**Human rights education for a vision**

*A news article on August 2018 refereed to a letter by Human Rights Watch which urged the prime minster to make human rights a key area of focus since Pakistan faces serious Human Rights Challenges.*

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As per world report 2018 by Human Rights Watch, women, religious minorities,children and transgender faced violent attack,and discrimination throughout the year.A recent report by HRCP declares the same dismal situation of human rights in Pakistan with restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom of movement misused continuation of blasphemy law and harassment against different segments of society. It’s really surprising that in a society with a majority of Muslims,who learns by heart the last sermon of the Holy Prophet PBUH,the violations of fundamental rights seem to be more frequent rather than getting under control. The recent video of a cleric punishing the students brutally explain well the plight of children s rights ,as there must be many more [unreported](https://dailytimes.com.pk/330696/tesla-smarting-from-trade-war-seeks-bids-for-china-gigafactory-construction/) un heard.

We need to understand in the light of above observation that there is some missing link in our system of education when it comes to human rights education as a part of our national curriculum and education policies. Human Rights education if imparted with a true spirit  can lead  to a cohesive society ,integrated ,stable ,it builds respect for non violent conflict resolution and peace ,positive social transformation ,economic development Tolerance access to justice  rule of law , acceptance of diversity ,inclusion are the ideal out comes if the human rights education is effectively incorporated in the existing schemes of studies Education in any state is the first element that can help in defining a vision for the nation. Unfortunately we really need to redefine our educational goals for the formation of a unified vision as multiple streams of education are currently imparting knowledge but in isolation and each one believing to be moving in right direction no matter a religious seminary ,private schools or the public Looking at the history of education reforms in Pakistan the first step was in the form of All Pakistan Education Conference in 1947 which was chaired by Mr.Fazlur Rehman the that time minister of education ,interior, broadcasting and information .The conference set the dimensions for   system of education as social spiritual and vocational .The multiple discussion points of the  conference emphasized the integration of moral social and vocational elements ,compulsory primary education,training of citizen ship ,addressing the issue of medium of instruction ,technical and vocational education etc  with recommendations that education should be teamed with Islamic values ,free and compulsory education .It also  emphasized  on science and technology .With these initial basic point the journey continued with the commission on national education in 1959,New education Policy 1970 ,1978,1992,1998 ,2009 till the education policy f 2017 and in recent past the launch of national education policy frame work, let’s see where this drive takes us .

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Since Pakistan was created in the name of religion, that slogan was kept alive by all the governments, no matter democratic or dictatorial as it was sometimes a tool, a remedy or a camouflage to keep the religious opponents under control without the slightest realization that the system of education isn’t something to be played with as it involves the mind making of generations.

That’s why even in the eras of  dictators like Ayub khan and Zia ul Haq and Musharaf , every education policy would be with a touch of religious ingredient .and each policy revolved around the basic dimensions set in 1947 .Along with policy making the national curriculum did keep on going changes and reforms till 2006 .The text books are written in alignment with the national policy and curriculum .We see the minimal presence of Human rights and human rights education in the real sense as all the efforts are being made in Islamizing the content plus the topic itself is dealt in arobotic manner whatever level it is .For example the social studies in grade five has a chapter named Aeen which mentions in a very vague manner the fundamental  rights without giving a clarity that these rights are meant for men women ,Muslims non Muslims equally .At this stage of education young ones really need to oriented to the basics of fundamental human rights  and [responsibilities](https://dailytimes.com.pk/319157/officials-of-information-department-have-more-responsibilities-in-new-era-of-it-secretary/) with  their  importance for a cohesive  and democratic society Though we are Islamic republic of Pakistan and Islamic injunctions and directive need to be followed.However we are living in a global village   where it is really important to respect and accept the diversity of faith cultures with understanding and clarity and this clarity has to be a part of the vision of the future leaders  .To add further we need to realize that human rights are an established reality no matter which religion one belongs to as they are an eternal part of human nature and directly related to the development of any society to promote coexistence.A global and universal approach towards Human Rights is missing at the higher level of education as well .Like the Pakistan studies taught at bachelors level while discussing the constitutional evolution  shares the criticism on Objectives Resolution by Molan Shabir Usmani by writing “Unhon nay kaha Aqliatoon ko Zaroorat say Zyad Ahmiat di gai ahay aur unhain policy banana walay Idaron main nahin Rakhna Chahye (rights of minorities are given excessive importance ,they shouldn’t be a part of the policy making institutions ) followed by a sentence that the Hindus showed their reservation on this comment of Molana etc .It is beyond understanding that the criticism  is left unattended without a slightest justification that  the criticism of Molana was the criticism of   core constitutional and universal  right of equality actually.The same book while discussing constitutional history ,mainly focuses on the induction of Islamic injunctions into the constitution  .At one point it narrates that the Islamic reforms of 19 77 were  actually an Islamic revolution .The whole episode depicts a picture as if Muslims and Islam was in danger so the revolution was needed .Where is equality ,where is acceptance of diversity ,though articles are quoted for the protection of the rights of minorities ? Where is Jinah s vision of 11th August? A reader at any point doesn’t come across the ones who are different by any means .It can be said that one of the major reason for growing religious intolerance,violence against women ,and transgender ,child abuse is of course that the key ingredient for a peace full society the existence and acceptance of Human rights is hardly shared with the learners with real life and practical examples In the current scenario where ever one comes across the  Human Rights in our books they at times seem to be  men’s or women  rights but they are the rights of transgender  .In addition they are more of Muslims Rights rather than the rights of  non Muslims who are equal citizens of Pakistan ,it does talk of freedom of expression but doesn’t ensure that freedom of expression doesn’t mean hate speech or character assassination .The  content in our books is mainly promoting rights of the Muslims leaving the equal citizenry for the non Muslims as a puzzle . The understanding of the idea can only be ensured if it is  a part of the educational vision of a state and  it needs to be an be an integral part of all tiers of  education starting from primary education along with  both formal and informal education.

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