

**Religious Morality in Education for Serving the Purpose of Our Life**

by

**Rukya Zaman Juthi**

Lecturer at Northern University Bangladesh

Email: [nubjuthi1994@gmail.com](mailto:nubjuthi1994@gmail.com)

**Dr. Mohammad Aman Uddin Muzahid**

Visiting Professor, Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

Email: [dr.amanuddin@gmail.com](mailto:dr.amanuddin@gmail.com)

**Professor Dr. Rafiqul Islam Molla**

Academic Advisor, International Islamic University, Chittagong

Email: [rimolla@gmail.com](mailto:rimolla@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

Modern education follows a secular framework in its structure, content, and values, prioritizing material well-being based on secular ethics and the belief that "a hungry man is an angry man." Within this perspective, religion is confined to theology and rituals, while education primarily focuses on skills and technology for societal progress. Consequently, it often fails to cultivate individuals with the moral integrity necessary to achieve life's ultimate purpose promoting peace, prosperity, and success in both the material and spiritual realms. This study explores how integrating religion and morality into modern education can help fulfill this broader purpose. It employs a conceptual framework and descriptive methodology, proposing an approach that unifies religious and educational objectives. The model presents a holistic educational system that removes any stigma associated with revealed religions by integrating philosophy into religion and science into philosophy. Incorporating religious ethics and values, this framework moralizes modern education, aligning it with life's ultimate purpose. The investigation highlights practical implications for government policymakers, academic institutions, educators, scholars, clerics, and social thinkers worldwide. Its findings guide embedding religious morality into education, enhancing its role in producing competent graduates who contribute to societal well-being by fostering harmony, peace, and happiness key indicators of both material and spiritual success. The study's originality lies in structuring education as a transformative process leading to wisdom and enlightenment, ensuring that learning aligns with life's fundamental goals and purposes.

**Keywords:** Education, Happiness, Moralization, Peace, Quality with morality, Religiosities.

**Introduction**

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental force in shaping individuals and societies. Beyond the transmission of knowledge, it plays a crucial role in nurturing the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of human life. In this regard, integrating religious morality into education serves a greater purpose—achieving a balanced harmony between material and spiritual growth. Rooted in ethical values, religious teachings provide a guiding framework that fosters virtues such as compassion, honesty, and justice, leading individuals toward a purposeful life. Incorporating religious morality into educational curricula promotes holistic development, ensuring that learners not only acquire secular knowledge but also cultivate moral integrity and spiritual awareness. This approach addresses the comprehensive needs of students, equipping them to contribute positively to society while attaining personal fulfillment. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2007) underscores the significance of integrating spiritual knowledge into education, arguing that it leads to a deeper understanding of life's ultimate purpose and the realization of truth in its divine essence.

The pursuit of knowledge is an inherent function of the human intellect, a lifelong journey that begins at birth and continues until death. Learning is an ongoing process, and in this process, as the saying goes, “we learn to forget.” However, only the essence of what we learn leaves a lasting imprint, shaping true education. At the core of all learning lies the purpose and ultimate goal of life, serving as the foundation of knowledge and education. Life is not merely a fleeting existence, meant for temporary pleasures without deeper meaning. Instead, it is a purposeful journey toward sacred goals, to be nurtured through the pursuit of knowledge and the practice of good deeds. The knowledge and good deeds are to take them higher on the ladder of humanity and perfection, to bring them closer to God and, therefore, eternal bliss of life (Al Zeera, 2001). The advancement of knowledge is essential for improving living conditions and effectively managing life in pursuit of its sacred goals. It enables us to understand and explain the reasons behind various phenomena and to harness them for human development and well-being. This research proposes an educational approach integrating religious morality, fostering intellectual growth and character development. By analyzing different models and case studies, the study demonstrates how religious moral education can equip individuals to lead meaningful lives and contribute positively to society. The approach advocates for a balanced curriculum that respects both secular and religious perspectives, ensuring a holistic learning experience.

Knowledge is acquired through two primary sources: rational inquiry, which relies on human intelligence and empirical data and revealed knowledge, accessible through divine revelations in religious teachings. Education represents the refined outcome of learning from both sources, combining reason and revelation to cultivate wisdom and moral integrity. The integration of religious morality into education has been extensively discussed in the literature, with scholars emphasizing its potential to foster holistic human development. Sayyed Hossein Nasr (2007) posits that the exclusion of spiritual elements from modern education limits individuals' understanding of life's deeper purpose. Nasr argues for a reintegration of spiritual knowledge into education to cultivate not just the intellect but also the soul, enabling students to grasp the ultimate truths of existence.

Although John Dewey (1934) was primarily a secular educational philosopher, he acknowledged the significance of moral development in education. He argued that education should equip individuals to confront life's moral challenges, a principle that aligns with the objectives of religious moral education. Dewey's focus on experiential learning reinforces the idea that moral education should be an active process, where students engage with ethical dilemmas and develop their moral reasoning through guided reflection.

Parker Palmer (1998) emphasizes the importance of educating the whole person by integrating intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. His concept of "wholeness" in education aligns with the goals of religious moral education, which seeks to cultivate students who are not only knowledgeable but also morally and spiritually conscious. Palmer's work suggests that a well-rounded education should provide opportunities for students to explore their inner lives and develop strong moral convictions.

The role of religious morality in education has been examined from multiple perspectives, with scholars and educators recognizing its value in fostering ethically and spiritually conscious individuals. Emile Durkheim (1925) emphasizes moral education as a fundamental pillar of social cohesion. He asserts that when education is grounded in moral principles, it cultivates a sense of duty and collective responsibility among students, essential for maintaining societal

harmony. His work highlights how religious morality can reinforce social bonds and instill shared values within communities.

Similarly, Thomas Groome (1996) promotes a pedagogical approach called "shared Christian praxis," which incorporates faith-based moral teachings into education. His methodology encourages students to reflect on their experiences through the lens of religious values, deepening their understanding of moral responsibilities and life's purpose. Groome's approach highlights the transformative power of religious morality in shaping students' ethical perspectives and personal development.

James Arthur (2010) examines the connection between character education and religious morality, proposing that moral education grounded in religious traditions offers a cohesive framework for character development. He argues that religious moral teachings provide a stable and enduring set of values that help guide students in ethical decision-making. This perspective reinforces the idea that religious morality serves as a powerful tool for fostering virtues essential to leading a meaningful and purposeful life.

Furthermore, Nel Noddings (2013) highlights the importance of care ethics in education, aligning with religious moral principles that emphasize compassion and empathy. She argues that education should go beyond academic achievement to cultivate caring relationships and moral sensitivity. By incorporating care ethics—often reflected in religious teachings—education can create a nurturing environment that supports both moral and emotional development.

The literature also presents critical perspectives, particularly from secular educational theorists who warn that incorporating religious morality in education could marginalize diverse viewpoints. However, scholars like Robert Jackson (2014) advocate for a pluralistic approach to religious education, encouraging exposure to multiple religious and moral perspectives. This approach broadens students' understanding of various ethical frameworks while fostering an inclusive and respectful learning environment.

Montessori education provides a practical model in which moral development is seamlessly integrated with cognitive learning. Maria Montessori's philosophy emphasizes a prepared environment and guided freedom, nurturing both intellectual growth and moral awareness. This approach reinforces the idea that education should instill virtues such as empathy, respect, and responsibility alongside academic skills. Character education programs, often drawing inspiration from religious teachings, further illustrate the incorporation of moral values into the curriculum. These programs seek to cultivate virtues like honesty, integrity, and compassion, which are fundamental to ethical decision-making and responsible citizenship. Research suggests that such programs enhance students' moral reasoning and contribute to the development of a more ethically conscious society.

The terms learning, knowledge, and education are often used interchangeably to refer to the educational system through which learning occurs. Commonly understood as a teaching-learning process, education is typically associated with schools, universities, and teachers. Additionally, it is frequently linked to literacy. However, literacy alone does not necessarily equate to being knowledgeable or truly educated. A highly literate individual may lack wisdom and understanding, while an illiterate person may possess deep insight, wisdom, and true education. While literacy can be beneficial, it is not essential for genuine education. When assessed through the lens of "quality with morality," there may even be a negative correlation between formal academic achievement and real education—suggesting that as literacy and academic levels increase, the depth of true education may decline. Religion, by contrast, is a system of thought and a way of life (Koenig & Larson, 2001), governed by divine principles. It is not merely a collection of rituals but a guiding force for ethical and moral conduct in all aspects of life. As a divinely inspired system, religion holds the highest legitimacy and serves as the strongest foundation for ethics and morality both of which are fundamental to true education. Morality, in turn, is shaped by multiple factors, including religious beliefs, values, motives, societal development, and historical influences (Ali & Gibbs, 1998). Therefore, religious teachings should play a central role in shaping the concepts, objectives, and structure of education.

**Religious Morality in Education for serving the purpose of our life:**

Education goes beyond simply conveying information; it is also about fostering moral and ethical growth. In contemporary society, the emphasis on secular education has overshadowed the integration of moral and spiritual principles, leaving students less prepared for life's ethical challenges. This essay examines the importance of incorporating religious morality into educational systems to develop individuals who not only succeed academically but also lead ethical and purposeful lives. Morality, rooted in values such as justice, compassion, and honesty, serves as the foundation for ethical reasoning and decision-making. It helps students build moral integrity by providing a structured framework to understand right from wrong. This section explores how religious teachings can be integrated into the curriculum alongside academic learning, ensuring balanced development of both intellect and character. Drawing from the works of scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Emile Durkheim, and Parker Palmer, the article delves into theoretical frameworks that support the integration of religious morality in education. These perspectives emphasize the need to nurture the soul as well as the intellect, suggesting that an education lacking moral development misses life's deeper purpose. Moral development is already a focus in various educational methods, including character education programs and Montessori education. For example, Montessori education creates environments where children develop moral principles alongside cognitive abilities, fostering empathy and social responsibility. Character education programs often use religious teachings to instill values like honesty and respect, helping students navigate moral dilemmas with confidence. Integrating Christian morals into the classroom presents both advantages and challenges. While it offers a pathway to holistic development, it also raises questions about inclusivity in diverse cultural contexts. The logistical challenges of implementing religious moral education, potential opposition from secular frameworks, and the need for a balanced approach that respects various viewpoints are addressed in this section. The integration of religious morality in education is not merely about teaching students what is right or wrong; it is about helping them understand life's broader purpose. By building a strong moral foundation, education can produce individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also ethically and spiritually aware. This holistic approach prepares students to contribute positively to society, leading lives that are meaningful and purposeful. The article concludes with recommendations for further research to explore innovative ways to incorporate religious morality into diverse educational settings. Such research

can guide future educational reforms to better address the moral and spiritual needs of students, ensuring a more comprehensive and fulfilling educational experience.

## **Research Methodologies**

To propose and clarify a model of the true goals of education, this study employs a descriptive and conceptual research approach. The conceptual method focuses on synthesizing various perspectives to create a comprehensive framework that integrates both religion and education, while the descriptive component involves a thorough review of the existing literature.

**Methods of Research:** The most essential aspect of this qualitative methodology is the use of secondary data sources. This approach is particularly effective for developing a compelling theoretical framework and gaining a deeper understanding of complex concepts, such as the relationship between philosophy, religion, and educational goals.

**Data collection:** The study uses only secondary sources, including books on philosophy, education, and religious studies. These books were gathered through in-depth library research. Both national and international education policies include moral and religious aspects. Important passages from revealed religions help in understanding universal values and ideas. The study also includes writings from well-known scholars who explore the connections between philosophy, religion, and science. Clearly explaining the selection criteria for books and other sources is important for making the study more transparent. The selection process was guided by the following key criteria:

1. **Scholarly Credibility:** The study prioritizes peer-reviewed books, scholarly articles, and works by well-known experts in ethics, philosophy, education, and religious studies.
2. **Relevance to the Study:** To align with the study's goals, sources were chosen for their direct contribution to the discussion on integrating religion and morality into modern education.
3. **Historical and Contemporary Perspectives:** To fully understand the development of religious and moral education, the study includes both classical sources and modern studies.

4. **Interdisciplinary Approach:** To enrich the discussion, the study includes sources from various fields such as philosophy, theology, education, and sociology, ensuring a well-rounded perspective.
5. **Reliability and Objectivity:** Books and sources with strong evidence, empirical data, or widely accepted theories were prioritized over those with anecdotal or overly subjective views. By setting these standards, the study ensures that its proposed educational model and arguments are based on reliable and relevant literature.

**Analytical Framework:** The study employs a detailed analytical framework to explore the integration of religious and educational goals. It examines the evolution of philosophy and religion, highlighting their complementary roles and exploring their interaction without criticizing any revealed religion. The study aims to create a clear framework that defines shared values and objectives by combining religious and educational perspectives. It also connects religious insights with philosophical ideas, providing a holistic approach that aligns education with moral and spiritual goals. Some examples Philosophical Insights and Religious Insights:

1. **Philosophical Insights:**

- ***Aristotelian Ethics:*** Religious teachings on moral development align with the concept of virtue ethics, which focuses on moral character and the pursuit of eudaimonia (flourishing).
- ***Al-Farabi's Educational Philosophy:*** His perspective on education as a means of developing moral and intellectual qualities supports the inclusion of morality in the curriculum.
- ***John Dewey's Pragmatism:*** Although Dewey's focus is primarily secular, religious moral teachings can complement his emphasis on experiential learning and ethical decision-making.

2. **Religious Insights:**

- ***Islamic Perspective (Tawhid and Hikmah):*** Hikmah (wisdom) emphasizes the pursuit of knowledge for a moral life, while the oneness of God (Tawhid) provides a unified worldview that connects knowledge, morality, and purpose.



- ***Christian Moral Teachings:*** The concept of agape in Christian ethics, which represents selfless love, promotes empathy and social responsibility, both of which can be integrated into school curricula.
- ***Buddhist Ethical Framework:*** The Noble Eightfold Path provides a systematic moral code that complements education, including right knowledge, right thought, and right action.

The proposed paradigm ensures that education promotes both intellectual and moral excellence by integrating these philosophical and religious perspectives. This approach transforms education into a holistic process that aligns with life's ultimate goal, producing individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also morally and spiritually conscious.

**Important Themes Examined:** The study focuses on issues related to beliefs that explain the meaning of life, particularly the moral and religious aspects of education. It examines the variations and differences between science, religion, and philosophy, highlighting universal ideas derived from revealed religions that are applicable across all educational settings. Key themes explored in this study include:

1. **The Role of Religious Ethics in Moral Development:** Examining how moral principles from religion shape moral judgment, integrity, and character in an educational setting.
2. **The Philosophical Foundations of Education:** Analyzing how philosophy, religion, and science converge to propose a unified teaching approach that promotes both moral and intellectual enlightenment.
3. **Interpretations of Life's Meaning Across Different Belief Systems:** Examining the ways in which different philosophical and theological traditions define life's meaning and how these viewpoints can influence a more comprehensive educational approach.
4. **The Impact of Spiritual and Ethical Education on Society:** Assessing the broader societal impact of teaching religious morality, including its influence on human development, social harmony, and peace.

**Validity and Credibility:** To offer a fair and comprehensive perspective, the study relies on a diverse range of secondary information from credible sources. Researchers from the fields of education, philosophy, and religion will evaluate the initial findings and the proposed model to

enhance conceptual clarity and ensure validity. This process includes critical analysis, peer review, expert consultations, and structured feedback sessions to refine conclusions and enhance scholarly rigor.

1. **Theoretical and Comparative Analysis:** The study will compare the effectiveness of secular and religious education frameworks in promoting moral integrity and holistic development by critically analyzing existing literature. This will help establish a strong conceptual foundation for integrating moral and religious values into modern education.
2. **Peer Review and Scholarly Feedback:** Preliminary findings will be shared with academic colleagues who specialize in religious studies, philosophy, education, and ethics. Their feedback and insights will ensure the scholarly validity of the conceptual framework and help refine it.
3. **Expert Consultations:** Experts in the field, including educators, theologians, ethicists, and policymakers, will be consulted for the study. These consultations will assess the feasibility and practical implications of integrating Christian morality into education, ensuring that the proposed model aligns with societal needs and current educational challenges.
4. **Feedback Sessions and Interdisciplinary Discussions:** Additional perspectives on how to effectively implement the proposed framework will be gathered through organized discussions with academics, curriculum developers, and educators. These sessions will also evaluate the potential impact on student learning, moral development, and societal well-being.
5. **Iterative Refinement and Validation:** The study's theoretical model and conclusions will be refined iteratively based on the feedback received. This process will ensure that the final recommendations are solidly grounded in academic research and practical for real-world educational settings.

**Ethical Considerations:** The study remains impartial, avoiding bias or prejudice against any particular faith, and encourages respect for all religious beliefs. By carefully presenting secondary sources of information, proper attribution and intellectual property integrity are maintained.

**Methodological Rationale:** This approach is ideally suited to the study's objectives as it facilitates an extensive theoretical investigation of complex and abstract interactions. Secondary research provides a solid foundation for developing a model that integrates universal truths, extending beyond the limitations of empirical data.

This qualitative and conceptual research methodology effectively supports the study's goals by enabling an in-depth theoretical exploration of the complex relationships between philosophy, education, and religion. By relying on secondary research, the study establishes a solid theoretical foundation, incorporating universal truths that transcend empirical limitations. Ultimately, this approach aligns with the study's objective of proposing a transformative educational model that balances intellectual growth with moral and spiritual development.

**Case Study:** Exploring the integration of religious morality in education reveals several case studies highlighting its impact on students' moral development and life purpose. Here are some notable examples-

### **Bringing Archaeology into Religious and Moral Education: A Case Study from Scotland**

This study explores how incorporating archaeological discoveries into Scotland's Religious and Moral Education (RME) curriculum could enhance students' understanding of death-related symbols and rites of passage. By engaging with physical historical objects, students can connect religious concepts to real-world contexts, deepening their understanding of morality.

### **Factors Affecting Teaching and Learning of Religious and Moral Education in Ghanaian Junior High Schools: A Case Study of C. B. Mensah SDA Junior High School**

This study examines the challenges and successes of teaching Religious and Moral Education (RME) at a junior high school in Ghana. It emphasizes the role of social institutions, such as families and religious organizations, in shaping students' moral education, and explores the teamwork necessary to effectively instill moral principles.

### **The Home-School Interface in Religious and Moral Formation: The Irish Case**

This qualitative study explores the influence of both home and school on the religious and moral development of Irish primary school students. By conducting interviews with parents, students, teachers, and school principals, it examines how children actively engage in their moral formation. The analysis highlights the dynamic interaction between family influence and educational environments.

### **Case Studies in Religious Education**

This website offers a variety of case studies that center on religious and moral education. It gives teachers who want to incorporate moral lessons into their curricula important perspectives on various techniques and difficulties in religious education.

### **Education: its meaning and dimension**

At its core, education is the advancement of knowledge in the pursuit of truth, a journey from darkness to light. It is both the foundation and the outcome of a process in which learning is transformed into knowledge, which, in turn, evolves into education. Learning and knowledge are essentially the stages of education in progress. When learning (awareness or information) occurs, is understood, and internalized, it becomes knowledge; and when knowledge is paired with natural morality and human virtues, then transformed into wisdom, it becomes true education—a movement from darkness to light. Thus, education progresses through the stages of learning, knowledge, and wisdom. The primary objective of education is to develop the inner faculties of human beings, enabling them to understand the central truths about the purpose of creation—namely, that the Almighty Allah/God created the universe and everything within it for the benefit of mankind, and that humans are created to serve His purpose. Therefore, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge to best serve humanity must be the fundamental goal of education and any credible education system. This holistic approach to education reveals the unification of its objectives with the goals of religion, creating a linkage where science ends and philosophy begins, and where philosophy ends and religion begins, with no prejudice toward any revealed religion.

Generally, for operational and management purposes, education is viewed as a system through which learning occurs. It can be simply described as a process of acquiring knowledge

and skills through formal academic structures. In its applied and functional form, education involves the advancement of knowledge, skills, and technology necessary for both the material and spiritual well-being of humanity. Its goal is to prepare individuals to successfully manage their everyday lives, blending efficiency with morality. While the majority of knowledge and education are acquired through formal academic systems, many other informal avenues also contribute significantly to learning. These include periodic public meetings, workshops by religious and political organizations, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other informal learning opportunities within society.

From an intellectual and conceptual perspective, education is a quest for truth, a journey from darkness to light (Kalam, n.d.; Bloom, n.d.). Its objective is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth (Kennedy, n.d.). Education is not just about acquiring facts but about understanding values (Burroughs, n.d.), transforming individuals into highly ethical beings with a strong sense of morality and a commitment to the well-being of humanity and all living beings. Its ultimate purpose is to turn mirrors into windows (Harris, n.d.), encouraging individuals, in the course of their lives, to look beyond self-interest (focused only on their own reflection) and to care for societal well-being (seeing the world through the window). It seeks to foster liberal attitudes and desires, shifting concern from "myself" to "ourselves," and from personal well-being to collective well-being. The call of education is: "Come for the learning, learn for knowledge, and spread out to serve society and, thereby, the Creator."

**Its Construction Process:** Learning is the foundation and stepping stone to knowledge, just as knowledge is the foundation and stepping stone to education. Learning stimulates the inquisitiveness of the human mind and promotes the growth of knowledge. In turn, knowledge enables individuals to gain the insights and wisdom needed to understand the meaning and purpose of life, the essence of daily activities, and the truth about the universe and its Creator. Through this process, it helps individuals become educated and enlightened, with a strong sense of human morality and divine virtues. This, in turn, equips them to fulfill the purpose of life—achieving both material and spiritual well-being for humanity. This can be summarized in the following structure for an easy glance:

## **Structure of Education Process: Movement from Darkness to Light**

### **Step 1:**

#### **Learning: for advancement of knowledge and skill**

- Through:
- a) Formal schooling and other academic & institutional arrangements
  - b) Personal experiences and observations and other informal methods outside any academic and institutional system

### **Step 2:**

#### **Securing knowledge and skill: for living successful, prosperous, and satisfied life.**

- Through:
- a) Rational or human-acquired source by way of
    - i) personal experiences and observations,
    - ii) conscious efforts of experimentation and research, and
    - iii) intellectual or philosophical insights.
  - b) Revealed source through divine revelations via revealed religions

### **Step 3:**

#### **Understanding and internalization of the deeper meanings and significance of knowledge: for gain the light of wisdom**

Guided by: The perspective of goals and purpose of life

Aiming at: Making individuals highly ethical human beings with strong human morality and virtues of humanity & commitment for wellbeing of mankind and other beings

### **Step 4:**

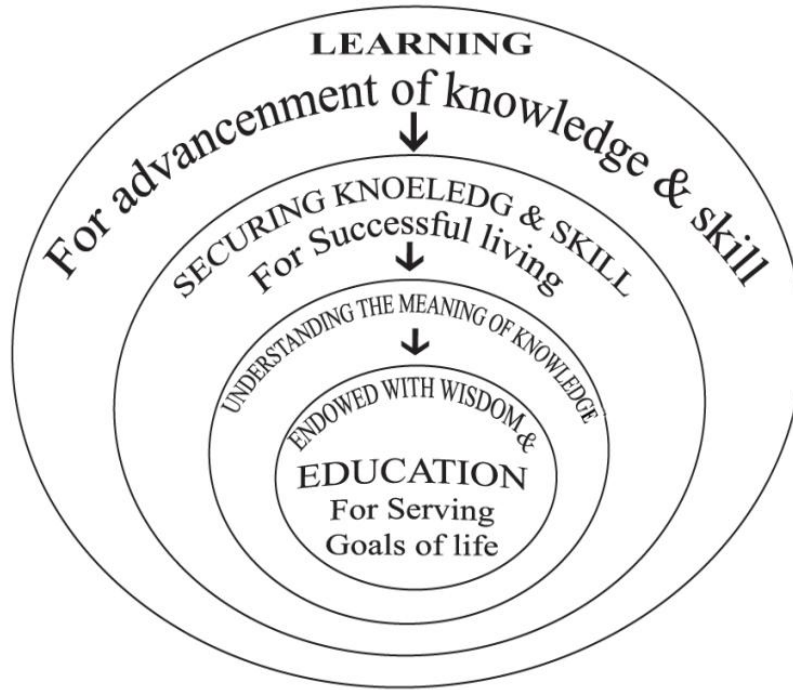
**Becoming enriched with necessary wisdom and virtues and endowed with Education For achieving the**

**Operational goal of:** Integrating revealed (Naqli) and rationally (Aqli)/acquired human knowledge

**Functional goal of:** Developing capable human capital with the skill combining quality with morality

**Central goal of:** Successfully serving the **Purpose of life** i.e., to establish peace and harmony with prosperity and happiness in the society for success in this world and the world hereafter.

Fig.1. A Schematic Deep-Down Vision of the concept and Goals of Education



**Fig. 1:** Below depicts a deep-down vision of the concept, function, and goal of education.

**Roles, Goals, and Essence of Knowledge and Education:** Knowledge is typically divided into two main categories: the humanities and the sciences. The sciences focus on the study of the physical and natural world, while the humanities explore the nonphysical aspects of life and the cosmos. However, all fields of study, in essence, are sciences in some form. The primary objective of all disciplines is to unravel the mysteries of creation and understand their relationship to humankind's material and spiritual well-being. Physical sciences rely on observation and experimentation to uncover the components and characteristics of the universe. On the other hand, the humanities seek to understand the deeper aspects of human nature and behavior, both on an individual and societal level. While both domains aim to enhance human



well-being, the discoveries in the humanities play a more critical role in fostering world peace, prosperity, and success.

The humanities reveal the fundamental virtues and principles of human nature, such as "sharing and caring," "from each according to ability, to each according to needs," "live and let live," "free but fair," "self-interest but not selfishness," "living in community," and "pleasure more in giving than in receiving." These insights into emotions, attitudes, and the idea that "happiness consists in contentment" are vital for creating an environment conducive to peace, harmony, trust, and prosperity. Thus, for the advancement of meaningful knowledge, it is essential to approach both scientific and technological discoveries, as well as studies in the humanities, through the lens of human values and the broader purpose of life.

The ultimate goal of life lies at the heart of learning, knowledge, and education. Life is not merely fleeting pleasure but is purposeful and meaningful. The primary purpose of life is to serve humanity and, by extension, the Creator, as understood in various divine religions. The creation of the world is not without meaning, and life itself has a transcendent purpose that goes beyond fulfilling physical needs and engaging in material pursuits. Human beings are created to serve this higher purpose (Abdalati, 1981, p. 15). It is said that "man is known not by many of his possessions, but by few of his deeds," emphasizing that a person's worth lies in their actions, not material wealth. The goal of life is to achieve both material and spiritual well-being for humanity. This involves creating an environment where people can live in peace, harmony, and brotherhood, built on trust and prosperity in this world. In turn, this provides a pathway to eternal bliss in the world.

Supporting the objectives and sacred purpose of human life is, in essence, the primary aim of education. The ability to successfully fulfill the operational, functional, and essential goals of life comes from the harmonious development of the body, mind, and soul. As Mill (1867) argues, the goal of educational institutions should not simply be to produce skilled professionals like engineers, doctors, or lawyers, but to cultivate capable, well-rounded individuals with the necessary goodwill to apply their talents for the greater good. Achieving wholeness and sanctity requires a balance between one's spiritual and intellectual dimensions (Al Zeera, 2001).

## **Religion: Its Goal and Human Role**

According to Deen al Fitra, revealed religion is a belief intrinsic to human nature. It reflects divine guidance and principles, offering a framework for human behavior and actions based on natural laws. For God to establish His ideal civilization on earth, religion provides a way of thinking and living, directed by divine norms. Its ultimate goal is to advance humanity and fulfill the Creator's purpose. A system of worship dedicated to the Almighty Creator fosters a deep moral commitment, helping individuals to succeed in both this world and the hereafter. It is crucial to understand that "men are not for religion, but religion is for men." Religion serves humanity by providing the best guidance to protect and support people. All its institutions, rules, and principles are designed to prevent harmful actions and promote the well-being of individuals and society. By encouraging virtuous behavior, religion fosters successful, prosperous, and peaceful living, where people coexist in harmony, love, respect, and trust.

Therefore, religion serves a purpose in life and is not a collection of useless customs. Its main objective of religion is to guide people toward living successful lives both on Earth and in the hereafter. It provides a strong moral foundation for every human action. The primary function of religion is to serve humanity. According to Al-Faruqi (1989), religion is central to human nature, shaping how individuals respond to their fundamental needs and emotions, including hunger, sex, fear, hope, pleasure, hatred, anger, jealousy, and faith. Most of human intellectual work is driven by the vision and expression of religion. It acts as the lens through which individuals interpret and understand everything around them. If culture is the body of a society, religion is its mind and soul. This positions religion as the essence and core of both culture and civilization. Thus, religion plays a significant role in influencing civilization and culture. The harmony between the body and soul fosters social stability and enables individuals to reach their highest potential (Molla & Dastagir, 2013).

As a result, Radhakrishnan views religion not merely as a belief system but as a way of life that one must practice, rather than just a theory to be adhered to (quoted in Gupta, 1996, p.12). Brohi (1988) argues that without religion, or faith in the divine, the evil and demonic forces within a person's subconscious may be awakened, ultimately taking control of their "soul-life." Gandhi, in discussing the importance of religion, remarked, "Life would be reduced to a thing of sound and

fury signifying nothing" (quoted in Gupta, 1996). Similarly, Hammarskjöld emphasized the significance of religion as a vital foundation for life, criticizing how "God is a useful work of reference always at hand but seldom consulted" on the bookshelf of life (Wallensteen & Kayfetz, 1995).

### **Role of Religion in pursuing the Goals of Education**

Thus, it is evident that the central goals of both religion and education are aligned—service to humanity in the pursuit of achieving the goals and purpose of life. The purpose of education is to cultivate capable human capital, integrating efficiency with morality, to successfully serve the goals of life. The fundamental principle is "acquiring knowledge for serving humanity." Revealed religion, similarly, embodies a profound moral commitment to serving these same life goals—achieving success, peace, and prosperity in this world, with the reward of eternal bliss in the hereafter. Religion provides a solid foundation of values and morality for guiding all human activities. Therefore, both education and religion are directed toward the same ultimate goal: "service to humanity." In this context, "serving humanity is serving religion and the Creator."

Therefore, religion should play an essential role in achieving the goals of education. Without the incorporation of religious morality, education risks producing skillful individuals who lack ethical guidance, potentially becoming harmful to society (Wellesley, n.d.). This concern was echoed by Roosevelt (n.d.) and Lewis (n.d.), who emphasized that educating a person solely in intellect, without a focus on morals and values, results in an individual who could become a menace to society. Other prominent thinkers expanded on this idea, noting that teaching children the three Rs—Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic—while neglecting the crucial "R" of Religion, leads to the emergence of a fourth R: Rascality. In line with this, Whitehead (1953) asserts that, at its core, education must be religious to ensure the reflection of high morality and values within its concepts, attitudes, and content. These observations highlight the critical role religion must play in shaping the educational process.

### **Furies and Failures of Religion and Education Due to Lack of Understanding of their True Meanings, Goals, and Roles**

It is unfortunate, however, that in contemporary times, most revealed faiths are not taught or studied in a way that allows for a true understanding of their mission, vision, and objectives.

Typically, these religions focus on teaching rituals for practice, but the deeper meanings, essence, and life purposes behind these rituals are often overlooked. As a result, religions are no longer able to effectively contribute to education or the management of life, losing their potential to guide individuals toward a more meaningful and moral existence.

### **Needed Reforms in Approach for Understanding Revealed Religions**

Unfortunately, many religions are taught and understood through a dogmatic and command-based approach, which focuses on obedience and ritual without encouraging a deeper understanding of their essence or how they can guide one's life. This method primarily emphasizes knowing, fearing, and obeying in order to practice the rituals, rather than truly comprehending their meanings, functions, and relevance to life. This approach can be described as a 'fear-based approach.' For instance, in the case of Islam, scholars like Garaudy (1993), Al-Faruqi (1987, 1989), and Abusulaiman (1987, 1994) have called for freeing Islam from this narrow, rigid, and ritualistic perspective. They advocate for a deeper understanding of Islam that aligns with its true mission and practical relevance in everyday life.

Islam is not merely a rigid manual or a set of fixed rituals, as it is often misunderstood and presented. Iqbal suggests that Islam is not an achievement or an end, but rather a living aspiration (cited in Siddiqi, 1993). It serves as a framework for continuous development, evolving over time and space while remaining rooted in its eternal and universal values and goals. The Quran (2:62; 2:112) assures believers that there is no fear for those who uphold the oneness of Allah. This principle of oneness, or *al-Tauheed*, is central to all major religions, which can be seen as different traditions reflecting the same core truth: belief in the oneness of the Almighty Creator and complete submission to Him. For example, the Brahma Sutra in Hinduism affirms the oneness of God, stating, "There is only one God, not the second; not at all, not at all, not in the least bit" (Chandogya Upanishad 6:2:1; Svetsvatra Upanishad 4:19; Rig Veda 6:36:4; and 8:1:1). Similarly, the Deuteronomy passages in Judaism and Christianity (Deuteronomy 6:4; 4:39) declare the belief in one God, Yahweh, to whom all submission and worship are due. This shared concept of the oneness of God ties together these diverse faiths, emphasizing their unity in this central truth.

However, these religions are currently constrained by a dogmatic and command-based approach to understanding and practice. This has led to their ineffectiveness in playing a significant role in education and the management of life. To address this, it is essential to replace the dogmatic and ritualistic approach with a more functional and pragmatic method—an approach that emphasizes understanding and reasoning (Molla, 2014; 2005). This shift would mean recognizing that rituals and religious institutions are not the essence of religion; they are simply means and tools that help adherents comprehend and experience the deeper meaning and significance of their faith in the context of life's pursuits. The focus should shift to understanding the true meaning and purpose behind religious rituals, from the perspective of the broader vision and mission of each religion. Therefore, this transformation in how we approach and interpret religion requires a reformation movement that reshapes our understanding of the values, essence, and worldview that underpin different religious traditions.

Revealed religions naturally possess a liberal foundation that allows them to coexist harmoniously with one another. The core message and essence of all these faiths is the unity of the supreme God (Tawheed). This inclusive perspective, as noted by the renowned German philosopher and poet Goethe, should be understood and promoted. Upon learning about Islam, Goethe expressed: “We resign ourselves to God; if this be Islam, do we not all live in Islam? In Islam we live, in Islam we die. I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I am a Muslim as one surrendered to God” (cited in Shamael, 2004). This suggests that anyone from any of the revealed religions who acknowledges the central truth of Tawheed—the oneness of God—can rightfully identify as a Muslim. As Shamael remarked in a letter to the British Foreign Minister, “I am a Muslim, since as a Christian I believe in one God” (cited in Shamael, 2004). Similarly, individuals who belong to other faiths, such as Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, etc., and who sincerely testify to the oneness of God (God is One, He begotten not, nor was begotten) and surrender entirely to Him as the Supreme Creator of the Universe, are within their rights to consider themselves Muslims.

Therefore, it is essential to respect all revealed religions (i.e., the traditions of the Central Truth) as different expressions and pathways to the divine guidance for living life in a manner that

serves the goals and purpose of existence—namely, achieving success, peace, and well-being in this world, while also earning the reward of eternal bliss in the hereafter. Religion should, therefore, be freed from the constraints of the current dogmatic and command-based approaches to its study and understanding. It needs to be liberated from a narrow, rigid focus and vision. A more functional, dynamic approach should be applied to recognize religion as a way of life—a means to establish and uphold the society that aligns with the divine will on earth. With such reforms, religions can effectively contribute to moralizing modern education and help guide it toward achieving its original purpose.

### **Needed Religiosities and Moralization of Secular-based Modern education**

It is important to recognize that today's secular-based modern education, with its significant contributions to human progress and civilization, is well-established and continues to provide benefits as a standard international model for societies worldwide. However, it has a critical shortcoming in that it fails to acknowledge revealed sources of knowledge, which are, in fact, the foundational basis of human morality. As a result, modern education does not incorporate the spiritual well-being of individuals or consider the well-being in the hereafter. Instead, it only recognizes morality based on secular ethics. This neglects the essential role of religion in education. This narrow view of education, where it is seen merely as a tool for developing skills and technology for material advancement, and religion as a separate domain of theology and rituals, severely limits the scope of both. As Hammarskjöld poignantly observed, "On the bookshelf of life, God is a useful work of reference always at hand but seldom consulted." This mentality has led to a weakened, incomplete form of education—one that cannot produce morally strong and capable individuals who can foster both material and spiritual well-being for humankind. As a consequence, modern education, though successful in fostering skill development for material progress, falls short in nurturing individuals capable of truly serving the central moral and spiritual goals of life. Without integrating religion and a deeper understanding of its role in shaping human values, education risks creating individuals who may be skillful yet morally weak, potentially becoming a menace to society.

To address the shortcomings of secular-based modern education and ensure its relevance to both material and spiritual well-being, it is essential to introduce religious principles and moral teachings into its framework. This can be achieved by incorporating basic education in revealed religions—along with their universal messages, worldviews, and teachings—into the curriculum at all levels. The goal is not just to present religion in terms of rituals, but to focus on the inner meanings and real-world applications of these teachings for the management of human life. To make this integration possible, modifications to the standard approach of teaching and presenting content can be made in a simple and innovative way. The key idea is to introduce subjects and materials from the perspective of the central goals of education as well as the worldviews of revealed religions. This means framing the content in a way that emphasizes the deeper purpose of life—success, peace, spiritual well-being, and fulfillment of humanity’s divine purpose—while exploring their practical implications in everyday life. This approach could be implemented in textbooks and classroom teachings by consistently asking the fundamental questions: *What*, *How*, and *Why*. Each subject or lesson would be presented with these guiding principles in mind—asking not only *what* is being taught but also *why* it is important and *how* it serves the larger purpose of life, as envisioned by both the goals of education and the teachings of revealed religions. This method offers a straightforward, effective way to bring religious moralization into secular education, aligning the operational, functional, and spiritual goals of human life. By having well-educated teachers and textbook authors who can apply this framework, a standardized model of moralized modern education can be developed and implemented globally. This model would be universally applicable, helping students not only to excel in technical and material skills but also to grow as ethically responsible individuals, ready to serve society and contribute to global peace and prosperity.

## **Findings**

**Alignment Between Education and Life's Purpose:** Modern educational institutions often prioritize financial success too much, neglecting the deeper meaning of life and leaving a void in moral and spiritual fulfillment. The participants agreed that education should help individuals contribute to both personal and societal prosperity by balancing material success with spiritual and moral growth.

**Role of Religious Morality in Education:** Religious morality is crucial in education as it provides a universal framework of ethical principles that uphold values such as integrity, honesty, responsibility, and compassion. By integrating religious values, educators encourage students to make morally sound decisions that foster justice and harmony in both society and their personal lives. Religious morality inspires students to see education as a means of fulfilling the Creator's purpose and nurturing the betterment of humanity.

**Effectiveness in Producing Capable Graduates:** Students motivated by religion are better equipped to manage and support others, as they exhibit both technical expertise and a solid moral foundation. Participants highlighted that moralized education fosters long-term societal prosperity, peace, and happiness by preventing corruption, promoting fairness, and ensuring justice.

**Challenges in Incorporating Religious Morality:** The growing secularization of contemporary educational institutions, especially in multicultural nations, is the main reason for resistance to integrating religion into education. While religious morality holds universal significance, its application in a pluralistic educational system must take into account diverse religious beliefs. Policymakers and educators often prioritize measurable outcomes, such as test scores, over the more abstract concept of moral development.

**Proposed Model for Moralized Education:** A recommended approach is to integrate traditional studies with religious values to provide students with a well-rounded perspective. Programs focused on moral education, which highlight virtues, moral reasoning, and intentional living, have been recognized as effective. It is also encouraged that families, places of worship, and communities collaborate with schools and colleges to strengthen the moral and ethical values taught to students.

**Broader Impacts on Society:** Education systems rooted in religious morality are more likely to cultivate leaders who embody integrity, compassion, and a vision for peace and justice. Shared moral values help build unity and mutual respect among diverse groups, fostering societal harmony. Graduates from a moralized education not only excel professionally but also attain spiritual contentment, contributing to their overall happiness and well-being.



## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the proposed model that integrates religious morality with the goals of education, the following recommendations are offered to enhance the effectiveness and implementation of a morally and spiritually enriched education system.

**Curriculum Development:** Educational curricula should integrate religious moral principles in a way that respects and acknowledges diverse religious beliefs. This approach should emphasize universal values such as honesty, compassion, integrity, and responsibility. Interdisciplinary courses should be developed to bridge science, philosophy, and religion, highlighting their complementary roles in understanding life's purpose and promoting holistic development.

**Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Implement training programs for educators that equip them with the skills to effectively and impartially integrate religious moral values into their teaching practices. Offer continuous professional development opportunities focused on moral and ethical education, ensuring teachers stay informed about best practices and emerging methodologies.

**Policy Implementation:** Advocate for the inclusion of religious morality and ethical education in national and institutional education policies. These policies should provide clear guidelines for integrating moral values without endorsing any specific religion. Establish standards and frameworks that define the objectives, content, and assessment methods for moral and religious education, ensuring consistency and quality across educational institutions.

**Community and Parental Involvement:** Develop partnerships with community and religious organizations to enhance and strengthen the moral instruction provided in schools. Their involvement can offer additional resources and diverse perspectives. By organizing conferences, seminars, and collaborative activities that align with both home and school values, parents can be encouraged to play an active role in the moral education process.

**Promotion of Interfaith and Cultural Understanding:** Implement programs that promote interfaith dialogue and understanding, helping students appreciate diverse religious

perspectives while fostering an environment of tolerance and respect. To ensure the introduction of religious morals is inclusive and sensitive to all cultural backgrounds, incorporate cultural sensitivity training within educational settings. This approach will create a more harmonious and respectful atmosphere for students from different religious and cultural traditions.

**Development of Assessment and Evaluation Tools:** Develop assessment tools to evaluate students' moral and ethical development, enabling teachers to gauge the effectiveness of moral education programs. Create feedback mechanisms that involve parents, teachers, and students, ensuring continuous improvement in the implementation of moral and religious education. These processes will help adapt and refine educational practices, ensuring that students receive the support needed to grow both morally and ethically.

**Addressing Secularization and Pluralism:** Create plans for finding a balance between modern educational goals and the introduction of religious values, making sure that the educational system is inclusive in multicultural and multireligious societies. Make sure that all students' diverse religious and nonreligious beliefs are respected and supported during the implementation of religious moral education, without bias or discrimination of any type.

**Further Research and Empirical Validation:** Conduct an empirical study to assess the impact of the proposed model on students' moral and spiritual development across diverse educational settings and circumstances. Additionally, carry out longitudinal research to explore the lasting effects of moralized education on students' personal and professional lives, as well as its broader influence on societal well-being.

**Enhancing Institutional Support:** Allocate sufficient resources and funding to support the integration of Christian morals into educational curricula. Additionally, motivate administrators and educational leaders to foster an institutional culture that prioritizes holistic development by emphasizing moral and religious education.

**Leveraging Technology and Media:** Deliver religious and moral education in engaging and accessible ways by incorporating educational tools and digital media that cater to diverse learning styles. Additionally, establish online forums where educators, religious leaders, and

policymakers can collaborate, exchange insights, and develop innovative approaches to moral instruction.

## Conclusions

Education serves as the foundation for advancing knowledge, skills, and technology essential for both the material and spiritual well-being of humanity. Its purpose is to equip individuals with the competence to perform effectively in all aspects of life, integrating efficiency with moral integrity. At its core, education aims to expand individuals' minds, thoughts, and perspectives while fostering the wisdom needed to understand and uphold fundamental values, life's purpose, and collective goals. It seeks to shift the focus from self-centered concerns to a broader sense of shared well-being, transforming "my well-being" into "our well-being." The integration of religious morality into education is crucial for holistic human development, ensuring that intellectual growth aligns with moral and spiritual enlightenment. This study has examined the profound influence of religious morality on education, highlighting its role in guiding individuals toward a life of purpose and ethical integrity. By embedding moral and spiritual values into curricula, educational institutions can nurture not only knowledgeable individuals but also morally responsible citizens capable of navigating the complexities of modern society. Thus, the essence of education can be summarized as: *Come for learning, learn for knowledge, and go forth to serve society and, ultimately, the Creator.* However, modern secular education often lacks this intellectual and moral dimension. As a result, it has largely failed to cultivate well-rounded, capable individuals who can effectively achieve life's operational, functional, and fundamental objectives. To address this shortfall, education requires a thoughtful process of moralization, which can be achieved through innovative methods—an area that demands further research and development.

At its core, education is inherently religious, making the inclusion of religiosity a necessity. It is imperative that we acknowledge and respect revealed knowledge, integrating it into serious academic study across all levels and disciplines. A foundational education in religions is essential for comprehending the universal messages and worldviews that shape human life. To achieve this, modern education must undergo a process of moralization through the meaningful integration of revealed knowledge with traditional rational sources of learning.

This integration will ensure that educational content embodies the principle of *quality with morality*, allowing true education to flourish and effectively serve the ultimate goals of life—establishing peace, prosperity, happiness, and success in this world while securing eternal bliss in the hereafter. Indeed, knowledge that is devoid of *tawhid* (the oneness of Allah) is ultimately soulless and, in the end, futile (Chittick, 1989; Choudhury, 2014).

The literature reviewed underscores various models and philosophies that advocate for the integration of religious morality into education, ranging from Montessori education's focus on moral development to character education programs grounded in religious principles. These approaches demonstrate how religious morality strengthens students' ability to navigate ethical dilemmas and contribute meaningfully to society. Given the increasing ethical challenges in contemporary societies, incorporating religious morality into education offers a viable path for cultivating well-rounded individuals who perceive their life's purpose beyond mere material success. This integration fosters a balanced development by nurturing virtues such as empathy, compassion, and integrity. In conclusion, religious morality in education plays a crucial role in harmonizing intellectual and moral growth. It not only prepares students for professional success but also equips them to lead lives rooted in ethical awareness and spiritual fulfillment. Future educational reforms should embrace this holistic approach to ensure that education fulfills its broader mission in shaping morally responsible and enlightened individuals.

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