thinks that there isn't wickedness in the person's nature. As a person, there are only good seeds and this goodness can improve with education. For him, the entire kindness source at the World is education. There is no badness in a person's nature. The only reason for badness is not taking it under control and not giving a direction based on good educational principles (Kant, 1954). Kant sees a person as an existence that needs education. And it is education that differentiates the person from animals. He further says that human beings have a wise existence and are the product of technical information and have the potential to be successful and determine the direction of actions, draw a map before acting. In this respect, Kant thinks that education should develop a person's natural and ethical abilities to make him a rational being (Bayrak, 2015).

Kant separates education into two physical and moral education. For him, physical education refers to that type of training that consists of tending and feeding the child i.e., rearing a child which is the work of parents or nurses. Kant under the influence of Rousseau holds that children should be reared naturally and an artificial environment should not be used as the child becomes dependent on those instruments. Regarding the problems of the child with certain defects, he advised that child should be accustomed to

exercising his body. A child should be trained to use his limbs and remedy the defects by keeping his body in a certain position. He also recommends certain exercises for the development of strength and skill, quickness, and self-confidence. He suggests climbing mountains, running, jumping, lifting weight, wrestling, etc., and also suggests games like spinning, swinging, and kite-flying for the children to develop strength, endurance, and cheerfulness among the children.

Moral education:

Kant believed that morality is something sacred and sublime and it should not be placed in the rank of discipline. He considered character formation as an important aspect of morality and the main aim of education. Moral education makes a citizen valuable for a nation and a community. It gives value to his existence. The goal of moral education is to cultivate powers of reasoning so that one better apprehends what the moral law requires and one better knows what one is obliged to do given the exigencies of the case (Loosman, 2013). Kant's moral education emphasizes the primacy of reason, judgment, and decision-making. He believed that children should be trained to act according to maxims which are rules because the proper methods and strict adherence are of great importance in the formation of character. He firmly rejects the wickedness of a man and calls it evil despite his keeping promises. He suggests the child should be made aware of his duty towards himself and others to maintain the dignity of humanness at his level and towards others. Making clear Kant's moral philosophical thoughts, he concludes that a person's nature is neither good nor bad. When a person improves only moral law and task consciousness and has a mind, he becomes a moral existence. According to Kant, to be good from the point of morals is only possible through virtue. Virtue means to raise appropriate style as a will's natural tendency, obstructing material desires, and instead of volition, it develops good habits and principles that help us to get away from badness (Kant, 2007, p. 108). Kant doesn't seem adequate to teach a person only good manners. That's why the most important thing is to teach people how to think. To Kant, the person who is developing his thinking abilities can be in an action according to ethical laws. To him, the basic target of moral education is to develop autonomous and creative individuals who have reached moral maturity (Churton, 1960, P. 82).

Methods of Teaching:

The basic need concerning methodology according to Kant is to teach the children 'to think' and not to train them like animals. Learning to think can be best achieved through Socratic methods. Kant overcome the dogmatic sclerosis of methods and content of earlier philosophy and discovered his method of philosophical reflection i.e., the Transcendental-Critical method which made him one of the central figures in the philosophical world. The implications of this for education were indicated by Kant in his educational statements and also in the content of philosophy. Besides the Transcendental research method, Kant also focused on the use of other methods like observation, project method, inductive-deductive methods, etc.

Discipline:

Kant being an idealist and pietistic strongly advocates strict discipline in education because it prevents man from animal instincts and impulses and leads him towards humanity which is his appointed end. He stressed the use of discipline from an early stage and believed that lack of discipline leads us toward savagery. Thus, favors natural and moral punishment for controlling the child's bad activities. According to Kant when a person is enlightened in a good way, he gains to behave in an idealistic way.

Iqbal's Educational Philosophy:

Sir Mohammed Iqbal (1877-1938) occupies a unique position among contemporary Muslim thinkers and philosophers in utilizing theology, mysticism, and philosophy. He combines the best of materialism and spiritualism in his philosophy and exhorts the individuals to make full use of the physical aspect of education, which should aim at physical fitness of the body and acquisition of necessary body skills. Iqbal's educational philosophy reflects his general philosophy of life; his ideas about knowledge, man, and nature. Iqbal's concept of life and the universe was that of having a soul in motion. Motion or dynamism is the basic component of his philosophy. Iqbal's philosophy or thought is creative as well as synthesizing. It is creative in the sense that he showed a new direction to his period through his philosophy of Khudi and the theory of dynamism. It is synthesizing in the sense that, looking critically into the thoughts of the Eastern and Western philosophers in the light of his creative theory, he established harmony between them and gave his own opinions. Hence the core of Iqbal's educational theory puts greater emphasis on the complete harmonious development of individual personality. He believed that education should help an individual to attain complete manhood, so that all his powers may be developed to the fullest extent for his perfection as well as the perfection of the human society in which he was born.

Aims of Education:

Educational aims are primarily a phase of values. They are conscious or unconscious value judgments. These judgments involve thinking in Metaphysics and Epistemology. Educational aims take their roots in philosophy. Iqbal's philosophy is the philosophy of self. A weak person in Iqbal's philosophy will become easily suppressed by the powerful and it is the highest crime in the philosophy of Iqbal which appears in his high writings. In his view "a strong will in a strong body is the ethical ideal view of Islam." Criticizing the educational system of his times he says very emphatically:

I venture to say, that the present system of education in this country is not at all suited to us as a people. It is not true to our genius as a nation, it tends to produce an un-Muslim type of character, it is not determined by our national requirements, it breaks entirely with our past, and appears to proceed on the false assumption that the ideal of education is the training of human rather than human will.¹

The aim of Education, according to him, is to develop personality through activity, creativity, and originality, to prepare man for the conquest of the material forces of the Universe, and further the achievement of the spiritual heights of man. He viewed the cultivation of individuality as the highest goal of all social and educational efforts. For this valuable purpose, religious and moral education is essential.

Development of Moral character:

Constructing the good moral character of man was much emphasized in Iqbal's educational philosophy. Good character is one of the main elements or constituents of self-realization which is the result of education and training. Iqbal characterizes the moral point of view in individualistic and social terms. A principal or norm for Iqbal is moral only if it is chosen freely in the light of full facts of knowledge. For good character, man must possess three qualities to carry out the purpose of life which are described by Iqbal as courage, tolerance, and Faqr (humanity). Courage is the greatest attribute possessed by man which increases the strength for the constant struggle. No one can achieve greater results in life without courage. Iqbal emphasized that a courageous man can overcome and combat all obstacles and has no submission

¹Vahid, 1964. Educational Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal, p. 45

to forces of evil or desire to give an acceptance to conviction. Iqbal addresses the younger generation to live courageously so that they will become the best architects of their destiny. The second quality of a good character is tolerance. It is a very essential element for the development of dignity of the human beings. Iqbal also considered it an important ingredient of self-realization and also for the progress of society. Faqr is the third most important quality of good character in Iqbal's philosophy. He felt that man was confronted with a lot of problems due to developing a materialistic outlook and people think in terms of loss and profit which is referred to as statistical thinking. Such thinking is the main cause that the spirit in man turns into stone and loses its humanity. Therefore, Iqbal felt the need to reconstruct an educational system that will produce an ideal student i.e. (Mard-e-Momin) having such lofty characteristics. Iqbal's Mard-e-Momin detaches himself from material things and is always busy in search to learn higher values so that he could accomplish his vision by thwarting every attack of evil.

Development of Individuality:

Education should be ideologically oriented and according to Iqbal, education is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The end of education is Islamic ideology and culture. It is through education that culture perpetuates itself. Since every system of education consists of social ideals, norms, and values and is based on its specific culture, Iqbal exhorts us not to imitate other nations and says:

Seek not the bounty of the glass blowers of the West
Make your cups and goblets from the clay of India²

Education must instill those beliefs and ideals for which the nation stands. According to him culture and ideals of society should be the guiding factors of our education and wants to establish a balance between individualism and collectivism. He regards the development of individuality as a fundamental value but does not ignore at the same time the growth of social sense and collective responsibilities. Therefore, an ideal system of education will always aim at the establishment of a balance between the development of individuality and the social consciousness of the individual. He therefore very aptly remarks

The individual exists under his social contacts.
He is nothing without that association.
He is like a wave in the river and has no existence outside it³

His conception of individuality is therefore unique and is altogether different from the conception held by the traditionalists. The individual of his conception is a thoroughly community-minded man. Iqbal holds that life is reality its basic root is self and for its development man must first create the desire to struggle to achieve the knowledge to create a love for human welfare. Iqbal provides the opportunity for the spirit of man to test its power and potentialities so that he will become able to overcome his problems. A few quotations from his Urdu and Persian verses will suffice to prove his contention. Besides the above, Iqbal also stressed the development of creativity and preservation of culture as aims of education.

Methods of Teaching:

The method is a statement of the way the subject matter of an experience develops most effectively and conventionally. It is derived accordingly from observation of the course of experiences where there is no conscious distinction between personal attitude and the material dealing with it. Iqbal doesn't favor the

²Umar, 2006. Iqbal and Modern Era, p. 64

³ Beg, 1961. The Poet of the East: Life and works of Dr. Sir Mohammed Iqbal, p. 254.

traditional methods of teaching in which student is a passive listener but focused on those scientific methods which help in the development of creativity among the students. As he says:

Create Thy Own World, if Thou be among Living

Life is the Secret Essence of Adam, the Hidden Truth of Creation (Khalil, 2015; 178).

He supports methods of learning by doing and activity-based methods which reflects his scientific approach towards education and helps in the building up of the confidence and self-reliance among the learners. Again, he says

A static condition means death to those who are on the move, have gone ahead,

Those who lagged for a movement have been crushed (Iqbal, 1992, p. 146).

Direct experience or observation is the basis of all methods of teaching or instruction and the main function of the school is to provide an environment and improvise activities for learning through the use of their senses because the senses are the gateway to knowledge. According to Iqbal, observation and experience methods allow individuals to grasp multiple perspectives and introduction of new ways to approach the problems.

Discipline:

Discipline means power at command, and mastery of the resources available for carrying through the action. To know what one is to do and how to do it properly by the use of requisite ways means to be disciplined, whether we are thinking of an army or any mind. Iqbal believes in free but self-discipline which is not based on punishment and rewards but results from free, purposeful, and creative activities. He further says that the natural way of establishing such a discipline is to redirect the natural impulses of children through cooperative and socially approved norms for the development of latent powers of an individual. He further says that life cannot unfold all its possibilities, nor can the individual develop his latent powers except in an atmosphere of freedom that would allow him for doing experimentation with the environment.

Comparative analysis:

- Both Kant and Iqbal stressed the development of values among individuals through the process of education. According to them, life is a search for values, and success in life would be attained through the attainment of values. Both agreed that values cannot be understood only through logical reasoning and analysis but through intuitive processes also.
- Kant and Iqbal belong to two different cultures and represent two world views and value systems. Kant's world view and value system originated from the enlightenment thought of rationalism and empiricism while Iqbal's thought is based on Islamic traditions and Western philosophy.
- Both of them recognized the process of education would be effective only if the creative potentialities of individuals found opportunities for self-actualization
- The aim of education according to both was the development of morality. But Kant's morality is based on reason while Iqbal's views on morality are based on religion and reason. They also emphasized the intellectual and cultural development of individuals.
- Kant and Iqbal recognized the supreme importance of reason while theorizing about education
- Both of them emphasize the development of imagination among individuals through the process of education.

- Both the philosophers appreciate the use of scientific methods like project method, analytical, learning by doing methods, etc. However, they did not develop a systematic system of learning pedagogy but provided certain views on which an up-to-date methodology can be evolved.
- Both Kant and Iqbal are Idealists but Kant's Idealism i.e., Transcendental Idealism is unique and different from the thoughts of other Idealists.
- Both differed on the incorporation of religion in education. As Kant emphasized secular but moral education while Iqbal stressed the integration of religion in education for character development.

Conclusion

Kant and Iqbal are considered among the greatest philosophers in the world. Both belong to two different cultures and religions but occupy a unique place in the history of philosophy. Kant's philosophy is known as critical philosophy and is blended with experience and reason. While Iqbal's philosophy is based on the concept of self and is blended with oriental, western, and spiritual values. Both worked for the progress of humanity and considered education as the main weapon for the upliftment of the nation. They insisted that education should be imparted according to the needs of society. Both were against the outdated subjects and focus on the need for an activity-based curriculum and methodology. Both the visionary faced different controversies but their common goal was to awaken the nation through a purposeful educational system. Both the philosophers are categorized as idealists. Kant separates epistemology, metaphysics, morality, and politics and accords them into their respective jurisdiction. Iqbal thinks that epistemology, metaphysics, morality, politics, etc. are organically interlinked. Thus, Iqbal's approach may be said to be synthetic while that of Kant is analytic. Kant sees the human being as a unique existence who needs education and the main task of education according to him is disciplined thinking, creation of a cultivated outlook, enhancement of civilization, and imparting moral rectitude while Iqbal's educational thought is based on the man, his nature and the development of moral individuality in the social milieu. Both believed that education must give due consideration to the physical, social, moral, vocational, and spiritual aspects of life to develop a better educational system.

Bibliography

1. Ashraf, E. (2003). *A Critical Exposition of Iqbal's Philosophy*. New Delhi: Adam Publishers.
2. Bayrak, Y. (2015). Kant's view on education. *Procedia: Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 174(2015), 2713-2715.
3. Beg, A. A. (1961). *The poet of the East: Life, and Works of Dr. Sir Mohammed Iqbal*. Lahore: Khawar publication.
4. Churton, A. (1960). *Kant on Education*. Michigan: Dover Paperback.
5. Guyer, P. (2013). *Kant's Groundwork on the Metaphysics of Morals (Critical Essays)*. New York: Roman and Little Field Publishers.
6. Iqbal, S. M. (1992). *Kuliyat Iqbal-Urdu*. New Delhi: Education Book House.
7. Iqbal, S. M. (1993). *Stray Reflections*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan.
8. Iqbal, S. M. (2013). *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Srinagar: Ali Mohammed and Sons.
9. Kant, I. (1954). *Critique of Practical Reason*. Tr. By T. K. Abbot. London: Longmans Publication.
10. Kant, I. (1973). *Critique of Pure Reason*. London: Macmillan publishers.

11. Kant, I. (2007). *Lectures on Pedagogy: Anthropology, History, and Education* (Trans). By Loudon, R.B. London: Cambridge University Press.
12. Khalil, M. A. (2015). *Allamah Iqbal's Bang-i- Dara* (trans). Srinagar: Gulshan Books Kashmir.
13. Khatoon, J. (1977). *The place of God, Man, and Universe in the Philosophic System of Iqbal*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan.
14. Loosman, Iris. (2013). *Moral Development and Education: Aristotle and Kant*. Utrecht University.
15. Maruf, M. (1987). *Iqbal and his Contemporary Western Religious Thought*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan.
16. Masoodi, T. (2007). *Educational Philosophy of Iqbal*. Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation.
17. Navadia, K. (1990). *A study of Educational Thinking by Immanuel Kant*. Vidyanagar: Sardar Patel University.
18. Saiyidain, K. G. (2012). *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*. Delhi: Shubli Publication.
19. Singh, R. P. (1987). *A Critical Examination of Immanuel Kant's Philosophy*. Delhi: Intellectual Publishing House.
20. Umar, M. S. (2006). *Iqbal and Modern Era*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan.
21. Vahid, S. A. (1964). *Educational Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*. Lahore: Sh. Mohammed Ashraf.