Structure and Organization of Al-Huda International: An Institution for Female Islamic Education

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Abstract:

Al-Huda is a movement of Islamic education and reform with a dedicated female following in Pakistani cities. Its founder and leader is a woman, Dr. Farhat Hashmi, who has become a well-known public figure in Pakistan. Al Huda follows the strategy of educating women about the Islamic teachings in a way that can help them apply those teachings to their own lives, reform themselves, and share the acquired knowledge with others including their families and friends. At the same time, Al Huda also emphasizes the importance of non-religious education amongst women as it helps in gaining scientific reasoning and logic. This is why modern educational tools like management studies and marketing skills are also taught in the institute. This amalgamation of Islamic and modern education has been one of the primary factors in attracting urban women from Islamabad to join the Institute. Data for this article was collected in Al-Huda H-11/4 Islamabad Pakistan by using qualitative anthropological research techniques.

Key words: Hadith, madrasa, curriculum, education, management, social organization

Introduction

'Man is a social animal' is a cliché that is largely heard in different spheres of life. From the beginning of time, man has lived collectively in the form of tribes, groups, and communities. These collective groups are formed on the basis of collective norms and obligations which tie all the people of the group together. The concept of society is also derived from the concept of social animal where individuals and groups coexist and interact. Thus, a society is made up of people and can be seen as an organization where people interact with each other on the basis of different relationships with each other. Everything from family, school, banking system, markets, communities, and hospitals become part of this social organization. The social interaction takes place at certain levels, both individual and collective. Individuals, groups, and institutions interact with each other on the basis of their unwritten assigned roles given to them by the society. Thus the pattern of interaction that takes place between these players of the society sets the social organization running. Brown and Barnett (1942) defined social organization as a system of relationships based on obligations which is present between and among groups in a certain society. It is argued that the social organization and social structure (where social structure refers to the position of individuals within a social organizational setup) of the society are based on obligations- relations.

Locale

Present research was conducted in Al-Huda institution Islamabad, situated at A.K Brohi Street, H-11/4 Islamabad Pakistan within 33.65^{o} latitude and 73.01^{o} longitude. It is situated very close to FAST University (new campus). Al-Huda has its branches and divisions in almost all big cities in

Pakistan. It has two divisions in Islamabad; one is in F-8/4 and the other in H-11/4. My location of analysis was H-11/4 school.

Research Methodology

Methodology for the collection of empirical data for the current research was based upon qualitative anthropological research methods, which include socio-economic survey, participant observation, and key informant interviews, interviews of the respondents, case studies, and focus group discussions. We choose of two key informants from the institute on the basis of the personal judgment, taking into account their familiarity with most of the inhabitants of the institute as well as the socio-economic conditions of the area. Participant observation was used in order to get first-hand and accurate information about the institute. In-depth interviews were conducted with the working staff of the institute to get detailed information. Structured interviews were used to collect information from students and teachers. Case studies were conducted to secure more detail.

Social Organization of Al Huda

The social organization has important consequences on the behaviors of individuals and collective groups. In order to keep the social organization balanced, people interact with each other at different levels assuming different roles. Three kinds of behaviors explain this social organizational setup namely ideal behavior, anticipated behavior, and the actual behavior. These behaviors lead to certain expectations which, with the passage of time, become the part of the culture. These embedded cultural expectations and norms thus shape the social organization in a way where different groups co-existing within a society interact with each other and become interdependent.

For centuries, the Madrasas of religious educations have held a prestigious and important position in Islamic societies. It is a deeply held belief of the Islamic society that the structure of the society is dependent upon the type and nature of education that is imparted to its younger generations (Osman, n.d.). Earlier Muslims excelled in every field of education largely because of the education and learning organization set up by the Madrasas. From the beginning of the first Madrasa by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) in Madinah whose students were known as Ashab-ul-Suffah (Companions of the Platform), to the many universities and Madrasas set up in Caliphates, to the South Asian Madaris like Jamia Aligarh, Darul Uloom Farang Mahal, and Darul Uloom Dioband, madrasa has played a significant role in the Muslim society. These institutes not only imparted religious knowledge (the knowledge of Quran, Sunnah, *Hadith*, and the Fiqh), but also incorporated sciences and arts in their curriculum to equip Muslims to face the challenges of the changing world.

At the same time, the madrasa acts as a social organization which teaches and inculcates moral and ethical values to the new generation of the Islamic society to enable them to live their lives according to the rules and path assigned by Allah in His Holy Book and through the teaching of the Prophets. The teacher and student relationship is very important in the Madrasa's social organization. According to Islamic teachings, teacher enjoys a very important position and status in the society. Teacher is regarded as highly as parents because they teach a person how to spend life in the right way.

Thus in order to carry out research on Al Huda International, it is important to understand the area where it operates as well as the social organization and structure that it maintains. Al Huda International has spread its wings internationally in order to spread its message. In Pakistan as well, it serves in different cities including Islamabad. The institute is well known for its unique and reliable way to

deliver the Islamic education. In the following lines, the Al Huda International is being discussed from social and educational perspective to explain how the madrasa works and is socially organized to help its students and make an impact on the society as a whole.

In 1994, Al-Huda opened its first Islamic Educational School in Islamabad. It gradually spread its branches in Lahore and Karachi within next few years and by now the network is spread over almost 70 urban locations of Pakistan. So far a total of more than 15,000 graduates have been reached, who have successfully completed one or more of the Al-Huda courses whilst a lot more take the lessons without formally being enrolled. In addition to this Al-Huda teaching sessions are spread over the Pakistani community residing in North America, Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. A woman called Dr. Farhat Hashmi initiated this movement.

The teaching methodology of Al-Huda is much popular to an extent that the number of audience can be numbered in thousands. The message is widespread through every possible media resource ranging from audio cassettes, radio and television to website and books. The main focus of Al-Huda curriculum is on Quranic text and *Hadith,* inclusive of Arabic to Urdu translation accompanied by Hashmi`s commentary covering every possible aspect. The sole purpose of these lessons is to guide the woman of today towards leading their lives based on Islamic teachings and principals and also to spread this knowledge around. (Hashmi 2006)

Interpretations of Farhat Hashmi are marked by Ahl-i Hadith subdivision of the Sunni sect of Islam in South Asia. This particular school of thought believes in rejecting most practices accustomed so as to prefer basis on texts and individual responsibility, identified by the religion. Hashmi is also a strong believer and preacher of educating the women in non-religious fields too. She strongly advocates the immense importance of logic and scientific reasoning, to illustrate this

approach she uses modern marketing and management techniques to organize and run Al-Huda smoothly.

Objectives

The sole objective of Al Huda Institute is to bring affordable Islamic education in the national (Urdu) and International (English) languages for people. Quran and Sunnah are the most prominent parts of the teaching delivered by the foundation. The institute targets the well-off, elite class of the society who are educated. The reason behind the beginning of this institute is the affiliation of Dr. Hashmi with Jamiat in her early years. Furthermore, she felt that it was important to provide a platform to women from middle and upper class where they could understand Islam and find a way to apply Islam to their lives. Due to the stereotypical perception of traditional madrasa, people from wealthy and educated classes do not want to join them. Furthermore, the segregation of Islamic and secular education that the traditional Madrasa does is also a hindering factor for this socio economic class. On the other hand, Dr. Hashmi, who herself is a foreign educated woman, considers both types of education necessary for survival in today's world. This idea is very prominent in the objectives and core values of the institute.

Vision about Co-education

Al- Huda provides education to females only as they have their own philosophy regarding co-education based on the Islamic principles. The single gender education system provided by Al Huda is, according to them, a better system where female students not only feel at ease, but also stay safe from many of the ills that coeducation brings. Furthermore, Al Huda believes that females should be provided with educational facilities that are structured exclusively for them. This has social implications

on the students of Al Huda because their teaching because the social relationships developed between the students of Al Huda is focused towards single gender education system.

Teaching Style

The teaching style and the attitude of the teacher have a profound impact on the development and learning of students. Theories and models have been presented over the years to devise best teaching methods to ensure effective learning of students. The trend is shifting from teacher focused approaches to student focused approaches. The emerging concepts include concepts of active learning (in which learning is delegated to the students whereby they discuss, ask questions, debate, and brainstorm amongst themselves in search of answers, with the teacher mentoring them); cooperative learning (whereby students are grouped together in teams where they have to solve problems and look for answers and are accountable for individual contribution and group work as well); and inductive based learning (where students are presented with challenges and then learning is induced when they strive to solve the problem. It is also known as problem based learning, just in time learning, or discovery learning).

The Islamic education, from the very beginning of its days also relied on the student centric approaches. In the early Islamic days, successful learning was considered to depend upon the readiness of learners, their interest, and the motivation to learn (Massialas and Jarrar, 1983; Subh, 1993). In the earlier Islamic era, the method of teaching was subject of four factors, including subject, teachers and scholars, place of teaching, and age of student. The Islamic educational institutes have followed different methods and techniques of teaching depending on the nature of studies. For instance, for Hifzul Quran, the repetition and memorizing method is the most effective, while for teaching science teaching by debate and

discussion have been used. The methods largely used by Islamic Madrasa over the earlier years included the repetition method (Tikrar); the narrative method; the dialogue method; teaching by setting parables (by setting examples); teaching through application and practice; and teaching by dictation.

The teaching method employed at Al Huda international is also aligned with the Islamic teaching methods used from the beginning of the era. At the same time, the teaching also uses a number of modern approaches to effectively teach the students. Class room learning methods where lectures are delivered by the teacher or the Muallim, the Tikrar method for Hifzul Quran, debates and discussions for Fiqh classes, and the narrative method for curses like Roshnika Safar, and Taleem al Islam are used. These teaching methods are progressive in nature and are designed with keeping in mind the nature of the study, the capabilities of the students, their ages, and the content. Latest technological tools are used for the distance learning courses as well. Thus, Al- Huda has amalgamated the progressive teaching methods taught by Islam with the recent technological tools to ensure effective teaching mechanism.

Teacher Student Relationship

The teacher- student relationship is of utmost importance when understanding the social organization of any institute. Islam holds teacher in utmost regards when it comes to education. From the beginning of the Islam, the teacher and pupil relationship has been seen as one critical relationship where respect for the teachers is considered as one of the highest forms of worship (Al- Ghazali, 1997). The relationship between the teacher and the student is a mutual one, bound with respect and devotion. According to the Islamic principles, teaching is not the sole responsibility of the scholars or the learned, but anyone who has learned something must teach others about it as well.

The teacher student relationship has been studied by many scholars from describing the duties of the students (Al Ghazali, 1997; Al Mawerdi, 1976); while others have started from the teacher's perspective (Al- Nawawi, 2000). On both type of studies, the most important aspect of the teacher pupil relationship is to approach the learning process with sincerity. Islam encourages the relationship between the teacher and the pupils to be a cordial one where both the parties how genuine love and respect for one another. Islam believes that when there is an intimate relationship between the teacher and the pupil on the basis of respect, the learning process becomes more effective. Al Mawirdi (1976) pointed out the moral obligation of teacher and student relationship by emphasizing that the teacher should be of high moral standing and the expert of his or her subject before he preaches anything. On the other hand, students are obligated to respect and love their teachers and think of them as their spiritual parents. The students should actively participate in the learning process and obey their teachers.

On the basis of the principles outlined above, it was observed that Al Huda also strives to maintain a teacher student relationship depicted by the early scholar and students of Islam. At the same time, the teachers at Al Huda do not restrict their students from questioning, as Islam encourages humans to think and question. Al Huda's teaching staff includes female teachers and Muallima's for the female students to make sure that a healthy and cordial relationship develops and prospers between the pupils and the teachers. Additionally, this relationship is based on moral grounds and thus exhibit affection and respect. By doing this, Al Huda contributes towards ethical and moral development of its students as well.

Management

The management of Al Huda is done under the supervision of Dr. Farhat Hashmi. Hashmi is the owner and the founder of Al Huda. She occupies a distinct place in the diverse religious landscape of the country (Ahmad, 2009). A former member of *Jamiat* (student wing of Jama'at e Islami, a well-known political cum Islamic organization of Pakistan), she always had the passion to attract the educated people of the country towards improving their lifestyles by adopting Islam. The management of the institute is run under her leadership and the teaching style adopted by Al Huda is also developed by her.

Culture of Madrasa

The culture of the Madrasa refers to the written and unwritten norms and practices, traditions, and festivals being observed in the Madrasa. Culture has a significant impact on the personality development and the learning process of the students. Deal and Peterson (1999) define school culture as the complex web of traditions and rituals that are developed over time. Owens (2001) identifies two aspects of culture, the norms (acceptable legitimate rules of behaviour) and the assumptions (unwritten, underlying, unconscious beliefs that must be followed). Developing a productive culture, and maintaining it is a challenge that each educational institute has to address all along. Sarason (1982) asserts that t ensure productive learning culture which stimulates students to question, and explore, requires the teachers to be motivated and committed.

The culture of Al Huda fosters Islamic cultural values and traditions. For female education, the management has built a separate wing where everything is managed by females alone. Thus culture of single gender education ensures that there are no social evils present in the Madrasa culture due to the presence of both the genders. The norms and traditions are

aligned with the Islamic traditions. Holidays are observed according to the Islamic Hijri calendar. Prayer breaks are allowed to the students during which they can offer their prayers in a timely manner. Teachers are encouraged to use positive reinforcement methods to encourage students to follow the norms and traditions. Punishments are discouraged in the Madrasa culture.

Curriculum

The curriculum is one of the most significant factors in the teaching organization. According to Islamic principles, the purpose of education is the character formation (Gil'adi, 1993). It is therefore the responsibility of the teaching institutes and the Madrasas to teach appropriate curriculum to the students which ensure the development of personal, social, and religious values. At the same time, the education about science and art is also encouraged by the Islamic education principles whereby students are encouraged to learn about the nature, and the things that Allah has made in this vast universe. The curriculum of Al Huda is in accordance with the guiding principles of Islam. The religious courses offered by the Madrasa are listed below:

Table 1: Curriculum of Al Huda

Sr.	Name	Duration	Admission criteria for women
1	Taleem-al-Islam (Long/Diploma Course)	1 year	BA. BSc or equivalent
2	Taleem-al-Quran (Urdu and English) (Long/Diploma Course)	1 Year	Young girls with a minimum qualification of F.A/ O-level or equivalent
3	Noor-al-Quran (Long/Diploma Course)	2 years	Females
4	Tahfeem-e-Deen (Long/Certificate Courses)	Varied	Females
5	Saut-al-Quran	Varied	Females

	(Long/Certificate Courses)		
6	Fahm-e-Deen (Long/Certificate Courses)	Varied	Not for females
7	Taleem-al-Hadith (Advanced course)	4 months	Students who have completed Quran Course
8	Saut-al-Hadith (Advanced course)	Varied	Students who have completed Saut-Al-Quran Course
9	Taleem-al-Tajweed (Advanced course)	Islamabad & Karachi	Students who have completed Taleem-Al-Hadith Course
10	Roshnikasafar (Short Course)	4 months	A short duration hostel-based course designed for women from rural areas
11	Hamare Bache courses	Varied	Islamic parenting classes
12	Roshni Ki Kiran (Short Course)	1 year	Illiterate females teaching them basic Urdu reading and writing.
13	Nazra Quran e Majeed (Short Course)	6 months	Females
14	IslamiTarbiyati (Short Course)	5-6 months	Matriculate girls awaiting to start college
15	Summer courses (Short Course)	4-8 weeks	Children, young girls and women

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-Curricular activities are an important part of the Madrasa's social organization. As discussed earlier, the objective of Madrasa in Islam is character development and moral improvement of both men and women. At the same time, the Madrasa in Islam has been a centre of social interaction where students can not only seek religious and intellectual education but also develop the love and affection amongst themselves by engaging in healthy activities. At Al Huda, extra- curricular activities like Naat and Qirat competitions, charity events, Bake Sales, and fund raising events are organized as a part of extra- curricular activities. These activities help the students socialize and interact with each other and understand each other. They also provide a healthy breathing space to the female students from their daily routine.

International Branches of Al Huda Institute:

Al-Huda has spread its branches and now operates in Canada, US, and Pakistan. It is a nonpolitical and non-profit institute with a purpose of enhancing Islamic knowledge amongst urban women. The international branches are opened with the idea in mind that people living in non-Muslim countries need to stay in touch with Islamic teachings to ensure that they are not distracted from the path of Islam by getting influenced by un-Islamic rituals and practices of the West. Following is a brief discussion of its international branches:

Al Huda Institute Canada

The foundation of Al Huda in Canada came in the year 2001 (Al Huda 2012). Today, it has formed a structured and organized institute that provides knowledge to people from different walks of life. Other programs that it offers include multi-media publications, learning through workshops and online courses. In Canada, just like in other regions, Al Huda is promoting Islamic teachings and the understanding of Divine Revelation; that is, Quran and Sunn'ah. Courses are specifically designed in a way that students understand their bond with the Almighty, find inner peace, build positive character, demonstrate encouraging interpersonal relations and serve society by benefiting people living around them (Al-Huda Institute Canada, 2012).

Courses

The institute offers on campus as well as online courses. On Campus courses include:

- Al Huda Weekend School
- Taleem al Qur'an
- SahihBukhari Advanced Courses

- Taleem al Hadith
- Taleem al Qur'an (weekend courses in English).
- Tahfiz al Qur'an (for boys)
- Taleem al Qur'an (certificate courses).

Specific Courses Designed for Women

Women are highly benefited from Al Huda in many ways. For example, in Canada, women of all ages are welcomed to learn detailed study of Qur'an in Arabic and Tafseer. This includes Taleem al Qur'an (for women, translation and Tafseer of Qur'an), Journey through Qur'an (for women of all ages who are seeking a practical guide to life), Hifz al Qur'an (memorizing the Qur'an), Tajweed, Miftah al Qur'an (recitation and Tajweed), Taleem al Hadith and many others. For boys, school going kids the Kindergarten programs and Tahfeez al Qur'an (integration of Hifz, Arabic and Ontario Curriculum) is designed (Al-Huda Canada, 2012).

Al Huda Facilities and Services

The campus provides a variety of services to its students. Masjid is a necessary component of any Islamic institute. On campus Masjid is also used for educational lectures are delivered by invited scholarly guests on occasions apart from being used to offer regular 5 prayers. Promoting research work, staff and students are encouraged to take advantage from precious books in library. At the same time, students looking for extra assistance are also provided help through communication officers of the institute. Purchase option on a wide range of CDs, DVDs and lecture notes is available for further material. To promote learning, seasonal discount offers are made to the students. An important aspect of the campus facilities include child care center for children whose mothers come to seek education. Mothers with their young children

under age of 3 are facilitated with this child care service. In this way, they can concentrate on learning process without interruption of their family affairs and kids nurturing. Cafeteria service is also provided for staff and students. To facilitate many people, rental hall service is provided that can hold up to 300 people. It is used for arranging weddings, receptions other than religious gatherings. But strict practice of Islamic values is conditioned on all events (Al-Huda services, 2012).

Staff training programs and workshops are held during different time of the year to make sure the teaching process is effective and best techniques are used to teach. It also helps the staff to manage stress and learn new skills.

Al Huda Institute United States

With its core vision of "Quran for ALL; In Every hand, In Every heart", Al Huda is striving in USA to serve humanity by spreading the knowledge of Quran and Sunnah. In US it offers courses in both English and Urdu to make sure the language barrier does not affect the learning process. Advance courses are offered with flexible schedule including Tehfeez/Hifz. Other courses include Taleem al Quran (in Urdu), Hifz and Dawa-e-Shafi, Seerah e Nabawi Courses, Islamic Creed Course and some courses designed for parents to groom their children under Islamic teachings.

Many of these courses are also offered in English. Advanced courses for Sahih Bukhari, Rah ul Bayan and Hadith are given for those with knowledge of basic learning. Additionally special telephonic conferences are held for advanced Tehfeez al Quran courses. Al-Huda facilitates the religious learning process of women by removing the basic barriers that come across women.

Al-Huda Pakistan

Al Huda Institute initiated its operation in Pakistan for the first time in 1994. The main objective of the institute is to spread the word of Quran and Sunnah and it also serves people by conducting various social welfare programs. The branches of Al Huda are spread all over Pakistan in different urban areas. Al Huda Institute, Islamabad wing, which is the focus of this research, is located on the Nazimuddin Road in Islamabad. The campus is built in a three story house and includes lecture halls, Masjid, cafeteria, Library, group discussion halls, and administration office.

Functional Departments of Al Huda

In order to ensure that the institute offers quality education to its students, the management of the institute is divided into various functions. These functional departments are discussed below to shed light on the operations and management of the institute.

Education and Training Department

This is one of the biggest departments of Al-Huda and serves the most important role of the organization. The primary objective of this department is to develop teaching methods for the introduction and understanding of Quran and Sunnah to students and building up their moral character by delivering Quranic teachings. This department continually strives to expand the scope of different courses offered at the institute, and develops and designs new courses as per the needs of the students. Special courses have been introduced for this purpose which includes:

- Ta'lim al-Qur'an
- Nazrah, Tajwid and Tahfiz al-Qur'an

- Taʻlim al-Hadith Course
- Roshnika Safar
- RoshnikiKiran
- Reality Touch
- Manar al-Islam
- Fahm al-Qurʼan
- Summer Courses

For better accessibility these courses are also offered online. These courses are specially designed for the students to correct their pronunciation of Quran and to give them correct understanding of Quran and Sahi al Bukhari with the implications of that knowledge in their practical lives. This plays an important role in the character building of the students.

Research and Publication Department

The purpose of research and Publication department is to publish Islamic books, pamphlets and cards. By these publications, Islamic guidance on various topics is delivered. Besides, the department also publishes Islamic literature in different languages to provide ease to corresponding readers.

The objective of Al Huda is spread by this department by another way; that is, preparation of Audio Cassettes, CDs, and DVDs of Qurʼanic recitation. In order to solve the issues of daily life, these supplements serve the purpose by preparing guidelines on the topic by translation and commentary on Holy Quran, Hadith, and the life of Prophet (Peace Be upon Him). Radio broadcasting, television and cable channels are also used as disseminating media (About Al-Huda, 2012). To provide more convenience, a wide range of resources are provided to download from www.alhudapk.com, www.farhathashmi.com and www.alhudainstitute.ca

Social Welfare Department

Practical steps are carried out to serve the society diligently by this department. For this purpose, many schemes and service programs have been developed (About Al-Huda, 2012). Some of these actions are given below:

- For financially weak and deserving student the institute provides *Educational Sponsorship* in meeting their academic needs.
- In rural areas, *Educational and Welfare* works are conducted.
- Handcarts, sewing machine and related other tools, supplies and equipment are provided to assist for *Self Employment*.
- Widows, orphans and other financially backed persons are provided a monthly stipend as a *monthly financial assistance*.
- Parents are facilitated to find out spouses for their children by *Marriage Bureau* section of the institute.
- Consistent *social counseling and religious guidance* is provided.
- *Funeral support services* are provided.
- In the holy months like Ramadan, the distribution of food supplies is done under *Ramadan Services* program.
- *Collective Sacrifices on Eid al-Adha*
- Digging of wells in dry, rural areas by *Water Supply Service*.

Al Huda e-Learning Campus

Establishment of Al Huda e-Campus came under the vision and mission of "Qur'an for all - in every hand, in every heart" (About Al Huda, 2012). For distant learners the institute uses internet for easy communication. Audio/video conferencing emails and

other updated technologies are also used for distant learning and to reach the audiences without the geographical limitations. To make sure that the standard of teaching is maintained students are given a chance to interact with their course mates all over the globe using e technology. The e-learning program in Islamic education proved to be a disciplined education experience. Globally, students are benefited by this facilitation of distant learning. This gives a chance for people in every field to understand Quran and its teaching by making it more approachable for them. They take care of their families, make earnings and continue to work full time without disrupting their education. E-learning programs include certificate courses of Qur'an and Tajweed courses. These students are facilities with eBooks in their required languages (Al-Huda e-Campus, 2012).

E-Campus courses are offered to students from different parts of globe. For example 6 months to 3 years courses are offered in Taleem al Qur'an, Taleem al Hadith, Taleem al Fiqh and Taleem e Seerah al Nabawi. These courses have been designed to facilitate distant learners. Women are benefitted by these courses at large, since it allows them to fulfill family matters along with continuing their learning process (Al-Huda, 2012).

Al-Huda teams have been continuously seeking the opinions and feedback from people to improve their web page features for convenient delivery of education. For this purpose, suggestions are welcomed and features are improved and updated. Following are the steps taken by the management in this regard. Learners are facilitated with an easily interactive and fresh look of website to enhance user experience. Graphics and valuable layouts and designs are upgraded as suggested by people (Al-Huda, 2012).

Audiovisual facilities

In order to keep in focus the needs of students, lectures are provided in different audio formats. Latest and widely accepted features are added and faster downloading is assisted for better learning. Users can quickly access the content and a large chunk of information can be found with a quick access including audio, textual and video content. Various categories and sub categories are given to find out data easily. Another option for searching content or relevant information is eased by powerful search option. (Al-Huda, 2012)

Help Desk

If any student comes with any query, the Help Desk service quickly responds to queries. Students submit their questions to relevant departments by fulfilling a form and rate their query as low, normal or high based on the urgency of answer needed. Students can also track their queries through Help Desk (Al-Huda, 2012).

Al-Huda International School

Al-Huda International School was found in 2010 by Dr. Farhat Hashmi and it serves the same purpose as the other wings of Al-Huda institute. Under an ideal Islamic environment, unique educational system has been established. Within a few years of its establishment, the school made its place among its other contemporaries as a leading educational system. The school is supervised and led by a team of dedicated and motivational professionals. The team works on the objective of fulfilling the huge gaps present in the educational system of Pakistan. For this purpose, religious as well as worldly education is delivered simultaneously. It is believed that these children are tomorrow's leaders of *Muslim Ummah*. The chief objective that

AIS works on is to prepare children for challenges of coming times and make them establish strong connection with Almighty. The programs that AIS offers include Prep School, Montessori and Junior Classes.

Vision and mission of AIS

The vision of AIS is *"Quran for All; In every hand, In every heart"* and the mission is to enhance the capabilities of students by improving their natural talent, imparting authentic religious education and make them responsible Muslims, citizens and respectful human beings by positive character building. AIS works on the basis of core values which include sincerity, integrity, dedication, tolerance, discipline, benevolence and respect.   Some other specifications of the AIS are given below:

Table 2: AIS Specification

Sr.	AIS features	Description
1.	Founder	Dr. FarhatHashmi
2.	Reason behind growth of AIS	- Specifically designed curriculum - Islamic environment - Teaching Arabic, English, and Urdu at all levels. - Unique teaching methodologies - Attention to individual student. - Focus on confidence boosting, physical education and overall performance development. - Registered doctors striving to maintain the health of children. - Best qualified teachers of their fields. - Islamic and professional trainings for teachers.
3.	The Campuses	- Spacious rooms, comfortable environment - Recreational areas - Indoor lunch areas - Security system - Mosque - Book-store - Cafeteria - Conference room - Auditorium - Computer lab - Library

4.	The teams	• Chief Executive: Dr. FarhatHashmi • Director: AtifIqbal • Head of Academics: MahiraJunaid • Head of Junior Section: SadiaNaveed • Head of Montessori Section: AroojSaqib • Head of Islamic Curriculum: Maryam Zubair • School Secretary • Faculty Department
5.	Future Plans	• Establishing new campuses with specially designed classrooms, training centers, labs and wide playing area. • Branches in other parts of country

Source: Al-Huda International School, 2012

AIS Library

The features of AIS library include learning, discovery and an emphasis on innovation and problem solving. Students are provided assistance in research, preparing notes and assignments. The environment of library is beyond taking a book and reading it. The specific focus is placed on learning, discovery, respect and value books. Library management cooperates students to quickly access books and this is carried out by the Standard International Dewy Decimal System which a specific library classification system. Over 4000 books on Islamic subjects, Mathematics, Science, Arabic, Geography, Linguistics and others are present currently in school library. AIS management believes that for quality education, the staff should be trained with the passage of time. For this purpose, library staff is briefed on library science and similar subjects by international professionals, trainers and librarians. Students' capabilities are enhanced by reading programs. This is based on the objective that students from very beginning (Montessori level) should be able to maintain fluency level in English language. Besides this, some other activities include leveled reading for Montessori section, leveled reading for junior section, scrap books and extracurricular activities. Library policies are made to make students learn respect; that is, respect books, library and each other (Al-Huda Library, 2012).

Fidya and Donations

Al Huda accepts *Fidya* and donations. The fee paid by students are not collected for the purpose of teaching them Qur'an and Sunnah, rather the expenses of online teaching, administration cost and the teaching management expenses are fulfilled from the fee. Likewise, *Fidya* and donations are accepted with a purpose of helping the extremely deserving and poor people, refugee families and people suffering from hardships. Donation from online and offline means can be provided to institute which is later on used for the purpose of helping people (Al-Huda Online, 2012).

Female issues in learning

In under developing countries, including Pakistan, no specific acts have been made contributing in the female learning. Poverty ratio is higher; other social issues are capturing the society. Therefore, no significant attention is made toward female education. Despite this, many institutes today have been founded which are playing their role to eradicate social issues. Islamic scholars consider that all this is not possible without a sound and sophisticated educational system which gives directions and teachings in a 'problem solving' way. Islamic teachings are highly credible in this regard, as each of these teaching has its logical background and solution to problem. Islamic madrasa have therefore been founded keeping in view this core purpose. In Pakistan, many institutes, other than specific Islamic institutes have been working today. These also include co-educational system where a number of middle class families do not send their female kids because of cultural and family values. Islamic madrasa solved this issue and attracted a number of societal groups. Al Huda has been working on campus and by its e-campus services to solve these issues of female. Since, another issue of females was to continue learning

without interruption. But it was not possible because of family responsibilities and home affairs. E-learning in all the courses that are offered to students coming in institute, have contribute in the same way as on campus courses. Another issue for learning was the financial status of families, as a majority of people belong to poor or low social classes. Madrasa and similar other Islamic institutes offer high quality education at very minimum cost which has solved this issue. Besides this, by following the Islamic teachings, these Islamic institutes work for the welfare of society. As examined, Al Huda works on a range of welfare program in order to improve societal condition.

Conclusion:

Al Huda globally is one of the well-known religious organizations particularly recognized to attract the elites and the experienced kind of the Pakistani group. Females from upper and upper middle class join Al Huda for seeking religious guidance in their daily lives. Despite the criticisms which spread the concept that becoming a participant of such organizations and Dars activities have become a yet another newest design followed by top stage females, the changes both recognizable and hidden in the way of life of these females validate otherwise. The females becoming a participant of Al Huda display that the enhanced propensity to practice Islamic information by town, experienced, and top stage females is mainly inspired by the point that new kind of educational organizations are now beginning up which do not adhere to the autocratic system that traditional Madrasas are stereotyped with.

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