

9TH WORLD ISLAMIC FORUM

Future Education and Socio-Demography

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9TH WORLD ISLAMIC FORUM

“Future Education and Socio-Demography”

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We live in an age where the events occur in a fast and complex form that has never happened before throughout the human history. It was impossible for those lived centuries ago to foresee today’s educational conditions, but we experience the same impossibility for just after 5 or 10 years. This situation makes it important to show an effort for searching the potential threats and opportunities of social events. Examining the vital social and demographic tendencies and discussing their impacts on education are also important for Muslim societies.

It is frequently mentioned that the Islamic World missed the last several century developments in the Western World in the educational field, and that traditional educational understanding has been effective on this. According to this, persistency of madrasa ulema in maintaining traditional education patterns has prevented the development of education and of the Islamic World. It seems that the developments occurred in the Islamic World during the last 250 years have validated this argument. However, this argument contains reductionism within itself like placing the shortcomings in the educational field in the center of all problems, and causes the economic, social and political developments, which prevent necessary steps from being taken in the field of education in the Islamic World and constitute the basis of modern education in the West, to be overlooked. In conclusion, the education - training sector is blamed for this failure, and sufficient work are unable to be made for the developments in other fields. Naturally, the current problems gradually transform into crises.

Urgent exit suggestions from these crises produce the policies or strategies (!) that lack consistency and become a problem by themselves instead of solving any problem. This chaotic situation has been increasingly maintaining its existence until today, and has become the most urgent problem that the Islamic World has to solve at the present time. For the solution of the problem, it is required that the studies in every field of social sciences, particularly psychology, sociology, politics, diplomacy, economy and especially financial management, be immediately developed. The most important handicap at this point is the underestimation and prevention of the studies in the field of social sciences by the political authorities in the Islamic World due to their lack of self-confidence. And the capacity, which the Islamic World tries to build in the field of physical sciences, is wasted day by day through brain drain that occurs due to the absence of a strategic planning. Therefore, the priority step that has to be taken at the present time is to remove the bureaucratic, political and economic obstacles in front of the studies of social sciences with sufficient self-confidence.

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It is undeniable that the developments in the field of education underlie technological developments. The opposite of this is also true. When the technological opportunities are improved, the form and content of education change. The Islamic World should closely follow this interaction between education and technology, and take necessary steps. In fact, the difference between the countries not taking necessary steps regarding education and the ones succeeding to benefit from the interaction processes of education – technology at maximum will be so much that this gap may never be closed just like the difference between stone age people and today's people, and that some cultures, languages and even civilizations will be wiped from the face of the earth.

The technologies, such as social media, communication and transportation facilities, smart phones, computers and smart boards, and the innovations brought by this age, such as gaining momentum of the cultural interaction between societies have brought along serious difficulties as much as some facilities in the field of education. The present educational practices and “interaction - communication” methods have become inefficient against these kinds of challenges. “Teacher - student” hierarchy has suffered erosion, and life guidance has started to come to the fore instead of teachership, and traditional “reward – punishment” and disciplinary methods have undergone loss of impact. Under these circumstances, it has been inevitable to review the “education - training” tools and methods at certain intervals and to make them up to date. The primary purpose of education must be to bring up those individuals, who are altruistic, and developed a sense of belonging, and improved their skills at the highest order, and can act independently. Educational activities must aim at enhancing the level of individual and social wealth, and gaining people coping skills with this complex and uncertain World, and setting up a substructure of knowledge, skills, behaviour and values in order to motivate new generations, and setting out principles for the construction of modern humanistic ecosystem, and having people adopt life-long learning approach for following up continuous and fast changes.

Even though it is not possible to certainly anticipate, the effectiveness of today's actions and decisions for shaping the future cannot be denied. Therefore, examining the present tendencies is an effective way to anticipate the future and the future needs. According to the research published by the Pew Research Center, the demographic interpretations made for the year of 2050 estimate that the Muslim population in the world will increase by 73% compared to the year of 2010. This rate is quite higher than the population growth rate of the world, which is 35%, and is equal to the population of, approximately, 2,8 billion people across the world. In the year of 2050, it is estimated that the part constituting 25,8 million people, who is equal to 10% of the total population of 30 countries constituting the population of Europe, will consist of Muslims. This increase results from both immigration and the fact that the Muslim population is young.

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Even though population increases fast in general, not every region will be effected from this situation in the same way, and different regions and countries will definitely have different dynamics. Therefore, knowing the socio-demographic characteristics of future society serves as a guide for us to build the future education. Because, the future education will be established in the future society, and function under the circumstances of those days. Consequently, making interventions towards the educational needs of rapidly increasing Muslim demography and making preparations to produce new methods, schools and programs in the not-so-distant future have great importance.

It is impossible to realize an economic development without having an educated “society” (in other words, “labor”), which a knowledge intensive economy is in need of. The economies of the past, which were “based on natural sources”, leave their places to “knowledge intensive” economies. A country’s education quality is an important determinant for its long-term richness. Therefore, the impacts of the worldwide economic competition on education are also great. On the other hand, according to the numbers of the UNESCO statistical institute, totally 750 million adults in the world, 102 million of them are young people between 15-24 years of age, are not literate.

Moreover, according to the Global Education Follow Up Report, 387 million children in the world, who are at the age of getting primary school education, do not have even the minimum success in reading. The number of those countries in the world providing 12-year continuous and free education to their citizens are less than five. Most of the adults in low and medium income countries are deprived of basic computer skills. Only 4% of the adults living in some of the African countries between 2014-2016 have the skills to follow the save-paste instructions of the files in a computer.

As it is understood from these examples, not every country is ready for this competition with the education that they provide to their citizens. However, what will be done with these masses, who have not qualifications to compete in the global economy, and the concrete proposals regarding to enhance the educational level of a society could not be completely developed yet. In conclusion, the **9. World Islamic Forum** aims at providing a platform of discussion and information sharing for the aforementioned topics.

Main Theme

Future Education and Socio-Demography

Sub Themes

Future of Global Demography and Islamic World

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Demographic Tendencies and Education Perspectives

Education of Social Sciences in Islamic Countries

Education and Application in Islamic Countries

Technological Developments and Education

Resources Reserved for Education and Young Population

Factors, such as Urbanization, Welfare Growth, and Income Distribution, and
Future of Islamic World

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The foundations of the **World Islamic Forum** were laid in the **Think Tanks Forum of the Islamic Countries** themed as “**Peace, Civilization and Cooperation**”, which was organized by the **Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM)** in cooperation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Istanbul in 2010. With the Istanbul Declaration accepted at the end of the forum, the Think Tanks Platform of the Islamic Countries was established for the think tanks of the Islamic countries to combine their knowledge and experiences under one roof and to actuate their communication and cooperation opportunities.

The forum gathered in **Istanbul, Baku, Cairo, Baghdad, Islamabad, Kuala Lumpur and Yezd** with different themes each year. With the declaration accepted in 2015 at the end of the 6. Forum, which was organized and hosted by the TASAM and Pakistan Senate Defense Committee in Islamabad, it was decided to change the name of the Forum as **World Islamic Forum** in order to make the forum more inclusive. The 8. World Islamic Forum meeting was held in Istanbul on March 01-03, 2018.

The World Islamic Forum is a **global organization** providing strategic contribution to the deepening of the common agenda and socio-economic integration by bringing the representatives of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the opinion leaders living all over the world and the think tanks of the Islamic World together within the framework of multi-dimensional issues. This is a **civil and opinion-based integration process** adopting the idea that the historical transitions, which the humanity experiences concerning the establishment of “power and justice”, may be overcome with a strong institutional representation to form in the Islamic World.

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